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The Lord Does Not Turn a Blind Eye

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The Lord Does Not Turn a Blind Eye

Abstract

"Why does God take action? It is because he desires to bring the glory of His name to all the nations."

Posting about God's promises fulfilled from *In All Things* - an online journal for critical reflection on faith, culture, art, and every ordinary-yet-graced square inch of God's creation.

<http://inallthings.org/the-lord-does-not-turn-a-blind-eye/>

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Comments

In All Things is a publication of the [Andreas Center for Reformed Scholarship and Service](#) at Dordt College.

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Jenni Breems

Daily Scripture Texts

[Psalm 146](#)

[Isaiah 59:9-19](#)

[Acts 9:1-20](#)

The idiom ‘to turn a blind eye’ is often used when describing official responses to sexual abuse, human rights violations, scandals, and war. In these situations, the needs of marginalized people are conveniently overlooked by those who have the power to take action. While the powerful display indifference, the violations continue. In today’s passage from Isaiah 59, it seems that God has turned a blind eye to their plight of his people.

God’s people are crying out for justice, and life is very dark for them. Righteousness, deliverance, and truth seem far away.

So justice is far from us,
and righteousness does not reach us.
We look for light, but all is darkness;
for brightness, but we walk in deep shadows.
Like the blind we grope along the wall,
feeling our way like people without eyes. (vs. 9-10)

In response to the gloom and darkness, the prophet Isaiah calls the people to a collective state of repentance. They confess their sins before the Lord.

For our offenses are many in your sight,
and our sins testify against us.
Our offenses are ever with us,
and we acknowledge our iniquities:
rebellion and treachery against the LORD,
turning our backs on our God,
inciting revolt and oppression,
uttering lies our hearts have conceived. (vs. 12-13)

Their confession recognizes that they have been part of the problem—playing roles as both oppressed and oppressor. God is moved by the prayers of his people. He opens his eyes and sees their plight.

The Lord looked and was displeased
that there was no justice.
He saw that there was no one,
he was appalled that there was no one to intervene. (vs. 15-16)

Not only does God see, He gets involved. He takes dramatic action. He achieves righteousness. He wraps himself in salvation and zeal. He repays his enemies.

So his own arm achieved salvation for him,
and his own righteousness sustained him
He put on righteousness as his breastplate,

and the helmet of salvation on his head;
he put on the garments of vengeance
and wrapped himself in zeal as in a cloak.
According to what they have done,
so will he repay
wrath to his enemies
and retribution to his foes (vs. 16-18).

Why does God take action? Is it solely because his people repented? No, it is because he desires to bring the glory of His name to all the nations.

From the west, people will fear the name of the Lord,
and from the rising of the sun, they will revere his glory. (vs. 19)

In Acts 9, God also takes dramatic action for the sake of his name. I imagine that the disciple Ananias and his fellow Damascus church-members were frightened about Saul's pending visit. They knew about his murderous oppression of the church in Jerusalem. They heard that he was coming to persecute them. God had other plans in mind.

As Saul traveled on this mission of persecution, he met the risen Jesus through a dazzling encounter on the Damascus Road. Afterwards, blindness set in and he could no longer see. During Saul's three days of blindness, God spoke to Ananias with instructions on how to restore Saul's spiritual and physical sight. Ananias was understandably worried about the injustice of the situation. After all, Saul was a known enemy of the early church. The Lord comforts and reassures Ananias. He is God; He is in charge; and He is taking action. Saul will no longer be the persecutor, he has been chosen to proclaim God's glory to the people of Israel and to the world.

Our third lectionary passage is a group of psalms that are known collectively as the "Hallelujah Psalms". Psalm 146 celebrates God's action on behalf of the powerless. He cares for the oppressed, the hungry, the prisoner, the widow, the refugee, and the downtrodden. He gives sight to the blind.

Hallelujah! Our Lord God does not turn a blind eye to injustice. May we imitate Him to be agents of His glorious light to the world.

A prayer from the Revised Common Lectionary:

Discerner of hearts,
you look beneath our outward appearance
and see your image in each of us.
Banish in us the blindness
that prevents us from recognizing truth,
so we may see the world through your eyes
and with the compassion of Jesus Christ who redeems us. Amen.