

Part 1 – Turn to the Shepherd of Israel

We've now come to the *eighth* 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 **Psalms 73** had the subject/title of "***Outside the Sanctuary. Effect. Distraction***" as 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 can be *spiritually* close to God is to have His Words (through studying the Bible) and Holy Spirit (which is given to us when we believe in, *and obey*, His Word) in our heart and mind. And *that's* what keeps us safe, and strong, *no matter* how hard times get.

And then, **Psalm 74** had a different subject/title because it explained how the Sanctuary was *defiled*. Thus, the subject/title was "***The Enemy in the Sanctuary***". The historical fulfillment of this was during the Babylonian's *final* invasion of Jerusalem, when they looted and burned all houses, even the Temple. This indeed was the enemy in the Sanctuary, defiling it. But, while this Psalm had a historical fulfillment, it was also 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). This is when the enemy (Satan) will defile God's Sanctuary when he is kicked out of heaven, to earth, with his fallen angels. When he's here, he'll convince the world (through great lies, flattery, signs and wonders) to allow him to rule the world *and worship him* (and his wicked beast governing system) as though he is God Almighty (the Savior of the world). So, while the Sanctuary was *physically* defiled during the days Psalm 74 was written, the coming desolation will be *far worse*. For it'll be *Satan himself* defiling Jerusalem, the Sanctuary and (worst of all) the *hearts of God's children*, by his seducing them to worship him as he stands in the Sanctuary of the Temple, proclaiming himself to be God, the Savior and King of *all* (2 Thess 2).

And then, **Psalm 75** also had a different title. The subject/title was "***God's Anointed in the Sanctuary***". And it was, essentially, an answer to the Psalmist's plea (in Ps 74:22) when the Psalmist asked: "*Arise, O God, plead Thine own cause; remember how the foolish man reproacheth Thee daily*". And, in Psalm 75, God *definitely* 'pleaded His cause' to the enemy. It was thus a *strong* warning to the wicked that the Judge is *very* near and that He has a 'cup of wrath' that *will* be poured out upon them. But it wasn't only a warning to the enemy; it was also an *encouragement* to all who love, fear and obey our Heavenly Father (and Jesus Christ) that their long wait for justice was soon to be at an end. Because, as Isa 61:2 says, the day of vengeance of our God **is** *what comforts* all those who are oppressed and mourn for the desolations of the enemy (which Psalm 74 spoke of).

And then, **Psalm 76** had yet a different title/subject, although it was still concerning the ‘Sanctuary in relation to man’ as all 73-83 chapters are. So, the subject/title of that Psalm was “***The Destruction of the Enemies in the Sanctuary***”. And while, historically speaking, we were not told *when* this was written, the Psalm was clearly written during a time when God Almighty gave Israel a *mighty* victory over their enemies, who truly were God’s enemies too (for they blasphemed Him). And therefore, it was another beautifully *prophetic* Psalm that taught us what God will *soon* do to *His* enemies, who fight against Him and His faithful servants. He *will* destroy all their weapons of war and save all those who love, fear and obey Him in the process. So, it too was an ‘answer’ to the Psalmist’s plea back in Ps 74:22.

And then, in **Psalm 77**, we saw that it had a subject/title that was very similar to Psalm 73, which was “*Outside the Sanctuary, Effect and Distraction*”. But Psalm 77 subject/title is “***Outside the Sanctuary, Effect and Misery***”. Thus, the Psalmist began the Psalm by being *very* focused on himself and his problems. And, like Psalms 73, the Psalmist finally came around to realizing what his problem was, which was that his heart and mind was ‘outside the sanctuary’ and *that’s* why he was so miserable. This is important to understand because being consumed with ‘self’ (which is what being ‘outside the sanctuary’ is) not only brings misery, but also keeps us on a ‘pity party’ and will eventually bring about depression if we don’t learn to stop it, as this Psalmist did. So, it was another excellent Psalm to teach us how to *discipline* our own ‘inner man’ (heart and mind) to *stay focused* on God (the truth, reality – which is being ‘in the Sanctuary’) and *not* our ‘self’ (i.e. being ‘outside the Sanctuary’).

