

WEAVER STUDY GUIDES

Imprecatory Praying

Study Guide

Covenant Theology

John Weaver

Weaver Bible College

A lesson-by-lesson companion for reading, discussion, and written responses.

Downloadable classroom edition | 8.5 x 11 inches

Name / group

Date

Contents

Lesson 1: Pastor John Weaver - Imprecatory Praying - Part One of Four	4
Major Themes	4
Key Arguments	5
Scripture References	6
Discussion Questions	9
Applications	11
Personal Application and Notes	12
 Lesson 2: Pastor John Weaver - Imprecatory Praying - Part Two of Four	 13
Major Themes	13
Key Arguments	14
Scripture References	15
Discussion Questions	18
Applications	20
Personal Application and Notes	21
 Lesson 3: Pastor John Weaver - Imprecatory Praying - Part Three of Four	 22
Major Themes	22
Key Arguments	23
Scripture References	24
Discussion Questions	27
Applications	30
Personal Application and Notes	31
 Lesson 4: Pastor John Weaver - Imprecatory Praying - Part Four of Four	 32
Major Themes	32
Key Arguments	33
Scripture References	34
Discussion Questions	36

Applications 39

Personal Application and Notes 40

Online Lecture Resources 41

Using this guide

Read the corresponding chapter, then work through the themes, arguments, and Scripture references.

Write your responses before discussing the questions with others. Use the application pages to identify a practical next step.

The study material is retained from the existing lecture study guides. Added writing prompts provide space for your own response.

Print at Actual Size / 100% on US Letter paper. Single-sided and double-sided printing are both suitable. Lessons begin on the next available page; no blank pages are inserted.

Reading assignments refer to the September 30, 2026 edition of the companion book. Online lecture links and QR codes are collected at the end.

LESSON 1

Pastor John Weaver - Imprecatory Praying

Part One of Four

February 03, 2012

Read Chapter 1 in the companion book, pages 5-23.

Major Themes

Biblical Basis for Imprecatory Praying

Imprecatory prayers are found throughout Scripture, both Old and New Testaments, and are divinely inspired for use by believers.

Lecture support: Weaver cites Psalm 104:35, 1 Corinthians 16:22, Galatians 1:8-9, and Revelation 6:10 as examples of imprecations.

Covenantal Sanctions

God's covenant includes both blessings for obedience and curses for disobedience, and imprecatory prayers align with the negative sanctions against covenant breakers.

Lecture support: Weaver explains Psalm 1 and Psalm 112 as illustrations of positive and negative sanctions, and references Leviticus 26 and Deuteronomy 28.

Justice and God's Kingdom

Imprecatory prayers are appeals for God to establish justice and fully bring His kingdom by removing wickedness.

Lecture support: Weaver connects Psalm 104:35 to Matthew 13:41-43, where the righteous shine after the wicked are removed, and cites Jeremiah 23:5 and Isaiah 42:3.

Love and Imprecation Are Not Contradictory

Loving enemies, as commanded in Matthew 5:44, means acting biblically and not seeking personal vengeance, which is compatible with praying for God's justice.

Lecture support: Weaver explains that love is obedience to God's law (Romans 13:10, 1 John 5:3) and that Romans 12:17-21 teaches leaving vengeance to God.

The Security of the Elect

Imprecatory prayers do not threaten the salvation of God's elect; those for whom Christ died will be saved, and such prayers may even aid in the conversion of the elect.

Lecture support: Weaver references Isaiah 53:10-11, John 17, Hebrews 13:20, and quotes Martin Luther and David Dixon on prayers for enemies.

The Necessity of Holy Living

To effectively pray imprecatory prayers, believers must have clean hands and live obedient, godly lives, avoiding the sins they pray against.

Lecture support: Weaver cites the doctrine of clean hands and uses the story of Ahab and Jezebel as a warning against hypocrisy.

Key Arguments

Imprecatory prayers are biblical and not limited to the Old Testament.

Weaver argues that imprecations appear in the New Testament, such as Paul's use of 'anathema' in 1 Corinthians 16:22 and Galatians 1:8-9, showing continuity.

Lecture support: Weaver reads 1 Corinthians 16:22 and Galatians 1:8-9, explaining that 'anathema' means cursed or doomed.

Imprecatory prayers do not condemn the elect.

Weaver contends that praying for the wicked to be consumed does not endanger the salvation of God's chosen people, because Christ's atonement secures them.

Lecture support: Weaver cites Isaiah 53:10-11, John 17:12, 24, and Ephesians 2:5-6 to show the certainty of salvation for Christ's sheep.

Imprecatory prayers are covenantal lawsuits for justice.

Weaver asserts that these prayers are a biblical mandate to call upon God, the judge of all the earth, to rectify injustices and establish His righteous rule.

