

Tuesday, February 14, 2023 ▫ Read Psalm 79

Questions from the Scripture text: Who wrote this Psalm (superscript)? Whom does this Psalm address (v1a)? Who has come where? What have they defiled (v1b)? What else have they done (v1c)? What have they done to the people (v2–3)? What has become of the people as a whole (v4)? What does v5 ask? Whom do they ask God to punish instead (v6)? What have these nations done (v7)? What does v8a recognize about the cause for this? To what hope does v8b cling? How does one appeal to such a merciful God (v8c)? For what do they ask Him to save (v9a–b)? For what do they ask Him to deliver and atone (v9c–d)? To what do they desire to put a stop (v10)? What do they have good hope that He cares about (v11)? What do they ask Him to do instead (v12)? What two ways do they refer to themselves in v13a? What will they do (v13b)? For how long? What else will they do (v13c)? For how long?

How does love for God's glory respond, when God's church is in ruins? Psalm 79 looks forward to the opening portion of morning public worship on the coming Lord's Day. In these thirteen verses of Holy Scripture, the Holy Spirit teaches us that **love for God's glory desires for His church to be revived and avenged so that it may thank and praise him forever.**

Love for God's glory agonizes at the church's ruination, v1–4. The church is in ruins. *God's* church is in ruins. "Your inheritance" (v1a). "Your holy temple" (v1b). "Your servants" (v2a). "Your saints" (v2c). This has been done with desecration (v1), brutality (v2), disregard (v3), and spite (v4). The moral condition of the church that led to this is worthy of indignation. But she is still God's church. And a love for His glory agonizes over her ruin—even when she richly deserves it. Let us grieve over the low state of the church in our day, and whenever/wherever she is brought low for her sin and error.

Love for God's glory pleads for the church's reviving, v5–9. God's enemies can do nothing to His church, except that He ordain it for good. But sometimes, it is clear that the church's ruin comes as an act of chastening. This is one of the cases. So, what does the psalmist plead? For forgiveness and atonement, so that His people might come out from under chastening. Despite the church's sin, she is not like the wicked who know not God; the psalmist is able to plead knowing the Lord and calling upon His Name (v6). It is the knowledge of God that makes the difference. He is a God of tender mercies (v8b), salvation (v9a), and deliverance (v9c). He saves for the glory of His Name (v9b) and His Name's sake (v9d). Let us desire the honor of His Name in the display of His atoning, reviving mercy upon His people.

Love for God's glory appeals for the church's avenging, v10–12. Just as God is glorified in His people by saving them, so also God is glorified over His enemies by repaying them. He displays His glory by avenging His people (v10c–d). He displays His glory by returning sevenfold into their bosom what His enemies have done to His people (v12). Do we love God's glory? Let us desire the vindication of His Name in pouring out justice upon His enemies.

Love for God's glory looks forward to everlasting fellowship, thanksgiving, and praise, v13. Finally, we must remember that God has an end for which He has set His people apart to Himself: not merely that they would be forgiven of sin, retrieved from error, and revived. The Lord has taken for Himself a people as the flock for whom He tenderly cares (v13a) in order that they may give Him thanks and praise. This is the forever-purpose for them (v13b–c). Let us desire to be revived and avenged, not for our own sakes, but for the glory of His Name, and for the privilege of giving Him thanks and praise forever!

In what ways is the church brought low by her enemies in your day? For what offenses against God and His holiness might He have done this? What ought you to be praying for and pursuing as His church? What should you desire for His enemies? When do you get to preview your forever-destiny?

Sample prayer: Lord, we praise You for Your holiness that is far above all creatures. You have consecrated for Yourself a people for Your worship. You have turned Your anger from us and forgiven us. Your tender mercies have come speedily to us, O God of our salvation. You delivered us and atoned for our sins. Long after You have repaid Your enemies, Your own grace will have brought us into glorious perfection, where we will be Your people and the sheep of Your pasture, giving You thanks forever, and giving You praise to all generations. Grant us now the help of Your Spirit, that we might today enjoy some of that eternal blessedness, giving You thanks and praise through Jesus Christ, in whom we ask it, AMEN!

Suggested songs: ARP79A "O God, To Your Inheritance" or TPH79A "God, the Nations Have Invaded"

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(The following is a machine-generated transcription. PLEASE BE AWARE of—and patient with—transcribing errors. If there is something confusing or obviously erroneous, you are invited to listen to the audio recording via hopewellarp.org)

Psalm 79. These are the words of god. A psalm of asap. Oh god, the nations have come into your inheritance. Your holy temple, they have defiled. They've laid jerusalem in heaps, the dead bodies of your servants. They have given us food. For the birds of the heavens. The flesh of your saints to the beasts of the earth.

Their blood. They have shed like water all around jerusalem and there is no one to bury them. We've become a reproach to our neighbors, a scorn and derision to those who are around us. How long Yahweh. Will you be angry forever? Will your jealousy burn like fire? Pour out your wrath on the nations that do not know you.

And on the kingdoms, that do not call on your name. For, they have devoured, jacob and laid waste his dwelling place. Do not remember former iniquities against us. Let your tender mercies come speedily to meet us. For we have been brought very low. Help us. Oh god of our salvation for the glory of your name.

