

Part 1 – Reminding God of His Inheritance

We've now come the second chapter that is in the 'Third Book' (Leviticus) of the Psalms, and it's still part of the portion (chapters 73-83) that are concerning *The Sanctuary in Relation to Man*. And let's remember that the last chapter (Psalms 73) had the subject/title of "***Outside the Sanctuary. Effect. Distraction***" because it taught us of the destruction of being far from God (outside the Sanctuary) versus the safety of being close to God (inside the Sanctuary). And truly, we can only be close to our Heavenly Father (in the Sanctuary) when we are *spiritually* close to Him. And the only way we be *spiritually* close to God is to have His Words (through studying the Bible) and Holy Spirit (which is given when we believe in and obey His Word) in our heart and mind. And that's what keeps us safe and strong no matter what how hard times get.

However, this next Psalm's subject/title is different because it will speak about the Sanctuary *being defiled*. Thus, the subject/title is "***The Enemy in the Sanctuary***". Therefore, while it certainly has a historical fulfillment, it also is quite *prophetical* of a time (soon) coming in the future. And that time is called the 'great tribulation' in the New Testament (Mth 24:21, Rev 7:14), but in the Old Testament it's referred to as 'the time of Jacob's trouble' (Jer 30:7). We shall learn much more about this 'great tribulation' as we study this incredibly prophetic (and important) chapter. And, as the *Companion Bible* also points out, the *second* Psalm in each 'book' (Gen-Deut) of the Psalms (see pg. 720 in the *Companion Bible*) has to do specially with *the enemy*. In the 'Genesis book' we saw how the heathen raged against God, and his anointed, and also conspired against Him (Ps 2). And, the second Psalm in the 'Exodus book' spoke of the deceitful and unjust men oppressing the Psalmist and his pleas to God for help (Ps 43). And then in this 'Leviticus book' we'll see that the enemy has done *wickedly* in the sanctuary (Ps 74)...

Psalms 74

1 Mas'-chil of A'-saph.

Now, this is another 'Mas'-chil' Psalm. And it is the **ninth**, out of thirteen (32, 42, 44, 45, 52, 53, 54, 55, **74**, 78, 88, 89 & 142), of such Psalms. But, since we've not seen it for quite a while (not since back in chapter 55), let's remember, the word **Mas'-chil** means *instructive*, i.e. *a didactic poem* (#4905). And it comes from the prime root *sakal* (#7919) that means **to be** (causatively, *make* or *act*) *circumspect* and hence, *intelligent*. And apx. 65 XI further explains **it's an 'Understanding' or 'Instruction' Psalm**, for public use (worship and learning). Unlike the "Michtam" Psalms (which are all by David) these 'Mas-chil' Psalms are by *various* authors, *except* for six of them, which are by David. Apx. 65 also tells us that 'Mas-chil' means *to look at, scrutinize, to look well into anything* (1 Sam 18:30); hence the noun will mean *understanding arising from deep consideration* (Prov 13:15, Neh 8:8). Thus, theses 'Maschil' Psalms **gives us the basis of all true instruction and understanding**.

Indeed, the **first** ‘Maschil’ Psalm, chapter 32, taught us the importance of sincerely repenting and how to do so. It showed us that true repentance not only requires acknowledging our sins (breaking God’s Laws), transgressions (rebellion against God) and iniquities (having a corrupted/perverse, or even evil spirit) – but that we must also study God’s Word to learn *how* to do what’s right (which is what cleans our heart and mind) and learning to actually implement His Word into our daily thoughts, desires, words and actions. And true repentance also requires trusting in our Father’s Word; meaning the promises He’s given us for doing what’s right in obeying His Word. So, that was essentially the first great lesson of the “Mas’-chil” Psalms and the **second** one (chpt 42) followed up that lesson by teaching us to kick out our worries and fears, and trust in the Lord (YHVH) *no matter what happens to us*. And then the **third** ‘Mas’chil’ Psalm (44), taught us to remember history (that which the Bible teaches us) because it shows that our Heavenly Father is *always* true to His word to punish the wicked and reward the righteous. But it also showed us that, even after we’ve sincerely repented for our sins, we will also have to endure the chastisements that come from our Heavenly Father (because we sinned); but that is to our benefit, as Heb 12 explains. If we keep humble and obedient to Him, then blessings *will* come.