Lecture support: Weaver references Genesis 18:25, Psalm 89:14, Jeremiah 23:5, and Isaiah 59:4 to support the idea of appealing to God for justice.

Loving enemies does not preclude praying for God's judgment.

Weaver argues that Matthew 5:44 commands biblical love, not sentimentalism, and that leaving vengeance to God (Romans 12:19) allows for imprecatory prayers.

Lecture support: Weaver explains that love is fulfilling the law (Romans 13:10) and that Romans 12:17-21 instructs believers to overcome evil with good while trusting God's vengeance.

Imprecatory prayers are prayers for the fullness of Christ's kingdom.

Weaver demonstrates that asking for the wicked to be consumed is equivalent to praying for the establishment of God's kingdom, as seen in Matthew 13.

Lecture support: Weaver reads Matthew 13:36-43, showing that the righteous shine after the wicked are removed, and connects this to Psalm 7:9.

Believers must have clean hands to pray imprecatory prayers.

Weaver argues that those who pray for judgment on the wicked must themselves be innocent of similar sins, using the legal principle of clean hands.

Lecture support: Weaver references the story of Ahab and Jezebel (1 Kings 21) as an example of unclean hands leading to judgment on the perpetrators.

Scripture References

Psalm 104:35

Weaver reads this verse as the primary text, a prayer for sinners to be consumed and the wicked to be no more.

1 Corinthians 16:22

Weaver cites this verse to show a New Testament imprecation: 'If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be Anathema Maranatha.'

Galatians 1:8-9

Weaver points out Paul's use of 'anathema' against those who preach another gospel, as another New Testament curse.

2 Thessalonians 1:7-9

Weaver references this passage to show that Scripture speaks of Christ taking vengeance on the disobedient, aligning with imprecatory themes.

Psalm 1:1-6

Weaver uses Psalm 1 to illustrate positive sanctions (blessings) for the righteous and negative sanctions (perishing) for the ungodly.

Psalm 112:1-10

Weaver reads Psalm 112 to show blessings on the righteous and the perishing of the wicked's desire.

Isaiah 53:10-11

Weaver cites this to argue that Christ will see His seed and be satisfied, ensuring the salvation of those for whom He died.

John 17:6, 9, 11-12, 24

Weaver references Jesus' high priestly prayer to show that none of those given to Him are lost, and that He prays for their presence with Him.

Hebrews 13:20

Weaver mentions the 'everlasting covenant' to support the eternal security of the elect.

Ephesians 2:4-7

Weaver reads this to show believers' union with Christ in death, resurrection, and seating in heavenly places, making their loss impossible.

John 3:36

Weaver quotes this verse to assert that those without Christ are already under God's wrath, so imprecatory prayers do not add to their condemnation.

Matthew 13:36-43

Weaver expounds the parable of the tares to show that the wicked will be removed at the end, and praying for this is praying for Christ's kingdom.

Psalms 7:9

Weaver quotes this verse as another example of praying for the wickedness of the wicked to end and the just to be established.

Matthew 5:17-19, 43-45

Weaver addresses the objection from loving enemies by explaining that Jesus came to fulfill the law, not destroy it, and corrects Pharisaical misinterpretations.

Romans 13:10

Weaver quotes this to define love as the fulfilling of the law, not mere sentiment.

1 John 5:3

Weaver cites this to reinforce that love for God is keeping His commandments.

Romans 12:17-21

Weaver reads this passage to show how to love enemies biblically: not repaying evil, but leaving vengeance to God and doing good.

Genesis 18:25

Weaver references Abraham's appeal to God as the judge of all the earth to do right, supporting the idea of bringing covenantal lawsuits.

Psalm 89:14

Weaver quotes this to show that justice and judgment are the foundation of God's throne.

Jeremiah 23:5

Weaver cites this prophecy that the Messiah will execute judgment and justice, linking imprecatory prayers to Christ's work.

Study notes

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

Discussion Questions

1. How does the concept of covenantal sanctions (blessings and curses) shape our understanding of imprecatory prayers?

Consider: Weaver explains that Scripture presents positive sanctions for covenant keepers and negative sanctions for covenant breakers, using Psalm 1 and Psalm 112.

-
-
-
-
2. In what ways do imprecatory prayers align with the New Testament teaching on loving enemies?

Consider: Weaver addresses the objection from Matthew 5:44 by explaining that biblical love is obedience to God's law, not personal vengeance.

-
-
-
-
3. How does the security of the elect provide a framework for praying imprecatory prayers without fear of condemning the innocent?

Consider: Weaver argues that those for whom Christ died cannot be lost, and imprecatory prayers may even aid in the conversion of the elect.

4. What does it mean to bring a 'covenantal lawsuit' against the wicked, and how does this concept relate to God's role as judge?

Consider: Weaver introduces the idea that believers have the right to appeal to God for justice, citing Genesis 18:25 and other verses.