And then, **Psalm 78**, again had the subject/title of “***Outside the Sanctuary***” but with no additional words about it (i.e. ‘effect and distraction’ in Ps 73 and ‘effect and misery’ in Ps 77). And the reason for this is because the Psalmist was not speaking of *his own* being ‘outside the sanctuary’ but rather, he gave us an excellent history lesson of how many times *Israel* was ‘outside the sanctuary’, as well as the *effects* of it. So, the Psalm had a very important ‘moral’ to it. It showed us that ***Divine history contains more than what appears on the surface***. And that’s why 1 Cor 10:11 tells us the history in the Bible was recorded for *our* ‘admonition’, which means *a calling attention to* (reminder), i.e. (by implication) *mild rebuke or warning* (#3559). So, the history written of in Psalm 78 – which covered parts of Israel’s history from the time of Moses to the days of David – taught us many things. Especially how (and why) we should not be ungrateful, or faithless, as the Israelites in the past were. Though the generation who came out of Egypt were shown *many mighty* miracles, they continued to rebel against God *many* times *because* they were lustful, ungrateful and *forgot* all that the Lord (YHVH) had done for them. And thus, they were punished for their sins albeit God didn’t totally destroy them because of the promises He made to Abraham, Issac and Jacob/Israel. Instead, He kept His Word and brought Israel into the Promise Land (albeit the rebels died off before then) and caused them to inherit it. Yet, many future generations of the Israelites living in the Promise Land still rebelled against God. And that’s why He eventually forsook Shiloah (which had become terribly corrupted) and

allowed His Ark of the Covenant to be taken to Zion; and He also rose David up from being a shepherd of sheep to being the shepherd (king) over all of Israel. And that was truly a type for our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, who will rule over Israel, *forever*, once He returns at His Second Advent. So, in the end, sin never pays well; it only leads to death. But loving, fearing and obeying (serving) God Almighty (Jesus Christ) always ‘pays’ well because *that’s* what leads us to *eternal* life. And that’s really the ‘bottom line’ of the ‘moral lesson’ that the great Maschil Psalm 78 taught us. Being ‘outside the sanctuary’ (rebellious against God) only leads to pain, misery and eventually death. But being ‘inside the sanctuary’ (loving and obeying God) always leads to blessings and, eventually, *eternal* life; we simply must be *patient* for it (Heb 10:36-37).

And then, in the last chapter (**Psalm 79**), we learned that it had the same subject/title as Psalm 74 had. So, its subject/title was also “**The Enemy in the Sanctuary**”. And, just as the context of Psalm 74 revealed that it was written during the Babylonian’s *final* invasion of Jerusalem (when they looted and burned all houses, even the Temple), so too did the context of Psalm 79 seem to put it in the same time frame. And while both Psalm 74 and Psalm 79 had historical fulfillments, they are both quite *prophetical* of a time (soon) coming in the future, which 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).

And now, this next chapter (Psalm 80) – and the next two Psalms (81-82) – will have a different subject/title, which is “**God in the Sanctuary**”. And while this next chapter (Psalm 80) is actually another plea for help, it speaks much about how Israel was blessed when God was ‘in the Sanctuary’ verses when He *left them* due to *their* sins. So, it’s not only a plea for help, but also a call for God to help Israel turn *back to Him*, which is what is needed for God to ‘return’ and bless them again (i.e. and help them out of the mess they made for themselves!). And, as Ecc 1:9 so profoundly declares, there’s nothing new under the sun. Therefore, this is another Psalm that we can learn so much from, for our people (*true* Israel, i.e. the Christian nations) have again turned away from Him and are suffering the consequences for that (i.e. the cursings). And the *only* way to receive God’s blessings again, is for us to turn back to Him *sincerely*...

Psalm 80 *1 Psalm of A'-saph.*

Now, this is yet again another ‘*Psalm of A'-saph*. And this is now the *ninth*, of twelve, Psalms with this ‘title’. Psalms 50 was in the ‘Exodus Book’ while all the others (Ps 73-83) are in this ‘Leviticus Book’, that we’re currently studying. So, this Psalm was either written *by* A'-saph or *given to him* for public use in worship. And, as we’ve already learned from our past studies, 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, we’ve also learned that not all the Psalms of A'-saph were the *same* A'-saph that lived during the days of David and

Solomon; and this is simply because the things that were described in some of the Psalms of Asaph did not happen during the days of David or Solomon (like destruction and defilement of the Temple). So, this Psalm (like Psalm 74 and 79) of ‘A’-saph’ was likely written by **a successor bearing the same name** because he’ll be speaking of things that simply didn’t happen during the days of David or Solomon...

