

Psalms Chapter 78 - Review

In part 1 we learned the importance of ‘giving ear’ (listening closely) to God’s Word, even the historical parts, for there is much more than ‘meets the eye’ (appears on the surface). And that’s why this Psalmist calls the ‘history lesson’ in this Psalm a ‘proverb’ or ‘dark sayings’. Through his giving Israel’s history (from slavery in Egypt to a kingdom under the rule of David) he taught us that, no matter how far Israel fell, God was still with them *and* was still working for Israel's *benefit*. Thus, He is always faithful to His Word and *will* fulfill *all* the promises He gave to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob/Israel; even the promises yet to be fulfilled through Jesus Christ’s Second Advent. And that should give us *great* confidence that *the Lord is faithful, who shall stablish you, and keep you from evil* (2 Thess 3:3). And this great ‘moral truth’ revealed through Divine history (the Bible) is important to share with others, especially our children, so it can be passed on from generation to generation.

In part 2 we learned the importance of sharing the truth we’ve learned and making sure not to hide it. As Jesus taught in Mth 5, no one puts a burning candle under a bushel (barrel) because the purpose of lighting a candle is to *shine light* to those in the room. Likewise, the purpose of learning truth is not simply for our ‘self’. While we *should* use the truth to edify *our own* heart, mind, words and actions, we also have a *duty* to share it with others. And this is *especially* important when we have children we are raising. The truth *must* be taught to the younger generations so it does not die out (as a candle put under a bushel does). And that’s *exactly* what this Psalmist has committed himself to doing; that’s actually why he wrote this Psalm. Thus, the Psalmist also pointed out that God gave His Laws, as a testimony to Israel, when He made a national covenant with them on Mount Sinai. But that was a *conditional* covenant, which means Israel would *only* be blessed *when* they *obeyed* God’s Laws, which is why it was so important to teach the younger generations God’s Laws and help them learn to obey Him, from the heart. And truly, this is still the case today. For, while we are no longer supposed to offer animal sacrifices (because Jesus Christ fulfilled them *once and for all*, Col 2:14, Eph 2:15, Heb 10:10), we *are supposed* to still obey His Ten Commandments and even the Statutes and Judgments (which do not pertain to the ordinances, i.e. the blood sacrifices). Obeying God, from the heart, has *always* been how we are blessed and, ultimately, what gives us eternal life too (John 17:3). But, if people don’t know God’s Laws (Word) then they cannot obey it. Which is it’s so important to learn it and share it with others.

In part 3 we learned that Divine history (i.e. the Bible) helps us to put our hope in God’s promises, for it gives us examples to prove *why* we should do so – i.e. it shows us what happens to those who do *obey* Him verses what happens to those *who do not*. And *that* causes us to strive *hard* not to forget the mighty works He has done (throughout the ages) *and* to strive hard to *sincerely* obey His Laws. Believing God’s Word therefore gives us the assurance we need to patiently endure the hard times *because* we know they won’t last forever *and* that, in the end,

wickedness does not pay well *but* obeying God (from the heart) *does*! (Rom 6:23) And we also saw the Psalmist refer back to the rebellious Israelites who came out of Egypt. Though God showed them mighty works (even parting the Red Sea for them but making it come back down and kill all the Egyptian army), they *forgot* what He did for them (His mighty salvation) and provoked Him to anger with their murmurings (complaining), disrespectful attitude and even outright tempting Him to see if He really was ‘God’. Their heart was simply not right with God because they were *faithless*. And their lack of faith was *because they forgot* what He had done for them... which is quite astounding since they personally witnessed *many* miracles He did for them. And *that’s* the point the Psalmist is making here in this Psalm. We must remember all God has done for us (which the Bible clearly tells us) so we don’t become faithless and/or embittered through hard times that come upon *all* those who do what’s right (2 Tim 3:12). For we are in a spiritual war between God/Jesus (good, truth) and Satan (evil, lies). And that means the war is *inside our own heart and mind*. That’s why we have to guard our ‘inner man’ closely (Deut 11:16-22; Prov 4:23; Mth 24:4-5, 23-26) and work to keep the lies and deception out of it (Gal 5:24, Lk 9:23) so we don’t succumb to the lies that Satan and his followers tell us (2 Cor 11:13-15).