5. Why is personal holiness and 'clean hands' essential for those who pray imprecatory prayers?

Consider: Weaver uses the story of Ahab and Jezebel to illustrate that those who pray for judgment must not be guilty of the same sins.

6. How can imprecatory prayers be understood as prayers for the fullness of Christ's kingdom rather than personal vengeance?

Consider: Weaver connects Psalm 104:35 to Matthew 13:41-43, showing that the removal of the wicked allows the righteous to shine.

Applications

Learn to pray the imprecatory prayers of Scripture.

Weaver urges believers to learn and use the imprecatory prayers given in the Bible to cry out for justice and God's intervention.

Lecture support: Weaver states, 'It is time that all of God's people learn to pray the imprecatory prayers given to us in Scripture.'

Live holy and godly lives to have clean hands.

Weaver emphasizes that to effectively pray imprecatory prayers, believers must be obedient and not guilty of the sins they pray against.

Lecture support: Weaver says, 'If we want to prosecute a divine lawsuit against the wicked, we have to have clean hands.'

Trust God as the judge who will bring justice.

Weaver encourages believers to rely on God to rectify injustices, rather than taking personal vengeance, because He is the judge of all the earth.

Lecture support: Weaver references Genesis 18:25 and Romans 12:19 to show that vengeance belongs to God.

Respond to enemies biblically, not emotionally.

Weaver teaches that loving enemies means acting according to God's law - doing good, not repaying evil - while still praying for God's justice.

Lecture support: Weaver explains Romans 12:17-21, emphasizing that believers should not be overcome by evil but overcome evil with good.

Study notes

Personal Application and Notes

Which application will you work on, and what specific step will you take?

What Scripture or teaching will you return to as you put this into practice?

Additional notes or questions to discuss

LESSON 2

Pastor John Weaver - Imprecatory Praying

Part Two of Four

February 03, 2012

Read Chapter 2 in the companion book, pages 25-42.

Major Themes

Unity of Scripture

The Old and New Testaments are not in conflict; both teach justice, mercy, and leaving vengeance to God.

Lecture support: Weaver states, 'We have one Bible, not two Bibles. The same God of the Old Testament is the God of the New Testament.'

Divine Sovereignty in Judgment

When believers pray imprecations, they must leave the results entirely in God's hands, trusting His sovereign will.

Lecture support: Weaver says, 'Once we pray the prayer, whatever God does is His business. We leave it completely and totally in the hands of the sovereign God.'

Personal Righteousness and Clean Hands

Those who pray imprecations must maintain personal integrity and gracious conduct toward enemies.

Lecture support: Weaver points to David's claim of clean hands in Psalm 35 and his refusal to harm Saul.

Concern for God's Righteousness and Honor

Imprecatory prayers express a desire for God's righteousness to be established and His name glorified.

Lecture support: Weaver cites Psalm 7:8-9 and Psalm 7:17 to show David's focus on righteousness and praise.

Hatred of Sin and Personal Holiness

Praying imprecations should cultivate a deep abhorrence of sin and a commitment to personal holiness.

Lecture support: Weaver references Psalm 139:23-24, where David asks God to search his heart after expressing hatred for the wicked.

Key Arguments

No Old vs. New Testament Contradiction

The tension between justice and mercy is not a matter of Old Testament versus New Testament; both testaments contain law and grace.

Lecture support: Weaver shows that Paul's teaching in Romans 12 is drawn from Deuteronomy 32 and Proverbs 25, demonstrating continuity.

Imprecations Leave Vengeance to God

Biblical imprecators never took personal revenge; they entrusted judgment to God alone.

Lecture support: Weaver notes David's restraint toward Saul and Shimei, and his prayer against Doeg without personal action.

Gracious Conduct Accompanies Fierce Prayers

David's prayers were fierce, but his actions toward enemies were kind, showing no personal bitterness.

Lecture support: Weaver cites Psalm 35:13-14, where David says he prayed and fasted for his enemies when they were sick.

New Testament Parallels Validate Imprecations

Church discipline and apostolic curses in the New Testament are functionally similar to Old Testament imprecations.

Lecture support: Weaver references Paul's curse on Elymas, the curse in Galatians 1, and the turning over of sinners to Satan in 1 Corinthians 5.

Imprecations Seek God's Kingdom and Righteousness

These prayers are ultimately requests for God's righteous rule to be established on earth.

Lecture support: Weaver equates 'Let the sinners be consumed' with 'Thy kingdom come' and points to Psalm 7:9.

Imprecations Promote Personal Holiness

Praying for judgment on others' sin should lead to self-examination and hatred of one's own sin.

Lecture support: Weaver explains that David's prayer in Psalm 139 moves from hating God's enemies to asking God to search his own heart.

