

Singing the Blues: Week 1: Why Cry the blues?

"The Backlash Blues" (Nina Simone:The Greatest Hits)

Backlash Blues is one of Nina Simone's civil rights songs, and was first released on the 1967 album 'Nina Simone sings the Blues.' The words were written by her and friend and poet Langston Hughes; they identify frustration with an upsurge of disadvantage because of skin colour and gender following the legal reforms inspired by the civil rights movement in the USA during the 1950s and early 1960s. The 'backlash' Simone sang about was and is far more subtle, concerning the habits of a society in its smallest interactions. These habits are hard to solve by laws and court cases. Her song names the frustration and laments its seeming intractability, while becoming a song of commitment to keep struggling for a just society. It speaks of justice which will be inexorable. Backlash is itself a subtle and difficult thing. Over the weekend of 2-3 July, 2016 the Metropolitan police recorded a 20% rise in hate crime and racial, ethnic, and religious abuse in the UK. What is a Christian response?

. Mr. Backlash, Mr. Backlash Just who do think I am You raise my taxes, freeze my wages And send my son to Vietnam	But the world is big Big and bright and round And it's full of folks like me Who are black, yellow, beige and brown
You give me second class houses And second class schools Do you think that alla colored folks Are just second class fools Mr. Backlash, I'm gonna leave you With the backlash blues	Mr. Backlash, I'm gonna leave you With the backlash blues
When I try to find a job To earn a little cash All you got to offer Is your mean old white backlash	Mr. Backlash, Mr. Backlash Just what do you think I got to lose I'm gonna leave you With the backlash blues You're the one will have the blues Not me, just wait and see

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Psalm 42 & 43 To the leader. A Maskil of the Korahites.

As a deer longs for flowing streams,
so my soul longs for you, O God.
My soul thirsts for God,
for the living God.
When shall I come and behold
the face of God?
My tears have been my food
day and night,
while people say to me continually,
'Where is your God?'
These things I remember,
as I pour out my soul:
how I went with the throng,
and led them in procession to the
house of God,
with glad shouts and songs of
thanksgiving,
a multitude keeping festival.
Why are you cast down, O my soul,
and why are you disquieted within
me?
Hope in God; for I shall again praise
him,
my help and my God.
My soul is cast down within me;
therefore I remember you
from the land of Jordan and of
Hermon,
from Mount Mizar.
Deep calls to deep
at the thunder of your cataracts;
all your waves and your billows
have gone over me.
By day the Lord commands his
steadfast love,
and at night his song is with me,
a prayer to the God of my life.
I say to God, my rock,
'Why have you forgotten me?
Why must I walk about mournfully

because the enemy oppresses
me?'
As with a deadly wound in my body,
my adversaries taunt me,
while they say to me continually,
'Where is your God?'
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and why are you disquieted within
me?
Hope in God; for I shall again praise
him,
my help and my God.
Vindicate me, O God, and defend
my cause
against an ungodly people;
from those who are deceitful and
unjust
deliver me!
For you are the God in whom I take
refuge;
why have you cast me off?
Why must I walk about mournfully
because of the oppression of the
enemy?
O send out your light and your truth;
let them lead me;
let them bring me to your holy hill
and to your dwelling.
Then I will go to the altar of God,
to God my exceeding joy;
and I will praise you with the harp,
O God, my God.
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