And deliver us and provide atonement for our sins. For your name's sake. Why should the nation say, where is their god? Let there be known among the nations

in our site. The avenging of the blood of your servants, which has been said, Let the groaning of the prisoner come before you According to the greatness of your power.

Preserve those who were appointed to die. And return to our neighbors, seven fold into their bosom, their approach with which they have approached you. Oh, lord. So, we Your people. And cheap of your pasture. Will give you thanks forever. We will show forth your praise. To all. Generations. So far the reading of god's inspired and Inherent word.

This is apparently written in the wake of The fall of Jerusalem and the destruction of the temple. By the Babylonians and Um, 586. We see the Babylonian siege that begins. 587, and Goes into. 586. This seems to be. Uh, written by one of those poor who Are left in the land.

As they consider what? Uh, what has happened? And this is someone who loves. Uh, the glory of god, you can see that. At the heart of the psalm. In verse 9 for the glory of your name. For your name, sake. And so this is how someone Who loves god's glory, loves his name, someone who has been converted, someone who the lord foreign you, and predestined, and cult for him.

The lord is working all things together for their good because they love God. And we know the only way someone can have been come to love god. As by having been called according to god's purpose. And so if god from before the world began intended to call them, to justify them, to glorify them to conform them to the image of christ.

And that now has Has been brought out in the evidence of loving god. Uh, from the heart. Then all things, even the destruction of Jerusalem. And even if we're making application to our day. Finding the the church in a very low state. And the word in ritual worship of god, is almost unknown.

The true worship of god. And in, in which The church is attacked with success. On many different signs and many different ways. Uh, whether Openly. Uh, politically or even physically in some places and And especially in some nations or more subtly. Spiritually. Attacks from outside and within upon theology and morality of the church, Uh, by those who Would be worthy of the nickname Jezebel.

Like we heard recently, In. From the book of revelation. How do those who love God's glory? How do they respond to the church being In such a low state. And we see at least four responses here. The first is, That love for god's glory agonizes over the church's ruination.

And we see this especially in verses 1 through 4. Just, The pain of it. Oh god, the nations have come into your inheritance, your holy temple. Your servants, your saints. And those four yours. In verses one and two. And you can hear. Even in the illustrations. Their blood. They have shed like water.

All around Jerusalem. And the the agony, the pain. Of seeing that, which belongs to god, that which is supposed to be for his glory, that, which is supposed to be a display. Of his redemption and his goodness and and the the protection and privilege and pleasure, that belongs to those who have him.

And it has all been brought so very low and is mockable. Has become a scorn, and a derision, and a approach. And so love for his glory agonizes, over the ruin of the church, even when the church richly deserves it. Judah Jerusalem. They richly deserved for this to happen.

And yet, it's God's church. It's God's people. It was god's temple. It was god's worship. And so, this should this should have application in our life when we look out around at the church. Landscape, for instance, when we were when we were Looking through the description of the so-called revival and Noticing how much ignorance there is?

Of god and of what actual life in the lord. Jesus looks like and what actual worship looks like that. We don't look at it with a Um, Uh, merely indignation. Uh, but that we grieve over the low state. Of the church of god. And and agonize over the church's ruination.

And that agony also, Comes in the second place with a pleading for the church's restoration, a pleading for the church's restoration or reviving, which we see especially in verses 5 through 9, how long ago will you be angry forever? Will your jealousy burn like fire? Pour out your wrath on nations that do not know you one kingdoms that do not call on your name, For, they have devoured, Jacob, and laid, waste his dwelling place.

Oh, do not remember former iniquities against us. But your tender mercy has come speedily to meet us. For we had been brought very low. Help us o god of our salvation. For the glory of your name. Now, this is actually helped by By sum of what has been. Prophesied for instance in Isaiah and Jeremiah where the lord not only proclaimed to Israel the or to especially Judah.

The destruction that would come upon them for their sin but also promised the return from the exile. And promised the restoration and promised it in such a way that Has really its fulfillment in the coming of Christ. The coming of the kingdom of god, which they, of course, would look forward to in their desiring the restoration, but Israel never became a great kingdom again.

But now, the Israel of god is the greatest kingdom there ever has been. Because it's king sits on the throne of heaven and its people's cover, the whole earth. And so there, there has been a great coming of the kingdom. In the coming of the king. And and so they had bible reason but they also just have reason.

In god, himself in his character. Yes, he is angry. With sin. Will you be angry forever and he's full of rat. And his wrath has an object, all of the nations and all of the kingdoms of the earth. But he's also merciful. How do they know? Well, in part.

Because they're praying and singing to god. This is not a prayer of despair, this is a prayer of faith. Do you see what verse 6 is in is implying by the contrast? We know you. We call on your name. Do you see what verse 8 is implying by contrast you have brought us to repentance.

We are no longer doing the things that we were doing before. And so someone who has been brought to know god has been brought to know god's name someone who not is not sinless, but has been brought to repentance has been brought to a hatred of of his sin or her sin.