And then the **fourth** ‘Mas’chil’ Psalm (45), taught us about the ‘royal marriage’ that’s soon to come between Jesus Christ and His virgin Bride, who are His faithful ‘saints’. And then in the **fifth** ‘Mas’chil’ Psalm (Ps 52) we learned how our Heavenly Father *will* punish the wicked ones, which are those who hate righteousness and truth but cleave to lies and wickedness. The wicked truly do not get away with anything. And then in the **sixth** ‘Mas’chil’ (Ps 53) we saw our Heavenly Father speak of the ‘depravity of man’ and His faithfulness to *defeat* it. And then in the **seventh** ‘Mas’chil’ Psalm (Ps 54) we saw David speak of the perverse men who were unjustly seeking his life in the wilderness, and his calls that the Lord would reward them evil (punish them) for their wickedness by ‘cutting them off’, which did happen to Saul, eventually, for he was killed in battle with the Philistines. And then in the **eighth** ‘Mas’chil’ Psalm (Ps 55) we saw David (again) pray to God for help from the enemy (which was likely when his son, Absalom, led a rebellion against him). For, not only was he being physically oppressed (they were trying to kill him) but he was also deeply pained due to the terrible betrayal of close friends and family (Absalom and his advisor Ahithophel). And while their oppressions (physical and spiritual) were very difficult for David, he taught us that the way to defeat the enemy is *always* to turn to our Heavenly Father for help. For He is always faithful to save, and protect, those who love and obey Him while punishing the wicked ones. So long as we don’t forsake Him, our Heavenly Father will *never* forsake us.

So, of a truth, these Psalms are *great* ‘instruction’ and give us understanding in how to ‘defeat our enemies’. It *only* comes by *trusting in our Heavenly Father* – His Word, His promises, His Laws, His Son (Jesus Christ) and in His Holy Spirit – for guidance, comfort strength and understanding that we need to endure all the hard times. For hard times *are* coming (Rev 12:7-

17, 2 Thess 2) and we'll need these critical 'instructions' on how to 'defeat the enemy' at that time, and likely before then too! And let's always remember, as 1 Cor 10:13 tells us, our Heavenly Father won't let us be tested (or tempted) above what we can handle. He'll *always* give us the strength and understanding to get through anything that comes our way **if** we continue to bind our 'inner man' to Him *wholeheartedly* and 'keep His way', meaning to obey Him with all our heart, mind, soul *and strength* (Mk 12:30). And that important Scripture (1 Cor 10:13) also tells us the things we go through are not uncommon. Others have dealt with the same kinds of temptations, and tribulations, as the Psalms so often point out. So, we *should* learn from the beautiful examples in God's Word (in the Psalms as well), as 1 Cor 10:11 tells us too.

Now, we're also told that this Psalm 74 is another '*Psalm of A'-saph*'. So, this Psalm is now the **third**, of twelve, Psalms with this 'title', and the only one that was in the 'Exodus Book' was Psalm 50; the rest are in this 'Leviticus Book' (Ps 73-83). And we learned in the last chapter (Psalm 73) that Asaph was actually one of the three 'chief' *musicians* who had authority over the others (1 Chron 16:4-8, 37, 1 Chron 25:1,6) during the days of David and Solomon. However, things that were happening at the time this Psalm was written did *not happen* during the life of the Asaph who lived during David and Solomon's reigns. Therefore, it's logical for us to conclude that the man who wrote *this* Psalm was **not** the same A'-saph living during David's time, but **a successor bearing the same name**. The *Companion Bible* actually has a note pointing this out. We'll see more documentation for this conclusion as we move along in our study of this great Psalm...