Psalm 80

I ... Give ear, O Shepherd of Israel, thou that leadest Joseph like a flock; thou that dwellest between the cherubims, shine forth.

Now, the words ‘**give ear**’ simply are simply a request for God (Israel’s Shepherd) **to listen** (#238) to what’s about to be said in this Psalm. And the word ‘**shepherd**’ not only means **to tend to a flock** but also **to rule** (#7462). Thus, the word ‘**flock**’ is not only a collective name for a **group of sheep or goats** but also figurative **for men** (and women) (#6629). And the *Companion Bible* has an enlightening note on this verse pointing out how God was actually spoken of as the Shepherd back in Genesis when Israel (i.e. Jacob) blessed his son, Joseph...

22 Joseph is a fruitful bough, even a fruitful bough by a well; whose branches run over the wall:

23 The archers have sorely grieved him, and shot at him, and hated him:

*24 But his bow abode in strength, and the arms of his hands were made strong by the hands of the **mighty God of Jacob**; (from thence is the shepherd, the stone of Israel.)*

25 Even by the God of thy father, who shall help thee; and by the Almighty, who shall bless thee with blessings of heaven above, blessings of the deep that lieth under, blessings of the breasts, and of the womb:

Gen 49:22-25

So, not only did Jacob/Israel call his God (Yehovah) his Shepherd but also his ‘Stone’, which is also spoken of as *the* ‘Stone’ in Deut 32:4, *and* in 1 Cor 10:4, when referring to Jesus Christ (who is God incarnate, <https://t.me/BibleStudyGodsWord/460>). And Jacob/Israel also alluded to God being his Shepherd back in Gen 48:15 when he said: *God, before whom my fathers Abraham and Isaac did walk, the God which fed me all my life long unto this day*. As a good Shepherd, the Lord (Yehovah = YHVH) led Jacob/Israel through the wilderness when he went to his mother’s family to find a wife, as Deut 32:10 also speaks of. It’s also important to remember that, many times in the Scriptures, Joseph is used to refer to the *entire* nation of Israel, not just the one man named Jacob. And what is also beautiful, is that God not only led that one man Jacob through the wilderness to find a wife, He also led the *nation* of Israel through the wilderness (after He freed them from Egypt) into the Promise Land. And that’s why the term ‘Shepherd’ has been used so much in the Psalms (Ps 23, 44, Ps 95:7, 100:3, 119:176), especially the Psalms of Asaph (Ps 74:1, 77:20, 78:52, 79:13). And the analogy of *The Shepherd* (John 10) and *His* sheep also 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, as we shall see, that's the point that this Psalmist is drawing on here in this great Psalm 80 as well.

But, the Psalmist also refers to God (Yehovah) as the one that *dwellest between the cherubims*. And this is clearly a reference to the point in Israel's history when they had set up the Tabernacle for God (Yehovah). In the 'holy of holies' (the innermost room of the Sanctuary) was where the Ark of the Covenant was. And on top of that was the 'mercy seat' (which was God's throne) and two cherubims were on top of the Ark (on the two ends of it), *covering* the 'mercy seat' to *'protect it'*. You can learn more about this in Ex 25 [https://t.me/BibleStudyBooks_Exodus/170] and Ex 25:22 specifically tells us that from *above* the mercy seat, is where God 'sat' to commune with Moses from.

So, the Psalmist is not only calling upon God Almighty (Yehovah) as Israel's Shepherd but also as their King, who literally dwelt with them as they were in the wilderness, and also in the Promise Land. And he asks for God (Israel's Shepherd and King) to '**shine forth**', which indeed means **to shine** (#3313). This is likely a reference to the 'priestly blessing' that Aaron and his sons were supposed to give to the whole house of Israel...

