

Outpouring of Anger

What makes you really angry? Talk to God about it.

I often find it hard to watch the news. As the streams of refugees grow longer daily, escaping from unrelenting and unimaginable horrors, this psalm begins to make sense. Those remembering Zion (Jerusalem) have returned from Exile but cannot forget the terror they lived through as they witnessed horrific atrocities before their city was finally razed and burnt by the Babylonians. They were then forcibly removed to a strange land, gloated over by the Edomites (v 7) and, if that was not bad enough, their worship was mocked.

Their reaction? We might wish that verses 7-9 were not in our Bibles, and of course the New Testament has a lot to say about forgiveness. However, it is right to express anger when something is wrong and hateful to God. CS Lewis recounts, in the Second World War, a train compartment full of young soldiers disbelieving what they'd read about the

cruelties of the Nazi regime, assuming it was government propaganda. Lewis says that not to see the wickedness of publishing propaganda 'argues a terrifying insensibility'.² The absence of anger and indignation is alarming. God has an implacable hostility – not to the sinner, but to the sin. Kidner suggests we need to receive the impact of this psalm and that 'to cut this witness out of the Old Testament would be to impair its value as revelation, both of what is in man and of what the cross was required to achieve for our salvation'.³

We can be sure that there will finally be divine retribution. The phrase 'happy are...' (vs 8,9, TNIV) anticipates Revelation 18:20, when the entire anti-God system symbolized by Babylon finally falls. Note, however, that it is God who ensures justice. Our part is to lay our anger and grief at his feet.

Pray for those living in harrowing conditions.

¹ See Obad 10-14. ² CS Lewis, Reflections on the Psalms, Fount, 1977, p25

³ Derek Kidner, Psalms 73-150, TOTC, IVP, 1975, p461

RENEW YOUR MIND, ENGAGE YOUR WORLD

ENCOUNTER WITH GOD

A LARGER, STRONGER, QUIETER LIFE

Tanya Ferdinandusz explains how God has been her guide in her life, allowing the revelation of himself through his Word to direct, comfort and encourage her



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