In part 4 we learned how Ephraim (the leader of the ten northern tribes) failed miserably at leading the *spiritual* war, even though they were always ready and willing to go into physical battles (even against their own brethren). Thus, those who don’t keep God’s Covenant, by refusing to obey His Law (from the heart), end up falling *quite* short of producing good fruit (works). And the main reason for this is *forgetting* Divine History, which is recorded in the Bible. And the generation of Israelites who came out of Egyptian bondage are a great (in a bad way) example of this. They, therefore, teach us what we should not be like: *faithless*. Because, when truth is not mixed with faith (Heb 4:2) *it does not profit us at all*. So, even though God showed *many mighty* miracles to the Israelites – such as the ten plagues He brought upon the Egyptians, parting the Red Sea, leading them by a cloud during the day and a pillar of fire at night and then *twice* cleaving rocks to give them an *enormous* waters supply for the millions of men, woman, children and animals... they still did not have *sincere* faith in God Almighty!

In part 5 we learned (again) how, despite seeing many miracles that the Lord (YHVH) performed, even being miraculously fed and watered while in the wilderness (desert), the children of Israel *still* tempted God by asking if He could again provide meat for them. And we covered some Scriptures which demonstrated that God had *already* proved to them that He *could* provide flesh (quail) and bread (manna) to them (as well as an abundant source of fresh water, *in the desert*). So, the fact that they *provokingly* asked if He could do again was a *huge* insult. For, they were not merely asking (humbly or respectfully) but outright accusing Him of being *unable* to, again, do what He had *already proven* to them that He *could* do. And this angered Him (rightly so) so much that He sent out a fire and killed some of them; and then, after again providing more quail (which filled the entire camp *and* miles around it) for them to eat, He smote

the lustful rebels with a *great* plague. So, while God didn't annihilate the whole nation (as He threatened to do after they made a golden calf idol in Ex 32), He did indeed punish them, and cleaned out the rebels amongst them.

In part 6 we (again) learned what happened to the Israelites when they believed not in God nor trusted in His salvation: He ended up killing off (again) all those who were faithless, lustful and ungrateful, *despite* seeing *many* miracles He did *for them*. And, the Psalmist used one specific account to make this point: even after Israel had been given manna (which we learned is actually angels' food) to eat *continually*, they got tired of it and lusted after the quail He gave them a year prior. And they even questioned His ability to provide it for them *again*. Therefore, while He gave them the quail, God smote the faithless, lustful and ungrateful people dead with a *great* plague, even while the flesh was *still between their teeth* (they didn't even get to finish enjoying their meal). Thus, the 'moral of the story' of this account (in Divine history) is that we should be grateful for what we have *and* not lust. And we should also learn to endure hard times, for they *will* come; *and* we'll be far better off after learning to endure them *because* our faith will be stronger afterwards. But, our faith *cannot* be like grass that's shaken by the wind, **if** we want to be pleasing to God and receive His promises. True faith is believing in God's Word *no matter what* happens to us *and* striving to obey Him (from the heart) *no matter how* hard times get. But, true faith is what the Israelites of old (who came out of Egypt) were lacking, and that's why they are such a good example (of what we should not be like) for us living today (1 Cor 10:11). And that's why the Psalmist of this great 78th 'Maschil' Psalm continued to use them as an example for teaching us the 'parables' and 'dark sayings' (vs 2) that are 'hidden' in divine history (God's Word).

