

# Psalm 79

by Henry Law

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*The sermon Psalm 79 calls for God's mercy and intermission of anger, pleading for the restoration of Israel and the glorification of God's name.*

**Scripture:** Psalm 79:2

**Topics:** "Gods Mercy", "National Repentance"

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## Description

Henry Law preaches about the desolation of Jerusalem and the distress of the Israelites as they witness the ruins of their beloved city and Temple, leading them to seek mercy from God. The cruel actions of the invading nations, including defiling the temple, shedding blood, and mocking the Israelites, are highlighted as reasons for their plea for God's intervention and mercy. The Israelites cry out to God, acknowledging their sins, asking for forgiveness, and seeking deliverance from their enemies. The prayer includes a plea for God to be known among the nations, to preserve the oppressed, and to bring justice upon their enemies, ultimately leading to a promise of eternal thanksgiving and praise to God.

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## Transcript

The ruins of the Temple and the cruelties of the insulting foe impel to the mercy-seat. Promises of praise are uttered. In the depths of distress may we thus seek and vow!

1. "O God, the heathen have come into Your inheritance; Your holy temple have they defiled; they have laid Jerusalem on heaps."

With tearful eye the pious Israelite beholds the desolation of his hallowed places. He would move mournfully amid the ruins of his beloved city. Can it be that the Temple has thus fallen! Can it be that the protecting walls are thus laid low! Have the heathen thus triumphed! Is the chosen city thus deserted! Such thoughts of anguish naturally arise amid the desolate scene.

2-3. "The dead bodies of Your servants have they given to be food to the fowls of the heaven, the flesh of Your saints to the beasts of the earth. Their blood have they shed like water round about Jerusalem; and there was no one to bury them."

Cruel carnage marked the invader's course. The slaughtered were exposed to vilest indignities. Devouring birds mangled the neglected corpses; ravenous beasts rioted in the abundance of their prey. Blood flowed in copious streams, and no survivors could bury the dead.

4. "We have become a reproach to our neighbors, a scorn and derision to those who are round about us."

The neighboring nations, who once viewed Jerusalem as the perfection of strength and beauty, and feared her as the mistress of the earth, now sneered at her fallen state. No tender pity softened their hearts. Derision sat upon their lips.

5. "How long, Lord? will You be angry forever? shall Your jealousy burn like fire?"

The period of calamity seemed endless. It is traced to its real cause. God's displeasure has poured down these miseries. The cry goes up to Him for intermission. It cries, Let not Your anger be thus prolonged; let it not burn like an unextinguishable flame. It is our wisdom when lying in the depths of sorrow thus to plead.

6-7. "Pour out Your wrath upon the heathen that have not known You, and upon the kingdoms that have not called upon Your name; for they have devoured Jacob, and laid waste his dwelling place."

Prayer beseeches God to mark that the triumphant nations were also enemies to Him. They did not know His majesty and glory. They had never acknowledged Him as their God. It is the province of faith to appeal to God that we are truly His, and that those who hate us honor not His glorious name.

8-9. "O remember not against us former iniquities; let Your tender mercies speedily 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 purge away our sins, for Your name's sake."

The remembrance of former iniquities should ever be before our eyes. Our cry should be that mercy would heal these wounds. Our only plea should be that God would thus glorify His great name, and make us monuments of His redeeming powers.

10-12. "Why should the heathen say, Where is their God? let Him be known among the heathen in our sight by the revenging of the blood of Your servants which is shed. Let the sighing of the prisoner come before You; according to the greatness of Your power preserve those who are appointed to die; and render to our neighbors seven-fold into their bosom their reproach, with which they have reproached You, O Lord."

Let not the sneer prevail that God has cast off His own. Rather let His glory be conspicuous in the ruin of the blood-stained foes. Let the plaintive wails of the captives prevail, and let the death-doomed find deliverance.

13. "So we Your people, and sheep of Your pasture, will give You thanks forever; we will show forth Your praise to all generations."

The happy result shall be constant flow of grateful praises from generation to generation. A ransomed flock shall magnify the Lord.

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