

E. The Imprecatory Psalms

1. In definition;

- a. The imprecatory psalms are those that involve a cursing of the enemy. They do not make easy reading but serve a purpose in demonstrating the view of God's holiness as opposed to the evil of mankind.
- b. There is not unanimous agreement in all of the psalms as to this designation but in most commentators the most pronounced psalms of cursing are:

7, 35, 55, 69, 109, 137

and there are imprecatory notes found at other places in the psalter.

- c. The character of the problem produced by them may be sketched in this way:
 - (1) they seem to give place to pure invective
 - (2) they seem to violate the NT/OT commandments with regard to your enemy
- d. Some notes regarding this concept are as follow:
 - (1) the imprecations are not personal vendettas, there is no indication the psalm writer is going to carry them out in a feuding style.
 - (2) the integrity of the Lord is often the thing that is at question
 - (3) to understand the cursing it is necessary to comprehend both the actions of the writer and the enemy
 - (4) from them we learn even the most bitter things may be expressed to God.
 - (5) and we glean the idea that if we do not feel some indignation at the character of sin, we may be too mild in life.