In part 7 we learned (again) that, even though God showed the children of Israel (who He freed from Egyptian bondage) *many* mighty miracles – and chastised them, *many* times – they *still* continued to sin, for they truly didn't believe the mighty works that He showed them (over and over again). And even though they did (at times) verbally repent, their repentance was not sincere because their heart really *had not changed*. And they were *not* willing to change their heart (desires, emotions, intentions, motivations) nor their mind (thoughts) to be steadfast with God's Covenant (His Laws). This shows us there's much more to true repentance than simply saying 'sorry Lord'. It takes a *sincere* change of heart, mind, words *and* actions – *and sticking with it!* Seeking and obeying God thus isn't something we do only when we have hard times - it has to be *a way of life* for us... for the *rest of our life!*

In part 8 we learned how compassionate the Lord (YHVH) was to *continue* to forgive the rebellious Israelites who came out of Egypt. Though they sinned against Him, *at least ten* times within the *first two years* of coming out of Egypt, He *continued* to use great self-control when disciplining them. And, essentially this was because of the unconditional promise (that He could not break) that He gave to Abraham, Issac and Jacob/Israel (i.e. He promised to multiply their

descendants to an *uncountable* number, *not* to destroy them). So, these Scriptures were very enlightening because they show us how *God used the truth to control Himself* – i.e. He remembered His unconditional covenant, but He also remembered that they were just in flesh bodies. And, as Jesus pointed out, the flesh is weak, even if our spirit is willing. But that generation of Israelites were incredibly obstinate despite the many mighty miracles He performed, both in protecting them and in providing for them; so, most of them were not very willing to try and obey Him! And this is simply because they *allowed themselves* to forget all that God had done for them when hard times came. This shows us *how important* it is for us today to remember God's Word *and* be grateful for all He has done for us... so we don't become ungrateful and rebellious as the Israelites of old.

In part 9 we learned of three plagues that God brought upon the Egyptians to prove that He is more powerful than their *false* gods. And He also caused them to despise *the very things they worshiped* by making the Nile River bloody (and stinky) and then causing a massive number of frogs to harass them. And He even caused flies to harass them on top of that. Thus, we learned how God uses His nature to fight against His enemies, and this is a *very* effective form of warfare! It's something mankind dreams of doing (and even attempts to do, but without the ability to *control* it like our Heavenly Father does). Again, it shows that Yehovah is the *Supreme* God over *everything*; and that's because *He is our Creator*. He *alone* has full power over His creation; and *that's* the 'hidden truth' behind the reason why the Psalmist is pointing to these historical plagues. And, prophetically, this tells us that it doesn't matter how many miracles the antichrist (Satan) will do when he's here, none of them can 'hold a candle' to what our Heavenly Father can do (and will do). That's why God will give His two witnesses (as it's recorded of in Rev 11) the power to (again) bring amazing plagues upon the world, when they are testifying against Satan and his wicked 'beast' governing system. So, the plagues not only teach us of God's amazing power over His creation, but they also warn us what *will be coming* upon the world, *yet again*. And the purpose is the same: to witness to the world that the Lord (Yehovah = YHVH) is the God above all gods and the Lord above all lords. And that is why He *alone* should be worshiped, loved, feared and revered. And just as *all* the people in Egypt (from Pharoah to the least of the people) experienced the mighty plagues - but Israel (who lived in Goshen) were protected from *all* the plagues – so too will all the people of the world experience the plagues from the two witnesses but God will protect those who love, *and obey*, Him from the future plagues (from the two witnesses, Rev 11) as well.

In part 10 we learned about the ninth plague that came upon Egypt, which were the locusts that consumed everything that the hail and fire did not destroy. But we also learned of the spiritual warning that this gives us (which is why the Psalmist brings it out here in this Psalm) and it's of utmost importance. The 'locusts' of the 'latter days' (which we are living in now) are *not* insects. They are actually the fallen angels, who come to earth with Satan, and help him deceive God's children into worshiping Satan, and his wicked beast system (Rev 9). And, while there have been

other ‘locusts’ (people) who have been helping Satan deceive God’s children for *quite a while* now, the coming ‘locust army’ will be *far more* destructive because they are supernatural. And *that’s* what we have to be mentally, physically and spiritually ready for. *That’s* why we need to study God’s Word! As Rev 9:4 says, the ‘locusts’ can *only* harm those who do NOT have the ‘seal of God’ in their forehead - which means they *don’t* have God’s Word written in (and sealed there) into their heart and mind - which is done by learning God’s Word, believing in it *and obeying it sincerely*. True faith is being deeply convicted by God’s Word, which will *always* lead a sincere person to accepting (and following) Jesus Christ as the true Messiah.