Can actually plead to god, the character of god that has produced those good things in us. I want to knowing him didn't come from us our, our learning to cry out to him. When we are in difficulty, that didn't come from us. Repentance from our sin. Certainly did not come from us.

Where did it come from? Verse 8, your tender mercies. Verse 9. Oh, god of our salvation. You see the character of god has in it as goodness? His tender mercy from which his electing love, his redeeming love. Has sprung forth and he glorifies himself not only in Pouring out.

Wrath upon sin. Which incidentally, he has that part of glorifying himself. He has done most of all where at the cross. Not even just in hell, but at the cross, But it also glorifies himself. Also the most of all at the cross in his tender mercy. And in his salvation, And so, we're still pleading for his glory.

As we as we plead for the churches, restoration or the church's. Reviving. Love for god's glory. Desire is not only that the church would be restored, but that the church would be Avenged. We ask for deliverance and attainment for his name's sake, but then we also ask That the lord would be glorified in his justice.

And that that which others have done to the church, Would be repaid upon them. Um, Weather in a union with jesus christ in which they are brought to faith. And his wrath has poured out on what they have done on the cross. Or whether they are never brought to faith.

And in the last day, Uh, when history is closed and opportunity for repentance is ended, Uh, we will praise god and pray only. For retribution upon those. Who still at that point. Are in hatred of his church and hatred of him. And so verse, 10 through 12. Why should the nation say?

Where is their? God, let there be known among the nations in our sight. The avenging of the blood of your servants, which has been said, Let us in other words, see and praise you. For the justice in which you take vengeance. The lord says vengeance is mine. I will repay.

And so since it's something that belongs uniquely and peculiarly to him on the one hand, we don't take our own vengeance, right? We leave room for the wrath of god and we love our enemies, and we even desire. That those enemies be converted. But on the other hand, not only do we not take our own vengeance, but we praise god for his vengeance.

We look forward to the day when the repayment comes. And so we appeal to god's. Not just compassion, but power. So a lot of this is appealing to his compassion, but look at the interesting way that verse 11 is phrased, let the groaning of the prisoner come before you According to the greatness of your power.

Preserve those who are appointed to die. So there's both compassion and power. That we see that god's rescue of his people in this life. Or then revenge. For his people. Both in this life and Uh, ultimately in the last day. Would be displays both of his justice. In what is right and his mercy, having compassion and sympathy with us and his power.

His power. And what he does to them, verse 12 return to our neighbors, seven fold into their bosom. They're approach with which they have approached you o lord. So, we not only agonize over the church's ruination. And plead. For the church's restoration or reviving? But we also appeal, Uh, for the churches of engine that we might see god's glory.

Yeah, displayed even in his justice and his power and his compassion towards us. In what he does. Uh, to those who they haven't just attacked his church, they've attacked him. Notice that in verse 12, there were approach with which they have approached you. Oh lord, and finally love for god's glory.

Looks forward to when all of this has done, Knowing what we have been created for knowing what we have been saved for. That we would know him that we would thank him that we would praise him. And you see those three things in verse 13 that we would know him so that we your people and the sheep of your pasture.

The last two, Um, wonderful, yours. Of this psalm. That we would know him. And then in the second place that we would think in You, we hear people in the sheep of your pastor will give you thanks forever. So when all is said and done when the lord has heard these prayers and done this work, what is it that less forever?

There's knowing him and there's thanking him. And then the last place, praising him. We will show forth your praise. To all generations. That we will praise him. Forever and ever. And so, But we are not surprised when the church is persecuted or when the church is in a low state and is judged by god for her.

Unfaithfulness To him. Uh, we're not surprised that that happens because he's given us psalms for how to respond to when that happens. And yet, we now know. And we're well instructed by this, psalm to agonize. Over the church's ruination to plead. For the church's restoration. To appeal, also for the churches of engine, but al Ultimately to look forward.

To the everlasting fellowship. Thanksgiving and praise That we Will have with our god. And that. All of the events of history, even in The. The most. Grievous moments of the history of the church. All of them are working towards. Our fellowship and thanksgiving and praise. All things work together for good.

For those who love the glory of god love god. Because we have been called. According to his purpose. Amen, let's pray. We thank you, lord for this psalm. We do agonize over the low stage of your church. Whether the The way it is in. Our country or The way it is in places where They had previously been faithful and then fell from that and Are now severely and sorely oppressed.

For centuries by. Murderous muslims. Lord's. Truly. Uh, the blood of your people, in many places has continued to be shed, like water. And we pray that for the glory of your name, Uh, you would bring to a close the time of her chastening. And that you would bring times of reformation, and A revival.

We pray. O lord. That christ would come quickly. That the prayer of the souls under the altar, In the fifth seal would be answered and How long would be filled up? Vengeance. Belongs to you. We praise you for your justice, we praise you for holiness. We pray. O, god that Great multitudes who have been persecutors, would be converted.

That you would bring an end. To the persecution. Even by the greatest revival that has ever been. We pray, lord that you would help us by your spirit. To have our minds and hearts instructed from your word. In the right way of thinking about your glory in the church and your glory in history.

Stir up for us. Increase us in. Loving your glory. We pray. O. God We ask in jesus name. Amen.