

# Do we “sigh and cry”?

## Ezekiel 9:4



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*All scriptures are NKJV unless noted otherwise.*

**KEY WORDS:** Ezekiel 9:4; mark of God, mark of the Beast, 144,000.

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**Summary:** *What reaction does God clearly want in his people in the midst of evils, disasters and violence in the land? What happens to do those having that reaction He seeks – and those that don't? This could impact you in a big way someday.*

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How do we as children of God react in our hearts and from our mouths – to abominations going on in the country? How do we react to violence, wars, and catastrophes like hurricanes and wildfires destroying entire cities? And yes, these things *are* happening more often and stronger. Prophecy is being fulfilled right before our very eyes.

Seriously, is our heart's reaction something like, “Yeah, but they had it coming. God is finally punishing them for all their sins”? Do we perhaps get *overly* excited about prophecies being fulfilled before our very eyes -- and are we too happy to see “the very last days” coming about? I realize it's a fine line.

I personally think we're still in the time Jesus said certain events had to happen first, but “the end is not yet” and these are just “the beginning of sorrows” (**Matthew 24:6,8**). That was after he talked about false prophets, famines, pestilences, wars and massive earthquakes everywhere.

Don't get me wrong. Jesus did say when we see the Matthew 24 and Luke 21 prophecies happening, to lift up our eyes for our redemption draws near (Luke 21:28).

But God's word also says that He always wants his children feeling for the troubles and problems people are going through.

**Hello you all.** Philip Shields here with another message – that will help you be protected by God in the very end time. Thank you for visiting our website. Please be sure **to register** as well. We'd love to know you regularly come to this website, where I intend with God's help to have new and regular sermons and blogs being posted more regularly. We already have over 450 sermons.

**There's a passage in Ezekiel 9 that I've referred to once in a while. The closer we get each day to the return of the Son of God, the more we will need to be practicing this.** It could have everything to do with how God treats us in times of trouble, so this is worth carefully thinking about.

We definitely are going to be seeing more and more disastrous things happening in our country and around the world. I see these as alarms from God that time is short, and to wake us up out of our sleep! Prophecy is happening before our very eyes – and should be really waking us up to be more zealous than ever for the things of God. But too many of us in the church are sound asleep. Sometimes including me, including you.

This is **January 2025** and right now, for example, we have devastating wildfires wiping out much of Los Angeles near the hillside and mountains? How are we reacting to these things? *The way we react tells God a lot about each of us and may determine how he treats us in the months and years ahead.*

*Ezekiel 9* is a vision the prophet Ezekiel experienced and it has a strong message for you and me today. It's based in Jerusalem in vision, but the point God is making applies to us all, wherever we live.

**Ezekiel 9:1-4**

Then He called out in my hearing with a loud voice, saying, "Let those who have charge over the city draw near, each with a deadly weapon in his hand." 2 And suddenly six men came from the direction of the upper gate, which faces north, each with his battle-ax in his hand. One man among them was clothed with linen and had a writer's inkhorn at his side. They went in and stood beside the bronze altar.

3 Now the glory of the God of Israel had gone up from the cherub, where it had been, to the threshold of the temple. And He called to the man clothed with linen, who had the writer's inkhorn at his side;

4 and YHVH said to him, "**Go through the midst of the city, through the midst of Jerusalem, and put a mark on the**

**foreheads of the men who sigh and cry over all the abominations that are done within it."**

Let's read a bit more.

**Ezekiel 9:5-7**

To the others He said in my hearing, "Go after him through the city and kill; do not let your eye spare, nor have any pity. 6 Utterly slay old and young men, maidens and little children and women; **but do not come near anyone on whom is the mark**; and begin at My sanctuary." So they began with the elders who were before the temple. 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."

**So do WE have the mark of God on our foreheads?**

**It's interesting that God has a "mark" ("tav" in Hebrew) for His people and there's also the "mark of the Beast",** led by Satan and his Beast political/military leader and the False prophet. The Mark of the BEAST – which we definitely do NOT want – is on the hand or forehead (**Rev. 13:16-17**). *We'll have to decide soon. Without "the mark of the Beast", you won't be able to function in the world at all. In fact, SOME – not all -- of those who refuse the mark of the Beast will be martyred. But those who DO take the mark of the Beast will be thrown into the lake of fire (Revelation 14:9-11).*

And again, remember in contrast to "the mark of the Beast", God also marks on the forehead of His children, His people – as we read in Ezekiel 9:4. This is the mark of GOD.

We also find **the 144,000 servants of God, of the 12 tribes of Israel**, described in **Revelation 7:2-4**. They are sealed in their foreheads by God.