Scripture References

Psalm 104:35

Opening text for the sermon; David prays for sinners to be consumed and the wicked to be no more.

Matthew 13:41-43

Used to show that imprecatory prayers align with the coming of Christ's kingdom when all things that offend are removed.

Psalm 7:9

Cited as an example of praying for the wickedness of the wicked to come to an end, equivalent to 'Thy kingdom come.'

Romans 12:17-21

New Testament teaching on leaving vengeance to God and doing good to enemies; shown to be rooted in Old Testament law.

Deuteronomy 32:35

Old Testament source for 'Vengeance is mine,' quoted by Paul in Romans 12.

Proverbs 25:21-22

Old Testament source for feeding and giving drink to enemies, quoted by Paul in Romans 12.

Matthew 5:17-18

Jesus' statement that He came to fulfill the law, not destroy it; used to argue continuity between Testaments.

Matthew 15:1-9

Jesus rebukes the Pharisees for replacing God's commandments with traditions; used to illustrate that traditions can obscure biblical truth.

Psalm 52

David's imprecatory prayer against Doeg; used to show David left judgment to God.

Hebrews 10:31

Quoted to emphasize the fearfulness of falling into God's hands.

Psalm 35:11-22

David claims clean hands and prays for deliverance; used to show his gracious conduct toward enemies.

Psalm 7:3-5

David's appeal to God based on his innocence; used to illustrate the doctrine of clean hands.

Proverbs 24:17-18

Warning not to rejoice when an enemy falls, lest God turn away His wrath; used to teach humility in imprecatory praying.

2 Corinthians 7:1

Exhortation to cleanse from filthiness of flesh and spirit; used to emphasize inner purity.

1 Corinthians 5:4-5

Paul's instruction to deliver a sinner to Satan for destruction of the flesh; used as a New Testament parallel to imprecation.

Psalm 7:8-9, 17

David's concern for righteousness and praise; used to show the purpose of imprecatory prayers.

Psalm 58:6-11

Fierce imprecations and the purpose that men may know God judges the earth.

Psalm 59:13

Prayer to consume the wicked so they know God rules in Jacob.

Psalm 83:13-18

Imprecations for shame and destruction so that men may know God is Most High.

Psalm 69:22-28

David prays for the wicked to be blotted out of the book of the living; used to show purpose of preventing wicked from enjoying blessings.

Study notes

Discussion Questions

1. How does understanding that both the Old and New Testaments teach the same truths about justice and mercy affect your view of imprecatory prayers?

Consider: Weaver argues there is no tension between the Testaments.

2. In what ways can we practically leave vengeance to God when we are wronged, following David's example?

Consider: Weaver emphasizes that David left results with God and never took personal revenge.

3. How can we maintain a gracious and kind attitude toward those we pray against, as David did?

Consider: Weaver highlights David's clean hands and kind actions toward enemies.

4. What is the relationship between church discipline in the New Testament and imprecatory prayers in the Old Testament?

Consider: Weaver draws parallels between apostolic curses and Old Testament imprecations.

5. How does praying for God's judgment on the wicked align with a desire for His kingdom to come?

Consider: Weaver equates imprecations with 'Thy kingdom come.'

6. Why is it important not to rejoice when an enemy falls, according to Proverbs 24:17-18?

Consider: Weaver warns that prideful rejoicing may cause God to turn away His wrath.

7. How can praying imprecatory prayers lead to greater personal holiness and hatred of sin in our own lives?

Consider: Weaver concludes that such prayers should prompt self-examination, as in Psalm 139.

Applications

Trust God's Sovereignty in Judgment

When we pray against enemies, we must leave the outcome entirely to God, trusting His perfect justice and timing.

Lecture support: Weaver states, 'Once we pray the prayer, whatever God does is His business.'

Maintain Gracious Conduct Toward Enemies

Even when praying fiercely, we must act kindly and not seek personal revenge, following David's example.

Lecture support: Weaver notes David's refusal to harm Saul and his prayer for enemies when they were sick.

Examine Your Own Heart

Praying imprecations should lead us to ask God to search our hearts and remove any wicked way, as David did in Psalm 139.

Lecture support: Weaver says, 'If you learn to pray these prayers, I can assure you of one thing. It will tend to make you a more holy person.'

Hate Sin, Not Just in Others

We should cultivate a detestation of sin and disobedience in our own lives, not just in the lives of the wicked.

Lecture support: Weaver explains that understanding judgment for sin should make us intolerant of sin in ourselves.

Praise God for Answered Prayers

When God delivers us or answers imprecatory prayers, we must give Him honor and glory.

Lecture support: Weaver cites Psalm 7:17 and Psalm 35:18, 28, and shares a personal story of thanking God for protection.

Personal Application and Notes

Which application will you work on, and what specific step will you take?

What Scripture or teaching will you return to as you put this into practice?