Psalms 74

1... O God, why hast thou cast us off for ever? why doth thine anger smoke against the sheep of thy pasture?

Now, the word '**God**' here is the most frequently used 'title' for our Heavenly Father in the Psalms. It is '**Elohiym**' (#430), which means *the Supreme God*, who is our *Creator*. '*Elohiym* (or '*Elohim*') is God the Creator putting His omnipotence ('*El*') into operation. And it's significant the Psalmist uses this 'title' for our Heavenly Father *instead of* God's Sacred Name, *Yehovah* (#3068) which is His 'covenant name'. This reveals the Psalmist does not feel like Israel is in a covenant with Yehovah anymore, which is why He asks the Supreme God, who is our Creator, why He has '**cast us off**', which means **to push aside**, i.e. **reject, forsake, fail** (#2186). Now, if you've ever read the cursings and the blessings in Lev 26 and Deut 28, the answer of why God would have 'cast them off' should not be too hard to figure out. For Yehovah *only* promised to bless Israel IF they *obeyed* Him. But, He also promised to put the cursings on them IF they *disobeyed* them. The covenant Yehovah made with Israel was a *conditional* covenant (Ex 19-20) which *depended* on Israel's dedication to *obeying* Him to obtain His blessings and promises. This is quite different than the promises He made to Abraham, Issac and Jacob/Israel

[<https://t.me/BibleStudyTruth/1122>] which were *unconditional* promises, and did *not* (and still do *not*) depend on what their descendants *do*, or do *not* do.

But, the *Companion Bible* really helps us to understand *why* this question is posed here, because it explains that it's actually a figure of speech (*Erotesis*, apx 6) where ***a question is asked, but not for information or even for an answer***. Rather, it's to make a point and the reasons why can vary. Several reasons given in apx 6 could be applicable in this case; it could be for *negative affirmation* or *lamentation* of what the Psalmist is seeing going on. In other words, the Psalmist is *not really* asking God *why* He is 'casting off' Israel (the sheep of His pasture) because he knows darn good and well '*why*'. At this time, Israel must have not been obeying God's Laws and *that is why* the Lord (YHVH) 'cast them off'. So again, the Psalmist uses this phrase '*why hast Thou cast us off forever*' simply as a figure of speech, which would truly be more similar to saying 'how mightily have you cast us off, just as you promised you would if we disobeyed you'. In other words, the Psalmist is lamenting over seeing Israel being cursed because they were not obeying God and is wondering *how long* it will last. In the book of Lamentations Jereimiah does the same thing, but without the figure of speech (Lam 2:7, 3:31).

Further, the words '**for ever**' would have been better rendered as ***continually*** (#5331). So, the Psalmist was simply saying that God's rejections (cursings) seemed like they would not end (i.e. they'll be forever). Yet we know from Scriptures that this is *not* true; God did *not* 'cast off' Israel *forever* (Isa 41:9-10, 54:7, Rom 11:1-12). But, it *felt* like it to the Psalmist because the 'desolations' *continued* for so long, and he didn't see any 'end in sight'. Now, the word '**smoke**' here is yet another figure of speech (*Anthropopatheia*, apx 6) where something is ascribed to God that 'belongs' to humans, creatures or even intimate objects. And we can understand this analogy; for even today we use smoke to refer to someone's *anger* being *so furious* that it's like they have a fire inside them and smoke is coming 'out of their heads' or 'nostrils'. In fact, the prime root that the word 'smoke' (#639) comes from does mean ***to be enraged*** (#599).