**Revelation 7:1-4**

After these things I saw four angels standing at the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth, that the wind should not blow on the earth, on the sea, or on any tree. 2 Then I saw another angel ascending from the east, having the seal of the living God. And he cried with a loud voice to the four angels to whom it was granted to harm the earth and the sea,

3 saying, **"Do not harm the earth, the sea, or the trees till we have SEALED the servants of our God on their foreheads."** 4 And I heard the number of those who were sealed. **One hundred and forty-**

**four thousand of all the tribes of the children of Israel** were sealed.”

In the remaining seven trumpet plagues and then the final seven bowl plagues, those who have the seal of God on their foreheads are protected from the plagues. Remember that true believers today are already sealed by God’s Holy Spirit (**2 Corinthians 1:22**). Later on, in one of the trumpet plagues of Rev. 9, we see the 144,000 again protected from harm.

**Revelation 9:4**

“They were commanded not to harm the grass of the earth, or any green thing, or any tree, *but only those men who do not have the seal of God on their foreheads.*”

God defines what this seal is, when the 144,000 are seen up in heaven, before the very thrones of the 24 elders, the 4 living creatures and the throne of God.

**Revelation 14:1**

“Then I looked, and behold, a Lamb standing on Mount Zion, and with Him *one hundred and forty-four thousand, having His Father's name written on their foreheads.*”

*Remember they were protected. Now in Rev. 14, they’re seen in heaven, in front of the throne of God and the thrones of the 24 elders and four living creatures, which clearly are all in heaven, as Revelation 4 says.*

Now let’s get back to the main point of this teaching today: are you and I doing **Ezek 9:4** -- “sighing and crying”, as something God says He’s looking for in his people? Sighing and crying about the evils and disasters and woes we see people in the world suffering?

If any of you think we’re NOT supposed to sigh, cry or grieve for anyone in the world, remember that the prophets sure did sigh and cry when they heard the news of what was happening in their lands.

- ***Jeremiah sure did. Just read his book of Lamentations,*** *written after the destruction of Jerusalem. It’s a short book and so I recommend you read and study it.*

In fact, GOD told Jeremiah to tell the Jews to pray FOR Babylon, while they were in captivity. Imagine that.

**Jeremiah 29:4-7**

4 Thus says Yehovah of hosts, the God of Israel, to all who were carried away captive, whom I have caused to be carried away from Jerusalem to Babylon:

5 Build houses and dwell in them; plant gardens and eat their fruit.

6 Take wives and beget sons and daughters; and take wives for your sons and give your daughters to husbands, so that they may bear sons and daughters — that you may be increased there, and not diminished.

7 **And seek the peace of the city where I have caused you to be carried away captive, and pray to YHVH for it; for in its peace you will have peace.**

- ***As we watch Los Angeles go up in smoke, regardless of the reasons for it, notice how NEHEMIAH reacted to the news of Jerusalem being burned.*** He lived in Shushan (Susa) in what is now Iran. He got news from those who were able to stay behind in Jerusalem that the walls were all destroyed and the gates burned with fire. So I'll read in Nehemiah 1:3-4.

***Nehemiah 1:1-4***

***“The words of Nehemiah the son of Hachaliah.***

It came to pass in the month of Chislev, in the twentieth year, as I was in Shushan the citadel, 2 that Hanani one of my brethren came with men from Judah; and I asked them concerning the Jews who had escaped, who had survived the captivity, and concerning Jerusalem.

3 And they said to me, "The survivors who are left from the captivity in the province are there in great distress and reproach. The wall of Jerusalem is also broken down, and its gates are burned with fire."

***4 So it was, when I heard these words, that I sat down and wept, and mourned for many days; I was fasting and praying before the God of heaven.”***

Do WE weep and mourn for days over bad news in the land, especially that which could be punishment from God for our sins? You can read the rest of the chapter where he confesses the sins of Judah and his own and asks for God's mercy.

**Certainly DANIEL fasted and prayed for his country, which was at that time in captivity.**

**Daniel 9:1-6**

In the first year of Darius the son of Ahasuerus, of the lineage of the Medes, who was made king over the realm of the Chaldeans — 2 in the first year of his reign I, Daniel, understood by the books the number of the years specified by the word of the Lord **through Jeremiah the prophet, that He would accomplish seventy years** in the desolations of Jerusalem.

**3 Then I set my face toward YHVH God to make request by prayer and supplications, with fasting, sackcloth, and ashes. 4**

And I prayed to YHVH my God, and made confession, and said, “O YHVH, great and awesome God, who keeps His covenant and mercy with those who love Him, and with those who keep His commandments,  
5 *WE have sinned and committed iniquity, we have done wickedly* and rebelled, even by departing from Your precepts and Your judgments and righteousness....