Additional notes or questions to discuss

LESSON 3

Pastor John Weaver - Imprecatory Praying

Part Three of Four

February 03, 2012

Read Chapter 3 in the companion book, pages 43-59.

Major Themes

The Biblical Legitimacy of Imprecatory Prayers

Imprecatory prayers are not contrary to the gospel or Christian faith; they are rooted in God's holiness and covenant promises.

Lecture support: Weaver states, 'I've showed you from the Word of God how that these imprecatory prayers are not contrary to the gospel, nor are they contrary to the Christian faith.'

God's Sovereignty in Judgment

When imprecatory prayers are prayed, the matter is left entirely with God to determine when and how to curse.

Lecture support: Weaver says, 'it is God who determines when and how to curse and what to do. It's totally and completely left in His hands.'

Sin as Primarily Against God

Imprecatory prayers teach that sin is primarily against God, and all who disobey are under His divine judgment.

Lecture support: Weaver explains, 'my sin primarily is against God. Secondly, only against Henry. The reason I sinned against Henry is because I first sinned against God.'

Lex Talionis and Sowing/Reaping

The principle of lex talionis (punishment fitting the crime) and the law of sowing and reaping undergird the imprecatory requests in Psalm 109.

Lecture support: Weaver says, 'David does not ask anything in this Psalm that is unbiblical... Everything that David asked for in this psalm is in line with the clear teaching of Scripture' regarding lex talionis and sowing/reaping.

Prayer for the Death of the Wicked as Biblical

Praying for the shortening of the wicked's days is consistent with Scripture's promises of long life to the righteous and shortened years to the wicked.

Lecture support: Weaver cites Proverbs 10:27: 'The fear of the Lord prolongeth days: but the years of the wicked shall be shortened.'

Crying to God for Justice When Human Systems Fail

When men will not grant justice, it is perfectly acceptable to cry to the judge of all the earth for justice.

Lecture support: Weaver says, 'When men will not grant justice, it is perfectly acceptable to cry to the judge of all the earth for justice.'

Key Arguments

Imprecatory prayers are not vengeful but theological

Imprecatory prayers do not arise from a vengeful heart but from a theology that understands God's holiness and covenant faithfulness.

Lecture support: Weaver states, 'Imprecatory prayers do not have their foundation in a vengeful, vindictive heart. Rather, the imprecatory prayers spring from a theology that reflects the holiness of God and His faithfulness to His covenant promises.'

Psalms 109's curses are consistent with lex talionis

Every imprecatory request in Psalm 109 aligns with the biblical principle of lex talionis, where the punishment fits the crime.

Lecture support: Weaver argues, 'David does not ask anything in this Psalm that is unbiblical, unholy, ungodly, or contrary to the Christian faith. Everything that David asked for in this psalm is in line with the clear teaching of Scripture.'

The prayer 'let his prayer become sin' is biblical

Since the prayer of the wicked is already sin (Proverbs 21:4, Romans 14:23), asking that it be treated as sin is a scriptural request.

Lecture support: Weaver quotes Proverbs 21:4 and Romans 14:23, and says, 'If their plowing is sin when they plow without faith, how much more is their prayer sin when they pray without faith?'

Praying for the death of the wicked is just

Asking God to shorten the days of the wicked is in line with God's promises to cut off the wicked and prolong the righteous.

Lecture support: Weaver cites Psalm 34:12-16 and Proverbs 10:27, and says, 'Such a prayer request is not only biblical, it is just.'

Removing the wicked from office is a pious act

Praying and laboring to remove a corrupt man from office and replace him with a righteous one is consistent with patriotism and piety.

Lecture support: Weaver quotes Albert Barnes: 'The act does not itself imply malignancy or bad feeling, but is consistent with the purest benevolence, the kindest feelings, the strictest integrity, the sternest patriotism, and the highest form of piety.'

Scripture References

Psalm 109:1-8

Weaver reads the first eight verses of Psalm 109 as the text for the sermon.

Psalm 109:8-15

Weaver reads the intense curses in verses 8-15 to show the severity of the psalm.

Acts 1:16-20

Weaver shows that Psalm 109 is applied to Judas Iscariot in the New Testament.

Exodus 21:22-25

Weaver cites this passage to illustrate the lex talionis principle of eye for eye.

Leviticus 24:19-22

Weaver cites this passage to further illustrate lex talionis.

Deuteronomy 19:16-21

Weaver cites this passage to show the law of retribution for false witnesses.

Matthew 5:38-42

Weaver explains that Jesus was correcting the Pharisees' misinterpretation of lex talionis, not abolishing it.

Romans 13:4

Weaver references the civil magistrate bearing the sword as God's appointed agent of justice.

Galatians 6:7-8

Weaver cites the law of sowing and reaping as a New Testament parallel to lex talionis.