And then the Psalmist also uses a special term for Israel: the 'sheep' of God's pasture. This is not an entirely new term for Israel, albeit it was not used to refer to Israel until the Psalms. We saw David use this analogy in Psalms 23, of course. And then in Ps 44 Hezekiah used it (vs 11, 22) and it'll be used several more times in the book of the Psalms (Ps 78:52, Ps 79:13, Ps 95:7, Ps 100:3, Ps 119:176). And then, the prophet Isaiah picked up on it (Isa 53) and uses it not only for Israel (vs 6) but also when prophesying of Jesus Christ (vs 7). Zechariah also uses it in prophesying of how Jesus's disciples fled when He was arrested (Zech 13:7) and it's also used several times in the book of Jeremiah (Jer 12:3, Jer 23:1, Jer 50:6, 7), as well as in Ezekiel (Ezek 34:6, 11-12). And Jesus Christ also used this analogy quite a bit (Matt 10:6, 16, Matt 12:11-12, Matt 15:24, Matt 18:12-13, Matt 25:31-33, Matt 26:31, Luke 15:4-7, John 10:1-18, John 21:15-17). But, probably the best explanation for *why* this analogy is used, was given by Jesus Christ Himself, in Matt 9:36, when it is written that (referring to Jesus Christ): *But when he saw the*

multitudes, he was moved with compassion on them, because they fainted, and were scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd. So, Israel was likened to the sheep of God's 'pasture' because He is *as a Shepherd* who takes care of them; protecting them and leading them throughout the land to find good food to graze on. To learn more about this analogy, and why it's used, check out the 34th chapter of Ezekiel [https://t.me/BibleStudyBooks_Ezekiel/640]. Further, Paul also uses this analogy (Heb 13:20), as does Paul (1 Peter 2:25) when he quotes from Isaiah. But, it's important to understand that this analogy of The Shepherd (John 10) and His sheep teaches us *how much God really loves us*. If you study a bit on shepherding, you'll see *how much* time, care and devotion to the sheep it takes to be successful at raising them; this gives a whole new perspective to our Heavenly Father's love, care and devotion to His creation. And again, Psalms 23 [which you can study in depth here: https://t.me/BibleStudyBooks_Psalms/250], is of course, another chapter that well describes how God takes care of us, even during the most difficult of times. We should remember how much effort our Heavenly Father has put into governing us *for our benefit* (Deut 10:13). He loves to see us be safe, happy, healthy and to *grow* spiritually closer to Him. That is, after all, what gives us eternal life (John 17:3).

So, in this first verse, the Psalmist is not really asking a question. He's putting forth the fact that he knows our Heavenly Father (our Shepherd) is quite angry with His 'sheep' right now. And, he also knows *why*. So, his point is not that God is angry with 'His sheep' but that he is wondering *how long* He will let the desolations in His Sanctuary go on. And he is therefore going to remind God (Isa 43:26) how Israel is HIS 'flock' and use that as a basis for asking for help...

Psalms 74

2 Remember thy congregation, which thou hast purchased of old; the rod of thine inheritance, which thou hast redeemed; this mount Zion, wherein thou hast dwelt.

So, the Psalmist is asking God to remember that Israel is His inheritance, as He so admitted in Deut 32:9. And that's because He 'purchased' them 'of old', which is a reference to how He plagued Egypt until they let Israel go free *so they* could serve *Him* (Ex 4:23, 7:16, 8:1, 20, 9:1, 13, 10:3, Acts 7:7). And in doing so He also 'redeemed' Israel, which refers to the law of kinship (Num 5:9, 27:11, Lev 25:25-32 and the book of Ruth). You can learn more about this in the special study **Jesus - Our Kinsman Redeemer** [<https://t.me/BibleStudyTruth/1347>]. After God delivered the children of Israel, and parted the sea so they could safely cross over (protecting them from the Egyptian army) Moses and Israel sang a song. And in that song, they sang: *Thou in thy mercy hast led forth the people which thou hast redeemed; thou hast guided them in thy strength unto thy holy habitation* (Ex 15:13). And years later, when Moses was giving his last series of speeches (before he died), Moses declared this as well...

