

Psalm 79

A Psalm of Asaph.

- 1 O God, the nations have come into your inheritance; *
they have defiled your holy temple; they have laid Jerusalem in ruins.
- 2 They have given the bodies of your servants to the birds of the air for food, *
the flesh of your faithful to the wild animals of the earth.
- 3 They have poured out their blood like water all around Jerusalem, *
and there was no one to bury them.
- 4 **We have become a taunt to our neighbors, ***
mocked and derided by those around us.
- 5 **How long, O LORD? Will you be angry forever? ***
Will your jealous wrath burn like fire?
- 6 **Pour out your anger 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 habitation.
- 8 **Do not remember against us the iniquities of our ancestors; ***
let your compassion come speedily to meet us,
for we are brought very low.
- 9 **Help us, O God of our salvation, for the glory of your name; ***
deliver us, and forgive our sins, for your name's sake.
- 10 Why should the nations say, "Where is their God?" *
Let the avenging of the outpoured blood of your servants
be known among the nations before our eyes.
- 11 **Let the groans of the prisoners come before you; ***
according to your great power preserve those doomed to die.
- 12 Return sevenfold into the bosom of our neighbors *
the taunts with which they taunted you, O Lord!
- 13 **Then we your people, the flock of your pasture,**
will give thanks to you forever; *
from generation to generation we will recount your praise.

O God, through your Son, the Man of Sorrows, you are acquainted with our grief. We pray for your church, especially in places of persecution and distress. When hope grows dim, kindle within us patience in prayer and persistence in the struggle for justice and peace. We ask this in the name of Jesus. **Amen.**

Psalm 79, like Ps. 74, voices bitter communal reflection on the conquest of Jerusalem (vv. 1-4), a cry for deliverance (vv. 5-10), a prayer for justice for the enemy (vv. 10b-12), and a vow to offer praise to God for God's justice and faithfulness (v. 13). It is graphic in its depiction of violence and vivid in its depiction of human shame, grief, fear, and longing. The psalm asks for divine retribution against the enemy (v. 12) but hands over this vengeance to God rather than taking it into human hands. It is also unique in daring to pray for divine retribution while acknowledging the human faithlessness that led to divine judgment (vv. 8-9). Used with great care, it may be appropriate in places where the vitality of God's covenant people has been decimated through (their own) unfaithfulness and the violent forces of culture. *Use in Worship: in conjunction with OT narratives of judgment and exile; services focusing on situations of extreme persecution.*

79A Psalm 79:1-9 | A Responsorial Setting

Refrain

Some - one's cry - ing, Lord, kum ba yah. Some-one's

cry - ing, Lord, kum ba yah. Some - one's cry - ing, Lord,

kum ba yah. O Lord, kum ba yah.

Refrain

- 1 O God, the nations have come into your inheritance;
they have profaned your holy temple;
they have made Jerusalem a heap of rubble.
- 2 They have given the bodies of your servants as food for the birds of the air,
and the flesh of your faithful ones to the beasts of the field.
- 3 They have shed their blood like water on every side of Jerusalem,
and there was no one to bury them.
- 4 We have become a reproach to our neighbors,
an object of scorn and derision to those around us. *Refrain*
- 5 How long will you be angry, O LORD?
Will your fury blaze like fire forever?
- 6 Pour out your wrath upon the nations who have not known you
and upon the kingdoms that have not called upon your name.
- 7 For they have devoured Jacob
and made his dwelling a ruin. *Refrain*

8 Remember not our past sins; let your compassion be swift to meet us;
for we have been brought very low.

9 Help us, O God our Savior, for the glory of your name;
deliver us and forgive us our sins, for your name's sake. *Refrain*

Tone

Dm Gm Dm Gm Dm/A A7 Dm

Lectionary: Ordinary Time After Pentecost (C).

Words: Marvin V. Frey © 1977 Marvin V. Frey

Music (KUM BA YAH 8.8.8.5): Marvin V. Frey © 1977 and arr. Bethany Vrieland © 2011 Marvin V. Frey

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Remember Not, O God **79B**

A^b D^b A^b E^b/G Fm E^b

1 Re - mem - ber not, O God, the sins of long a - go;
2 O Lord, our Sav - ior, help, and glo - ri - fy your name;
3 Then, safe with - in your fold, we will ex - alt your name;

A^b D^b E^b7 A^b A^b/E^b E^bsus E^b A^b

in ten - der mer - cy vis - it us, dis - tressed and hum - bled low.
de - liv - er us from all our sins and take a - way our shame.
our thank - ful hearts with songs of joy your good - ness will pro - claim.

This tune in a higher key: p. 702.

Words: *Psalter*, 1912, P.D.

Music (GORTON 6.6.8.6): Ludwig van Beethoven (1770-1827), 1807, adapt., P.D.