Read all of Daniel 9. God was so moved by his prayer that one of the greatest prophecies in the Bible was given to Daniel, mentioned even by Yeshua. God changes not. He could be moved by your prayer, by my prayer.

- **Apostle Paul** said he would even be willing to be accursed by God if in exchange all Jews could be saved (**Romans 9:1-5**). Imagine that!

Putting all these verses together, **clearly God wants to his children to feel deeply, care profoundly for the sufferings and problems in the world – though we’re not a part of the world.** And God will put his mark on us and protect us as well, he says, as I’ve been reading.

*As Ezekiel 9:4 says, he wants us sighing and crying to him as we watch all that is going on.*

***But it’s too easy for some of us to react more like JONAH did against Nineveh, wanting the destruction of the wicked to happen in front of our eyes. Don’t be like that!***

**I am saying all this because I still see too many believers** and ministers who seem to express barely muted DELIGHT that the horrifying end-time events are finally actually happening, stronger and faster than ever. *To them, it’s like confirmation that finally, Christ’s second coming is almost here.* Yes, I can see all that – but be careful what’s going on in your HEART.

Seeing suffering – especially against the helpless -- should make us feel some suffering ourselves.

It's fine to look up and rejoice as we see the redemption and salvation of our Lord surely drawing nearer – *but we should still be feeling personal shock and sadness to see so much suffering.*

*For example, seeing so many people mowed down in a terrorist attack, or who suffer badly in a **wildfire** like the one burning in Los Angeles, CA right now. Entire homes are being totally burned down. I saw a woman frantic to find her mom, wondering if she was burned alive or got out safely. Those wildfires move SO incredibly FAST, especially when pushed by 100 mph wind gusts! The woman looking for her mom was surrounded by massive nearby flames herself and her voice broke our hearts. And she's just one of thousands, right now.*

**OUR PRAYER:** As I heard the anguish in her voice, a lump welled up in my throat, and Carole and I prayed right then and there:

*“Father, have mercy on these people. Help this poor woman find that her Mom is well and OK. Please Father, stop the fires. Please Yeshua, command the winds fueling the flames to die down. Command the rains to come to help quench the fires. Protect the fire fighters, risking their own lives. Protect those still trapped. We know you're a God of love and mercy, and so we call out to you for mercy and protection”.*

Even **when sinful abominations** are involved, sighing and crying for the perversions, violence, sins of the nation –gets God's attention WHEN he sees how we feel and cry out to Him to send Jesus back soon to set up his millennial reign on earth.

**Think about this: in Genesis 18-- God would have allowed Sodom to be spared, if only ten people had been righteous. TEN.** Remember it was one of the greatest prophets – ABRAHAM -- who was praying *for* Sodom. He never even *mentioned* Lot and his family. Remember in Genesis 14, Abraham saved and freed the people of Sodom from being captives!

So we can be praying lovingly for our nation. Remember, Daniel did in Daniel 9. Jesus from the cross asked for their forgiveness – even before anyone was repenting.

So, terrifying news after horrific news of any kind -- horrific hurricanes, tornadoes or earthquakes or terrorism and their damages -- should always evoke in God's people a sense of deep sadness and asking for God to be merciful.

We should never ever have ONLY a sense of delight in thinking “this must mean the second coming is really much closer now”. Sure, we are watching and praying – but we must never lose our love and heart for anyone suffering.

**Sigh and cry instead.** Let’s commit ourselves to stronger obedience and quitting any worldly sins we’ve been allowing to creep into our lives. Pray for God’s love and mercy. Let’s all turn from our OWN wicked ways and seek his face as never before. Let’s be sure we are waking up too! If enough of us do this, we will see God’s hand of mercy being extended in the land.

**2 Chronicles 7:12-14**

Then YHVH appeared to Solomon by night, and said to him: "I have heard your prayer, and have chosen this place for Myself as a house of sacrifice.

**13 When I shut up heaven and there is no rain, or command the locusts to devour the land, or send pestilence among My people,  
14 **if My people who are called by My name will humble themselves, and pray and seek My face, and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin and heal their land.**”**

So who knows what kindness of God we’ll witness if more and more of us, God’s people, sigh and cry, and have our own repentance and seeking after God – going on.

**But remember Ezekiel 9:4.** *God puts a mark on the foreheads of his people who are touched, moved, saddened, who are sighing and crying over the evils and horrible things happening in our land.*

*Do YOU and I have the mark of God on OUR foreheads? PRAY for it.*

I want God’s loving protection in the scary times ahead. I hope you do too. So let’s cry out to God daily for our lands and sigh and cry for the abominations being done in the land.

CLOSING PRAYER