Psalms 18:25-26

Weaver shows that God acts toward individuals according to their character, reflecting lex talionis.

Proverbs 21:4

Weaver cites this to show that even the plowing of the wicked is sin.

Romans 14:23

Weaver cites this to explain that whatever is not of faith is sin.

Proverbs 15:8

Weaver cites this to show that the sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination.

Proverbs 21:27

Weaver cites this to emphasize that the sacrifice of the wicked is even more abominable when brought with a wicked mind.

Psalms 91:15-16

Weaver cites this to show that long life is promised to the obedient.

Psalms 34:12-16

Weaver cites this to show that the righteous are promised long life and good days, while the wicked are cut off.

Proverbs 9:10-11

Weaver cites this to show that the fear of the Lord multiplies days.

Proverbs 10:27

Weaver cites this to show that the years of the wicked are shortened.

Proverbs 28:28

Weaver cites this to show that when the wicked perish, the righteous increase.

Proverbs 29:2

Weaver cites this to show that when the wicked rule, the people mourn.

Study notes

Discussion Questions

1. How does understanding that sin is primarily against God change the way we view imprecatory prayers?

Consider: Weaver argues that sin is primarily against God, which justifies praying against God's enemies.

-
-
-
-
2. In what ways does the principle of lex talionis (punishment fitting the crime) appear in the New Testament, and how should it inform our prayers for justice?

Consider: Weaver connects lex talionis to the law of sowing and reaping in Galatians 6.

-
-
-
-
3. Is it ever appropriate for Christians today to pray for the death of wicked rulers or enemies? Why or why not?

Consider: Weaver defends David's prayer 'let his days be few' as biblical and just.

4. How can we distinguish between personal vengeance and a righteous desire for God's justice in our prayers?

Consider: Weaver emphasizes that imprecatory prayers are not vengeful but theological.

5. What does it mean that the prayer of the wicked is sin, and how should this affect our prayers for the conversion or judgment of the ungodly?

Consider: Weaver explains that the wicked's prayers are sin because they lack faith and honor for God.

6. How does the fulfillment of Psalm 109 in Judas Iscariot shape our understanding of imprecatory psalms as prophetic?

Consider: Weaver notes that Acts 1 applies Psalm 109 to Judas.

7. In what situations today might we need to cry to God as the 'judge of all the earth' for justice?

Consider: Weaver applies the psalm to modern injustices where human courts fail.

8. How can we balance praying for the removal of the wicked with Jesus' command to love our enemies?

Consider: Weaver argues that David was kind to his enemies personally while praying imprecations.

Applications

Cry to God for justice when human systems fail

Believers should pray for God to intervene and bring justice when earthly courts and authorities are corrupt or ineffective.

Lecture support: Weaver says, 'When men will not grant justice, it is perfectly acceptable to cry to the judge of all the earth for justice.'

Pray for the removal of wicked rulers and their replacement with righteous ones

It is biblical and pious to pray that God would shorten the days of wicked leaders and raise up godly replacements.

Lecture support: Weaver quotes Albert Barnes: 'The act does not itself imply malignancy or bad feeling, but is consistent with the purest benevolence... and the highest form of piety.'

Trust that God is for His people when the wicked oppose them

Even when surrounded by enemies, believers can have confidence that God is on their side and will vindicate them.

Lecture support: Weaver says, 'We must remember that God is for His people when the wicked are against them.'

Expect wickedness from wicked men and do not be surprised by it

Believers should not expect morality or justice from those who reject God; instead, they should anticipate opposition.

Lecture support: Weaver says, 'There's no reason to expect goodness and kindness and integrity and morality and justice from wicked men.'

Leave vengeance to God and pray for His covenantal justice

Instead of taking personal revenge, believers should entrust judgment to God and pray for Him to fulfill His promises to punish the wicked.

Lecture support: Weaver states, 'it is God who determines when and how to curse and what to do. It's totally and completely left in His hands.'

Pray imprecatory prayers more frequently in our time

Weaver suggests that the prayer 'let his days be few; and let another take his office' is needed today.

Lecture support: Weaver says, 'I believe that's a prayer that probably needs to be prayed a lot more frequently today in our time.'

Personal Application and Notes

Which application will you work on, and what specific step will you take?

What Scripture or teaching will you return to as you put this into practice?

Additional notes or questions to discuss

LESSON 4

Pastor John Weaver - Imprecatory Praying

Part Four of Four

February 04, 2012

Read Chapter 4 in the companion book, pages 61-79.

Major Themes

Lex Talionis (Law of Retribution)

God's justice operates on the principle of sowing and reaping, where the punishment fits the crime, and David's imprecations are applications of this divine law.

Lecture support: Weaver states, 'David is not being vicious... He is just asking God to apply the biblical principle of lex talionis, the law of retribution, the law of sowing and reaping.'