In part 11 we learned about a couple more plagues that God brought upon the Egyptians because they refused to let Israel go free. And this Psalm again gave us more details about those accounts. For we learned that the thunderstorm not only had great (extremely large and heavy hail) mixed with fire, but that the fire (that ran upon the ground) was actually hot thunderbolts (lightning). And we also learned that the firstborn sons of the Egyptians (*and* the cattle) were killed by Satan (who *is* the destroyer) *and* his evil angels. And we further learned that they were actually killed with a *very* quick acting pestilence... all that is except those who had the blood of the Passover Lamb on their doorposts, which is symbolic for having God’s Word and Holy Spirit in our heart (desires, emotions) and mind (thoughts) - which is what protects us from lies and deception that causes us to apostatize. Thus, the last study really ‘hammered home’ the fact that – while our Heavenly Father is *extremely* gracious, compassionate and merciful *to those who* fear, love and obey Him – *He is a terror to the wicked!* And that was the point of the Psalmist recounting the plagues of Egypt; to warn us not to allow our heart and mind to depart (apostatize from) our *true* Heavenly Father, nor to lose our faith in His son, Jesus Christ. For, if you don’t believe in Jesus Christ, you don’t believe in the one (and only) true God either (John 5:23-24, 37-40, 14:6).

In part 12 we learned (again) how gracious, loving and faithful our Heavenly Father was to Israel when He freed them from Egyptian bondage and cared for them in the wilderness, just as a good Shepherd does for His sheep (John 10). And He even caused them to inherit the Promise Land, by enabling them to fight (and win) against men (giants) much larger, and stronger, than they were. But, despite all that He did for Israel, they would not remain faithful (obedient) to Him. Like a deceitful bow that disappoints (and angers) the bowman when it doesn’t go where it’s supposed to, so too did Israel keep ‘turning away’ from God’s Laws, *over and over* again. While there were a few generations who would obey Him, that’s only because they had good leaders who tried hard to teach God’s Laws and cause Israel to be obedient. But, for most of their history, they continued to provoke God to anger with their false gods and idols.

In part 13 we learned how God is *not* a respecter of persons. For, even when Israel sinned (after they were in the Promise Land) He punished them. At one point in time, He not only allowed the Philistines to kill off 30,000 fighting men of Israel (in just *one day*) but the wicked priests as well. And, He even allowed His Ark of the Covenant (which was symbolic of His presence) to be

taken captive by the heathen Philistines, who put it in the house of their false god and paraded it around the country like a trophy. And this was because Israel's own *priests* were acting just as the heathen do (they were just as corrupt as the heathen). So, it was not a big thing to God for the heathen Philistines to capture the Ark of the Covenant. After all, God didn't need Israel to 'defend' His 'glory and strength' (symbolical names for His Ark). He not only plagued the Philistines with mice and smote them with emerods (hemorrhoids) but also cast down their false god *to the ground* (face down) several times. And after a while, even the Philistines began to fear the Lord (YHWH) and realized they didn't want His Ark as a 'trophy' anymore! So, God's Ark of the Covenant was safely returned to Israel, on a cart pulled by cows, that had *no man* guiding them. So, no matter who it is that's sinning against Him, God *will* punish them.

