

The Inheritance of God

Psa. 79:1a

Introduction:

1. Most often when we think of an inheritance we think of receiving land, possessions or money from a deceased person. Lk. 12:13 refers to a man saying to Jesus, "Tell my brother to divide the family inheritance with me."
2. When we think of a spiritual inheritance we think of what we will receive in heaven. 1 Pet. 1:4 refers to "an inheritance which is imperishable and undefiled and will not fade away, reserved in heaven" for those who have been born again.
3. There is yet a third use of the concept of inheritance in Scripture. It is about the people of God being an inheritance.
 - a. In 2 Sam. 14:16 a woman spoke to king David about her and her son being destroyed "from the inheritance of God."
 - b. In Eph. 1:28 Paul prayed that saints might know the riches of the glory of God's inheritance in the saints.
 - c. In both these passages God's people are looked upon as His inheritance.
4. In Psa. 79 God's people are looked upon as His inheritance, but the enemy has invaded His inheritance. Why would God allow the enemy to destroy His inheritance? He has good reason, and Psa. 79 reveals it. It is a pleasant thought to realize that God thinks of us as His inheritance, but will He allow the enemy to invade and destroy us? Does He have good reason?

Discussion:

- I. The first seven verses describe the severity of the circumstance (79:1-7). Cf. 74:1-11.
 - A. The image is that of a battlefield.
 1. The nations have invaded.
 2. The temple is defiled.
 3. The bodies of God's servants lie unburied in the open field. The vultures and the beasts devour them.
 4. The blood has flowed like water around Jerusalem.
 5. I am reminded of Joshua Lawrence Chamberlain's description of the second day of battle at Gettysburg at Little Round Top. Chamberlain wrote: "At times I saw around me more of the enemy than my own men; gaps opening, swallowing, closing again with sharp convulsive energy; squads of stalwart men who had cut their way through us, disappearing as if translated. All around, strange, mingled roar- shouts of defiance, rally, and desperation; and underneath, murmuring entreaty and stifled moans; gasping prayers, snatches of Sabbath song, whispers of loved names; everywhere men torn and broken, staggering, creeping, quivering on the earth, and dead faces with strangely fixed eyes staring into the sky. Things which cannot be told- nor dreamed."
 - B. The Psalm harks back to the days of the Babylonian invasion. Indeed, verses 6-7 are identical with Jer. 10:25.

C. The Psalm 79:1-7 finds its match in Psalm 74:1-11.

D. The invasion is the result of God's angry judgment against His inheritance (79:5; 74:1,

11a). WHY?

1. This is the question asked in 74:1, 11a.

2. They have walked in the stubbornness of their evil hearts (Jer. 11:8); they have broken covenant (Jer. 11:10). Cf. the jealousy of 79:5b. Jealous as a husband for their loyalty.

3. Will we be abandoned to the enemy?

a. 1 Cor. 5:5, 11.

b. James 4:4-10.

c. We need on-going stimulation to love and good deeds in order to avoid this (Heb. 10:24-31).

II. The second part of the Psalm begs for forgiveness (8-12).

A. "Do not remember the iniquities of our forefathers against us" (8a).

1. God does not hold us condemnable for the sins of our ancestors.

2. This was the thinking some had in Israel.

a. "The fathers have eaten sour grapes and the children's teeth are set on edge" (Jer. 31:29).

b. NO. "But everyone will die for his own iniquity; each man who eats the sour grapes, his teeth will be set on edge" (Jer. 31:30).

B. "Let your compassion come quickly to meet us" (8b).

1. The Psalmist recognizes God's compassion.

2. "He works deeds of deliverance" (Psa. 74:12).

3. "Consider the covenant" (Psa. 74:20).

C. This appeal motivated by their having been brought low (79:8c).

1. "Humble yourselves in the presence of the Lord, and He will exalt you" (James 4:10).

2. "Blessed are the poor in spirit for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted" (Matt. 5:3-4).

D. The Psalmist recognizes nothing in Israel that makes them worthy. It is to the greatness of God to which he appeals (79:9-12).

1. God's gracious forgiveness needs to be recognized by the nations.

2. Israel's forgiveness is a product of God's great compassion.

3. His greatness will be vindicated before the nations.

4. The nations have reproached Him, but His compassion will be proven in the forgiveness of His people and the condemnation of their enemies.

III. Thanksgiving and praise will be the response of God's people (79:12).

A. They will be forgiven.

B. They will tell to all generations of God's praise.

1. That is, they will proclaim His greatness to all generations.

2. God's holy nation, the people of His own possession, His inheritance proclaim His

excellencies to all generations (1 Pet. 2:9).

C. Herein is the foundation of evangelism.

1. We have been forgiven as a result of God's compassion.
2. We proclaim his compassion and forgiveness to others (cf. Psa. 51:13).

Conclusion:

1. As the inheritance of God what will it be for you?
2. Death and destruction or forgiveness, thanksgiving and telling of God's praise?