



## [Ezekiel 9:4](#)

(7) Then He said to them, "Defile the temple, and fill the courts with the slain. Go out!" And they went out and killed in the city. (8) So it was, that while they were killing them, I was left *alone*; and I fell on my face and cried out, and said, "Ah, Lord GOD! Will You destroy all the remnant of Israel in pouring out Your fury on Jerusalem?"

*New King James Version*

Effective [sighing and crying](#) before [God](#) *does not imply an "I told you so," self-righteous attitude*. Lot, Peter writes, was oppressed by what he witnessed around him; he wrestled with it. There is no indication at all that he self-righteously gloated at the cities' destruction.

What about Ezekiel? Understandably stunned by the destruction that he witnessed in the visions, he cried out to God, asking Him how far the judgment would go ([Ezekiel 9:8; 11:13](#)). Far from self-righteous gloating, this forward-looking prophet expressed his concern over the welfare of his countrymen. His was not a self-righteous response to the destruction that he saw coming.

Because Ezekiel asked, we know. God tells us that He does indeed spare and protect His people (see [Ezekiel 11:14-21](#)). We know that God will not destroy all Israel, but He will rescue a remnant out of which He will build a better world for our children's children. It will be a world where, as [Amos 5:24](#) foretells, "justice [will] run down like water, and righteousness like a mighty stream." In that world, we will no longer need to cry and sigh over abominations.

But that will be then, and now is now. In this present evil world, let us sigh and cry over Israel's sins, praying that we use God's Word to understand exactly what those sins are. Let us remain awake and alert to what is happening around us, fully understanding what God considers to be sinful, but not participating at all in those sins. And let us not gloat in self-righteous glee in the wholesale death and destruction that we know will come, but

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rather pray for God's [mercy](#) and [grace](#) on all.

The days are becoming very evil, and the angel with the inkhorn might just be roaming around here now. If we do these things, he might not pass us by.

— Charles Whitaker

**To learn more, see:**  
[The Torment of the Godly \(Part Two\)](#)

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