7 The LORD did not set his love upon you, nor choose you, because ye were more in number than any people; for ye were the fewest of all people:

*8 But because the LORD loved you, and because he would keep the oath which he had sworn unto your fathers, hath the LORD brought you out with a mighty hand, **and redeemed you out of the house of bondmen**, from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt.*

Deut 7:7-8

Further, the Psalmist is actually using a similar method of communicating with God as Moses did many years prior. After God plagued Egypt, and used Moses to lead Israel out of bondage, He led Israel into the wilderness. And while there He called Moses up into mount Siani to give Him instructions on how to make the ‘mobile’ Tabernacle. Moses was only up there for about a month before the children of Israel demanded that Aaron make them a golden calf to worship! God got so angry about this that He said to Moses...

7 And the LORD said unto Moses, Go, get thee down; for thy people, which thou broughtest out of the land of Egypt, have corrupted themselves:

8 They have turned aside quickly out of the way which I commanded them: they have made them a molten calf, and have worshipped it, and have sacrificed thereunto, and said, These be thy gods, O Israel, which have brought thee up out of the land of Egypt.

9 And the LORD said unto Moses, I have seen this people, and, behold, it is a stiffnecked people:

10 Now therefore let me alone, that my wrath may wax hot against them, and that I may consume them: and I will make of thee a great nation.

*11 And Moses besought the LORD his God, and said, LORD, why doth thy wrath wax hot against **thy** people, which **thou** hast brought forth out of the land of Egypt with great power, and with a mighty hand?*

12 Wherefore should the Egyptians speak, and say, For mischief did he bring them out, to slay them in the mountains, and to consume them from the face of the earth? Turn from thy fierce wrath, and repent of this evil against thy people.

*13 Remember Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, thy servants, **to whom thou swarest by thine own self**, and saidst unto them, I will multiply your seed as the stars of heaven, and all this land that I have spoken of will I give unto your seed, and they shall inherit it for ever.*

14 And the LORD repented of the evil which he thought to do unto his people.

Ex 32:7-14

God was *so* angry at Israel for their making an idol, and worshiping it, that He was *disowning* them. Notice how He spoke to Moses in verses 7 and said they were *Moses’* children and that he led them out of the wilderness! But, Moses didn’t let that stand. He reminded God that Israel was actually *His* children and that He led them out of Egypt with *great* power and a *mighty* hand (vs 11). That was quick and smart thinking on Moses’ part! Moses also reminded Israel of this shortly before they entered the promise land in Deut 9. And in verse 26 he said: *I prayed therefore unto the LORD, and said, O Lord GOD, destroy not thy people and thine inheritance, which **thou** hast redeemed through thy greatness, which thou hast brought forth out of Egypt*

with a mighty hand. And in verse 29 he also said: *Yet they are **thy** people and **thine inheritance**, which thou broughtest out by **thy mighty** power and by **thy** stretched out arm.* So, Moses was reminding God that Israel was His inheritance because He purchased (redeemed) them from bondage to the Egyptians. And that's why he begged God not to destroy all of them. And while God did agree not to destroy all of them, He did purge out the rebels (Ex 32:35). So, in a similar manner to what Moses did (interceding with God, on Israel's behalf by reminding God that Israel was *His* inheritance because He had purchased [redeemed] them), so too is this Psalmist doing. He's reminding God that Israel (His congregation, or better said, His nation) is **His** inheritance because **He** purchased them a *long time* ago (by plaguing Egypt). And the Psalmist also asks God to remember Mount Zion (in Jerusalem), because that is where **His** Temple was at the time of this writing. In fact, God Himself said that is where He would put His name (1 Kings 9:3) which means that's where He chose to dwell *forever*, as Ezekiel 16 attests to [which you can learn about here: https://t.me/BibleStudyBooks_Ezekiel/293]. And he asks this *because of* what is happening there... but we will have to wait until part 2 to learn about it!

*20 Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, **through the blood of the everlasting covenant**,
21 Make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is wellpleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.*

Heb 13:20-21

We'll pick this up in part 2...

AMEN.