Corporate Guilt and Family Judgment

Families often share in the sins of the head and thus are justly punished together, as seen in examples like Haman, Korah, and Achan.

Lecture support: Weaver says, 'It is possible to curse an entire family... They were all equally guilty and therefore they were all equally punished.'

God's Sovereignty in Judgment

Imprecatory prayers leave the outcome to God, who may convert, remove, or restrain the wicked, demonstrating His absolute rule.

Lecture support: Weaver notes, 'the result is left entirely with God. God may do as He pleases.'

Righteousness and Justice Established

Imprecatory prayers evidence a concern for righteousness and the establishment of justice, desiring that God be honored and the wicked punished.

Lecture support: Weaver says, 'the imprecatory prayers evidence a concern for righteousness and the establishment of righteousness.'

Deliverance and Praise

David's ultimate desires are deliverance from enemies, that God would be glorified, and that he would rejoice in God's salvation.

Lecture support: Weaver explains, 'David desired to be delivered from his enemies... that God would get all the honor and the glory... David wanted to rejoice in the Lord.'

Key Arguments

Imprecations are not personal vengeance

David's curses are not vindictive but are prophetic declarations of divine justice, consistent with the lex talionis.

Lecture support: Weaver argues, 'What David is doing... he is merely asking for the lex talionis... He is asking God to do what divine justice has proclaimed it will do.'

Children suffer for parental sins

Scripture shows that children often participate in and suffer for the sins of their parents, making the extension of curses just.

Lecture support: Weaver states, 'It is not necessarily that the children are cursed for the sin of the Father. It's usually the children are continuing in the same sins of the Father and therefore they have their own curse.'

Psalm 109 is prophetic of Judas

The psalm finds its ultimate fulfillment in Judas Iscariot and the judgment on those who crucified Christ.

Lecture support: Weaver says, 'Psalm 109 is referred to as the Iscariotic Psalm because it does refer to Judas Iscariot and it is quoted in the New Testament as applying to Judas.'

Imprecatory prayers are for victory, not defeat

God has appointed His people to victory, and imprecatory prayers are part of executing His written judgments.

Lecture support: Weaver declares, 'these imprecatory prayers demonstrate that God has not appointed us to defeat, but to victory.'

Scripture References

Psalms 109:8-19

The main passage expounded, containing David's imprecations against his enemy and his family.

Exodus 21, Leviticus 24, Deuteronomy 19

Cited as the Old Testament basis for the lex talionis, the law of retribution.

Galatians 6:7-8

The New Testament principle of sowing and reaping, equivalent to the lex talionis.

Matthew 5:38-42

Jesus' correction of the Pharisees' misuse of the lex talionis for personal vengeance.

Deuteronomy 24:16

The principle that each man should die for his own sin, used to address the question of family punishment.

2 Kings 14:6

An example of the application of Deuteronomy 24:16, where children were not slain for fathers' sins.

Proverbs 3:33

The curse of the Lord is in the house of the wicked, indicating household judgment.

Proverbs 15:27

He that is greedy of gain troubles his own house, showing sin affects the family.

Psalms 68:6

God sets the solitary in families, indicating His placement of both elect and wicked in households.

Proverbs 22:6

Train up a child, used to argue that godly families produce godly children and wicked families produce wicked children.

Proverbs 11:17

The merciful man does good to his own soul, but the cruel troubles his own flesh, including offspring.

Proverbs 12:7

The wicked are overthrown, but the house of the righteous shall stand.

Proverbs 14:11

The house of the wicked shall be overthrown, indicating whole households are judged.

Proverbs 15:25

The Lord will destroy the house of the proud.

Esther 8:7; 9:14

Haman and his ten sons were hanged, showing family complicity and punishment.

Deuteronomy 11:6; Numbers 16:27-33

Dathan, Abiram, and Korah's households were swallowed up, demonstrating corporate judgment.

Joshua 7:19-26

Achan and his family were stoned because they were complicit in his sin.

Psalms 59:11-15

A similar imprecation where enemies wander like hungry dogs, paralleling Psalm 109:10.

Psalms 34:16

The face of the Lord is against evildoers to cut off their remembrance, justifying the prayer in Psalm 109:15.

Psalms 7:14-16

The wicked fall into their own pit, illustrating the lex talionis.

Discussion Questions

1. How does the lex talionis (law of retribution) help us understand the imprecatory prayers in Psalm 109?

Consider: Weaver argues that David's curses are applications of this principle, not personal vengeance.

2. In what ways can entire families be complicit in the sins of the head, and how does this affect our view of the curses on children in Psalm 109?

Consider: Weaver uses examples like Achan and Haman to show family involvement in sin.

3. How do we reconcile the principle of individual responsibility (Deuteronomy 24:16) with the corporate judgment seen in Psalm 109?

