

Psalm 79

Written after the Babylonians had destroyed Jerusalem and leaders going into captivity or subjection under the Babylonians in Judah, [2 Kings 24:1-17; 2 Kings 25:1-21].

Psalms 79:1-4 [New King James] *“O God, the nations have come into Your inheritance; Your holy temple they have defiled; they have laid Jerusalem in heaps. 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. Their blood they have shed like water all around Jerusalem, and there was no one to bury them. We have become a reproach to our neighbours, a scorn and derision to those who are around us.”*

These verses express the plight that the people of Judah are in.

Psalms 79:5-10 [New King James] *“How long, LORD? 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. Oh, 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, 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! 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.”*

The prayers of the people in distress, this is based on three grounds, **first** – the agony and distress of “Your saints” that is God’s chosen people; **second** – the “tender mercy” of the Creator God; **thirdly** – the ignominy and dishonour which other nations will attach to God’s name if He leaves desolate those who are His servants, [verses 9-10].

Psalms 79:11-12 [New King James] *“Let the groaning of the prisoner come before You; according to the greatness of Your power Preserve those who are appointed to die; and return to our neighbours sevenfold into their bosom their reproach with which they have reproached You, O Lord.”*

In the course of this demonstration of the Creator God’s divine faithfulness, power and justice, the Psalmist asks for the derisive neighbouring states [verse 4] experience the derision of the Creator God, [Psalms 2:4] because in reproaching Israel they have really scorned the Creator God.

Psalms 79:13 [New King James] *“So we, Your people and sheep of Your pasture, will give You thanks forever; we will show forth Your praise to all generations.”*

The Psalm concludes on a note of dedication, **not** in the spirit of bargaining with the Creator God, for true supplication must be linked with consecration, the vow is of thanksgiving to God and being a testimony to all other human beings.

In the end God’s glory will be evident to all human beings, but in the meantime, true Christians, God’s elect, must endure suffering with patience and allow the Creator God to strengthen our character through such suffering, [Hebrews 2:9-11].

James 1:2-4 [New King James] *“My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience. But let patience have its perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing.”*

It is often through suffering that the Creator God will perfect our character as we continue to trust Him inspite of the pain.

1 Peter 4:12-19 [New King James] *“Beloved, do not think it strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened to you; but rejoice to the extent that you partake*

of Christ's sufferings, that when His glory is revealed, you may also be glad with exceeding joy. If you are reproached for the name of Christ, blessed are you, for the Spirit of glory and of God rests upon you. On their part He is blasphemed, but on your part He is glorified. But let none of you suffer as a murderer, a thief, an evildoer, or as a busybody in other people's matters. Yet if anyone suffers as a Christian, let him not be ashamed, but let him glorify God in this matter. For the time has come for judgment to begin at the house of God; and if it begins with us first, what will be the end of those who do not obey the gospel of God? Now 'If the righteous one is scarcely saved, where will the ungodly and the sinner appear?' Therefore let those who suffer according to the will of God commit their souls to Him in doing good, as to a faithful Creator."

Suffering is a normal part of a true Christian's life, as a means of spiritual growth. Our response to such suffering will be part of the judgement as to our reward in the future Kingdom of God.

Romans 8:18-19 [New King James] *"For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us. For the earnest expectation of the creation eagerly waits for the revealing of the sons of God."*

The "sons of God" will be recognised as those who inspite of suffering remained faithful to their Creator God.

For reasons we cannot fully understand, non-Christians are often allowed by the Creator God to scoff at true believers.

We should be prepared for criticism, jokes and hurtful remarks because the Creator God has **not** placed us beyond the attacks of scoffers.

John 15:15-16, 18-19 [New King James] *"No longer do I call you servants, for a servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all things that I heard from My Father I have made known to you. You did not choose Me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit, and that your fruit should remain, that whatever you ask the Father in My name He may give you." ... "If the world hates you, you know that it hated Me before it hated you. If you were of the world, the world would love its own. Yet because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you."*

Bearing the name Christian will bring the hatred of all who do not know the Creator God on us.

John 17:1-9, 14-17, 20-21 [New King James] *"Jesus spoke these words, lifted up His eyes to heaven, and said: 'Father, the hour has come. Glorify Your Son, that Your Son also may glorify You, as You have given Him authority over all flesh, that He should give eternal life to as many as You have given Him. And this is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent. I have glorified You on the earth. I have finished the work which You have given Me to do. And now, O Father, glorify Me together with Yourself, with the glory which I had with You before the world was. I have manifested Your name to the men whom You have given Me out of the world. They were Yours, You gave them to Me, and they have kept Your word. Now they have known that all things which You have given Me are from You. For I have given to them the words which You have given Me; and they have received them, and have known surely that I came forth from You; and they have believed that You sent Me. I pray for them. I do not pray for the world but for those whom You have given Me, for they are Yours.'" ... "I have given them Your word; and the world has hated them because they are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. I do not pray that You should take them out of the world, but that You should keep them from the evil one. They are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth." ... "I do not pray for these alone, but also for those who will believe in Me through their word; that they all may be one, as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You; that they also may be one in Us, that the world may believe that You sent Me."*

This hostility to true Christians will in the end be a powerful witness for our Creator God to all who as yet are blinded to the reason for human life by Satan, [2 Corinthians 4:4; Revelation 12:9; 1 John 5:19].

This deception of Satan can be overcome through two ways.

Revelation 12:11 [New King James] *“And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, and they did not love their lives to the death.”*

First – by preaching the good news that Jesus Christ brought from God the Father, that His sacrificial shedding of His blood on the cross can be a substitute for our deserved death because of our sins, [Romans 3:23; Romans 6:23; 1 John 1:8].

Second – by our personal witness, that will include suffering as a person who has total faith and trust in the Creator God, [Matthew 5:14-16].

This is how Psalm 79:13 will be fulfilled in every generation.