

Evening Sermon – November 1, 2020

“Complaint, Prayer & Praise” Psalm 79

I. Asaph’s complaint –

A Psalm of Asaph. This Asaph or Son of Asaph seems to have endured the time of Nebuchadnezzar’s invasion of Jerusalem!

1. Nations / Gentiles had come into God’s inheritance, they had defiled the temple -

¹ O God, the nations have come into Your inheritance; Your holy temple they have defiled; They have laid Jerusalem in heaps. Psalm 79:1

2. The defiling of the temple, had been prophesied by Ezekiel, also the destruction of all those who did not CRY OVER the sins of Jerusalem –

A. The glory of God guided Ezekiel’s vision -

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.

B. The man clothed in linen (in the vision) is possibly an angel, he marks those who were not involved in Jerusalem’s sins, those who wept over it -

And He called to the man clothed with linen, who had the writer’s inkhorn at his side; ⁴ and the LORD 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.” Ezekiel 9:3b – 4

C. Those who are marked are spared, everyone else is killed, if you were not bothered by GREATNESS of the SIN, you were Killed -

⁵ 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. Ezekiel 9:5-7 (NKJV)

D. Ezekiel questioned and the LORD explained, the why?

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?”

⁹ Then He said to me, “The iniquity of the house of Israel and Judah is exceedingly great, and the land is full of bloodshed, and the city full of perversity; for they say, ‘The LORD has forsaken the land, and the LORD does not see!’ ¹⁰ And as for Me also, My eye will neither spare, nor will I have pity, *but* I will recompense their deeds on their own head.” Ezekiel 9:8–10 (NKJV)

3. Asaph experienced what Ezekiel had prophesied –

² The dead bodies of Your servants— They have given as food for the birds of the heavens, The flesh of Your saints to the beasts of the earth.³ Their blood they have shed like water all around Jerusalem, And *there was no one to bury them.* ⁴ We have become a reproach to our neighbors, A scorn and derision to those who are around us. Psalm 79:2-4

II. Asaph’s prayer –

1. Concerning the length and intensity of the trial -

⁵ How long, LORD? Will You be angry forever? Will Your jealousy burn like fire? Psalm 79:5 (NKJV)

A. The answer to Asaph’s “how long” prayer is given to Daniel – 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. Daniel 9:2 (NKJV)

B. God’s jealousy is always a righteous jealousy, because He is always what is best for us -

²⁴ For the LORD your God is a consuming fire, a jealous God. Deuteronomy 4:24 (NKJV)

God’s people had forsaken Him, they were worshipping the Queen of Heaven and when called by Jeremiah to repent they refused –

¹⁶ “As for the word that you have spoken to us in the name of the LORD, we will not listen to you! ¹⁷ But we will certainly do whatever has gone out of our own mouth, to burn incense to the queen of heaven and pour out drink offerings to her, as we have done, we and our fathers, our kings and our princes, in the cities of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem. For *then* we had plenty of food, were well-off, and saw no trouble. ¹⁸ But since we stopped burning incense to the queen of

heaven and pouring out drink offerings to her, we have lacked everything and have been consumed by the sword and by famine.”
Jeremiah 44:16–18 (NKJV)

2. *There is prayer for vengeance / wrath on the nations that defiled Jerusalem -*

⁶ Pour out Your wrath on the nations that do not know You, And on the kingdoms that do not call on Your name. ⁷ For they have devoured Jacob, And laid waste his dwelling place. Psalm 79:6-7

A. *God used Babylon, and other ungodly nations as tools to punish Israel for their sins –*

B. *Yet, as far as the attacks on Israel the stealing of gold from the Temple, the murders they committed and the ill heart behind these acts God did punish the nations who attacked Israel!*

3. *There is prayer for forgiveness -*

⁸ Oh, do not remember former iniquities against us! Let Your tender mercies come speedily to meet us, For we have been brought very low. Psalm 79:8

A. *When we need forgiveness –*

Verse 8. – *“Speedily.”* Lest they come too late, for we are at our last gasp. – *John Trapp.*

B. *Why we need forgiveness -*

Verse 8. – *“We are brought very low.”* Literally, “We are greatly thinned.” Few of us remain. – *Adam Clarke.*

Verse 8. – *“We are brought very low.”* We are very greatly exhausted (emptied out): that is, we are utterly destitute of all things, both fortune, and strength of mind and body, just like a well or a vessel completely emptied. – *Martin Geier.*

Verse 8. – *“Very low.”* Past the hopes of all human help, and Therefore the glory of our deliverance will be wholly thine. – *Matthew Pool.*

4. *There are prayers for salvation, for God’s glory, for deliverance for God’s Name’s sake -*

⁹ Help us, O God of our salvation, For the glory of Your name; And deliver us, and provide atonement for our sins, For Your name’s sake! Psalm 79:9 (NKJV)

5. *There are prayers for vengeance -*

¹⁰ Why should the nations 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 shed.* Psalm 79:10

6. *Prayers for the prayers of the most vulnerable to be heard -*

¹¹ Let the groaning of the prisoner come before You; According to the greatness of Your power Preserve those who are appointed to die; Psalm 79:11

7. *Prayers for reproach of the reproachers of God -*

¹² And return to our neighbors sevenfold into their bosom Their reproach with which they have reproached You, O Lord. Psalm 79:12

III. Asaph’s Praise, God’s people’s praise -

¹³ So we, Your people and sheep of Your pasture, Will give You thanks forever; We will show forth Your praise to all generations. Psalm 79:13 (NKJV)

1. *A happy relationship, we are God’s people, His sheep!*

A. *He will discipline us when we are wrong –*

⁶ For whom the LORD loves He chastens, and scourges every son whom He receives.” Hebrews 12:6 (NKJV)

B. *He leads us and provides for us as His sheep –*

¹ The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want. Psalm 23:1 (NKJV)

2. *Our endless debt of Thanksgiving –*

“Will give You thanks forever” Psalm 79:13 B

¹⁸ in everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. 1 Thessalonians 5:18 (NKJV)

3. *Our purpose to praise –*

... We will show forth Your praise to all generations. Psalm 79:13 C

Arnold Brevick