In part 14 we learned of an example of what happens when God fights against His enemies. For, when the Philistines stole His Ark of the Covenant – and put it in the temple of their false god and then paraded it around the country like a trophy – He fought against them in a *mighty* way. Not only did He plague them with mice but also gave them horrible hemorrhoids. His hand was so 'heavy' upon them (in fighting them) that they finally decided they didn't want to keep the Ark of the Covenant and sent it back to Israel. And then we also learned why God chose Zion to put His Ark of His Covenant in, instead of Shiloh. Not only had the priesthood in Shiloh become corrupted, but the tribe of Ephraim (who hosted God's Tabernacle) were *terrible* spiritual leaders. In fact, they were often leading *the apostasy* instead of leading people to serve God. And we also learned that God raised David up to be king of Israel. While David was just a 'shepherd boy' in his youth, God used his experience caring for sheep to prepare him to shepherd Israel. And, overall, David did do a really good job at it. While he wasn't without fault, he did repent sincerely for his sins and then continued to serve God faithfully. His heart was truly fixed on God and not his *self*, which is what made him such a good leader. In fact, He was such a good leader that he became the 'model' king to which all future kings were compared to. And that's why David was also a 'type' for the *true* King of Israel, Jesus Christ (the Messiah), who will rule Israel (and the world), from Zion, *forevermore*, after He returns. And His reign will not only be eternal but also perfectly without corruption. As Isa 9:7 says: *Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts **will** perform this.*

So, while the 'climax' of this Psalm was to tell us how God chose Zion to dwell in forever, *and* that He chose David to be king over Israel... truly what this is pointing to is that Jesus Christ *will* rule the world, from Jerusalem (Zion) *forever*. And that's truly the ultimate answer to all of Israel's history of rebellion (as this Psalm has been telling us about). For, when Jesus Christ returns, all knees will bow to Him and all people (of every race and nation) will be *forced* to confess that He *alone* is King of kings and lord of lords (Isa 45:23, Rom 14:11, Phil 12:10). As Rev 19:15 also says, *out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the*

nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. So, even though Israel (yea, the world) has been rebelling against the Most High God (YHVH) for thousands of years (and even before then, in the first earth age - <https://t.me/BibleStudyTruth/1288>) there won't be *any more* rebelling when Jesus Christ returns. All the rebel leaders will be locked up (Isa 24:22, Rev 20:1-3) for the Millennium and truth will be taught *without* any interference from the wicked ones.

Therefore, if we don't want to be found displeasing to God when Jesus Christ returns, we'd better make sure we're not 'outside the Sanctuary' (which is when our heart has departed from God) when He returns [learn more in the **Apostasy**: <https://t.me/BibleStudyDownload/499>]. And this is the *concluding* great lesson (proverb, 'dark saying', vs 2) that the Psalmist reveals in this great 'Maschil' Psalm of instruction and understanding. For truly, we have *many* examples (1 Cor 10:11) that teach us *why* it's not good to rebel against God (be outside the sanctuary); and we've learned about quite a few here in this great Psalm. But we've also learned of many reasons why we should have faith in – and obey – our Heavenly Father (i.e. be 'inside the sanctuary'). He truly has made His power known so many times; and He's also shown us how loving, gracious, merciful and compassionate (and righteous) He is *to those who* fear, love and sincerely try to obey Him. So, we must not only learn of Divine history, but sincerely believe it *and obey* it, otherwise *it won't do us any good* (Heb 4:2). For as sure as the sun comes up each day and then goes down at night, so will our Heavenly Father *always* punish the wicked and *reward* those who love, fear and sincerely obey Him. So long as we don't forsake Him, He'll *never* forsake us...

45 Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his lord hath made ruler over his household, to give them meat in due season?

*46 **Blessed is that servant**, whom his lord when he cometh shall find so doing.*

47 Verily I say unto you, That he shall make him ruler over all his goods.

48 But and if that evil servant shall say in his heart, My lord delayeth his coming;

49 And shall begin to smite his fellowservants, and to eat and drink with the drunken;

50 The lord of that servant shall come in a day when he looketh not for him, and in an hour that he is not aware of,

51 And shall cut him asunder; and appoint him his portion with the hypocrites: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

Matt 24:45-51

***Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life**, whereunto thou art also called, and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses.*

1 Tim 6:12

AMEN.