Consider: Weaver addresses this tension by arguing that children often continue in the sins of their parents.

- 4.** What are the godly desires behind David's imprecations, and how can we cultivate similar desires in our own prayers?

Consider: Weaver identifies deliverance, God's glory, and rejoicing as David's motives.

- 5.** How does the New Testament concept of sowing and reaping (Galatians 6:7-8) relate to the Old Testament imprecatory prayers?

Consider: Weaver equates the two as the same principle of divine justice.

- 6.** What role do imprecatory prayers play in the believer's victory and in establishing God's justice on earth?

Consider: Weaver cites Psalm 149 to show that saints execute written judgments.

7. How should we respond when we see the wicked prospering, in light of the promises of Psalm 109?

Consider: Weaver encourages praying for justice and trusting God's timing.

8. What does it mean to 'abhor sin' as a result of studying imprecatory prayers?

Consider: Weaver lists abhorrence of sin as one of the specific reasons for imprecatory prayers.

Applications

Pray for God's justice against the wicked

Believers are encouraged to pray imprecatory prayers, asking God to establish righteousness and judge the ungodly, especially those persecuting the church.

Lecture support: Weaver prays, 'We do pray, Father, against the wicked, against the ungodly, especially those, Lord, who are persecuting Thy people.'

Abhor sin and stay far from wickedness

Knowing that God judges sin should motivate believers to hate sin and avoid it, recognizing the severe consequences.

Lecture support: Weaver says, 'I want to make you want to stay as far away from wickedness and sin as you can, because you know God will judge it.'

Trust God's sovereignty in judgment

Leave the outcome of imprecatory prayers to God, who may convert, restrain, or remove the wicked as He sees fit.

Lecture support: Weaver states, 'the result is left entirely with God. God may do as He pleases.'

Rejoice in God's deliverance and give Him glory

When God answers prayers for deliverance, believers should publicly praise Him and acknowledge His hand.

Lecture support: Weaver notes David's desire: 'I will greatly praise the Lord with my mouth... for he shall stand at the right hand of the poor.'

Desire the establishment of righteousness

Imprecatory prayers should stem from a concern for righteousness and justice, not personal vengeance.

Lecture support: Weaver says, 'the imprecatory prayers evidence a concern for righteousness and the establishment of righteousness.'

Recognize the corporate nature of sin and judgment

Understand that families and communities can share in guilt and punishment, and pray accordingly for God's justice.

Lecture support: Weaver explains, 'It is possible to curse an entire family... They were all equally guilty and therefore they were all equally punished.'

Personal Application and Notes

Which application will you work on, and what specific step will you take?

What Scripture or teaching will you return to as you put this into practice?

Additional notes or questions to discuss

Online Lecture Resources

Scan a code or select the lecture link in the PDF. The original lecture identifiers and destinations are preserved.

Lesson 1: Pastor John Weaver - Imprecatory Praying - Part One of Four

Lecture JW01235

[Open the formatted lecture online](https://weaverbiblecollege.com/transcript.php?library=weaverbiblecollege&lecture=JW01235&transcript=ai&pc_view=formatted)



https://weaverbiblecollege.com/transcript.php?library=weaverbiblecollege&lecture=JW01235&transcript=ai&pc_view=formatted

Lesson 2: Pastor John Weaver - Imprecatory Praying - Part Two of Four

Lecture JW01236

[Open the formatted lecture online](https://weaverbiblecollege.com/transcript.php?library=weaverbiblecollege&lecture=JW01236&transcript=ai&pc_view=formatted)



https://weaverbiblecollege.com/transcript.php?library=weaverbiblecollege&lecture=JW01236&transcript=ai&pc_view=formatted

Lesson 3: Pastor John Weaver - Imprecatory Praying - Part Three of Four

Lecture JW01237

[Open the formatted lecture online](https://weaverbiblecollege.com/transcript.php?library=weaverbiblecollege&lecture=JW01237&transcript=ai&pc_view=formatted)



https://weaverbiblecollege.com/transcript.php?library=weaverbiblecollege&lecture=JW01237&transcript=ai&pc_view=formatted

Lesson 4: Pastor John Weaver - Imprecatory Praying - Part Four of Four

Lecture JW01244

[Open the formatted lecture online](https://weaverbiblecollege.com/transcript.php?library=weaverbiblecollege&lecture=JW01244&transcript=ai&pc_view=formatted)



https://weaverbiblecollege.com/transcript.php?library=weaverbiblecollege&lecture=JW01244&transcript=ai&pc_view=formatted

Source information

Study material: existing Major Themes, Key Arguments, Scripture References, Discussion Questions, and Applications from the corresponding Weaver Bible College lecture records. Original lecture titles and provenance are retained in those source records.

Layout upgraded September 30, 2026. Original manuscripts, study-guide data, and previous PDFs have not been changed.