23 Speak unto Aaron and unto his sons, saying, On this wise ye shall bless the children of Israel, saying unto them,

24 The LORD bless thee, and keep thee:

25 The LORD make his face shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee:

26 The LORD lift up his countenance upon thee, and give thee peace.

27 And they shall put my name upon the children of Israel; and I will bless them.

Num 6:23-27

While this was a simple prayer the priests were supposed to say in front of the nation of Israel, the only way that God's 'face' ever 'shined' on Israel was when they were *obeying* Him. *That's* why it was also the priest's duty to *teach* Israel God's Laws and *help them* learn how to obey them, from the heart (Lev 10:11). And truly, that is the duty of every Christian today, too. For, when the light of truth shines in our hearts (thanks to the Holy Spirit teaching us truth, 2 Cor 4:6) we too are to 'shine' like a candle so the world can see the truth. As Jesus also said in Matt 5:16, *let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven...*

Psalm 80

2 Before Ephraim and Benjamin and Manasseh stir up thy strength, and come and save us.

The word ‘before’ here actually means **the face**, *as the part that turns* (#6440). And the words ‘stir up’ mean **to wake** (#5782). We still use this analogy today when saying that’ve been ‘wakened up’ to the truth, or something of that nature. Basically, the Psalmist is calling on the Lord (YHVH) *to take action*, which is why he then asks that God ‘come and save us’ *by stirring* (waking up) His ‘strength’, which means **force**, **valor** and even **victory** (#1369). It’s also been rendered as *power* as well. And the word ‘save’ here is the Hebrew word **yeshuw’ ah** (#3444), which means **something saved**, i.e. (abstractly) **deliverance**; hence, **aid**, **victory**, **prosperity**. It comes from #3467, which is one of the two prime roots for the Hebrew word (#3091) that Jesus’ Greek name (#2424) comes from. But, why does he ask that God ‘stir up’ His strength before Ephraim and Benjamin and Manasseh? Well, Ephraim and Manasseh were the only two sons of Joseph; and Benjamin was Joseph’s full blood brother, by Rachel. So, of all the tribes, these were the closest in relation because Joseph and Benjamin both had the same mother.

But, that really doesn’t explain why they are being used together here. However, the *Companion Bible* has another insightful note that explains that, when Israel was in the wilderness, these three tribes were delegated by God to march together in the rear (back, or West side) of the nation, as Numbers 2:18-22 documents. There’s a great picture of Israel’s encampment in the *Companion Bible*, on page 181, if you’d like to check it out [<https://t.me/BestStudyBible/6>]. And the *Companion Bible* also notes (here in Ps 80:2) that, while *Ephraim and Benjamin and Manasseh* were in the rear (back) of the encampment, the tribes of Judah, Issachar and Zebulun were in the front, with the Ark of the Covenant (which is symbolic of God’s presence) so that truly, God did lead Israel through the wilderness, just as a Shepherd (Ps 78:13-16, 52-55; John 10:4-5). So, *Ephraim and Benjamin and Manasseh* were in the ‘rear’ of the encampment and it was therefore their duty to protect Israel’s ‘backside’!

So, in modern day language, the Psalmist is essentially asking God to ‘save their ass’! And we literally have an example of how God did this when He was leading Israel out of Egypt. When Israel had come to the Red Sea, and there was no where else they could go, the Egyptian army came up from behind them and were getting ready to attack them. But, God moved His cloud that was in front (leading them) to the rearward (behind them), so that His cloud protected them from the Egyptian army until they could cross the Red Sea - which of course, He miraculously parted for them (Ex 14:19-20). We actually learned about this recently back in Psalms 78:13-14 [https://t.me/BibleStudyBooks_Psalms/910]. Truly, *the Lord is faithful, who shall stablish you, and keep you from evil* (2 Thess 3:3). So, long as we don’t forsake Him, He’ll always ‘have our back’!

Psalms 80

3 Turn us again, O God, and cause thy face to shine; and we shall be saved.

Yet again, the *Companion Bible* helps us in understanding this verse. For it points out that this verse is another figure of speech (*Cycloides*, apx 6) where the repetition of the same phrase is used at regular intervals, which is why it'll be used again in verses 7 and 19. And the words 'turn us again' literally mean **to turn back** (#7725). This is a request for God to help them *turn away from idolatry* (which is what was causing their problems) and *turn back to Him* - so that He *could* 'shine' His 'face' upon them again (i.e. save them). Shining His face upon Israel was simply another way to say (a figure of speech) that He would bless Israel (as the end of Num 2 reveals), *which included* saving and protecting them. Truly, God won't bless (or condone) sin; and He, therefore, won't save us *unless* we're willing to repent *sincerely* and turn back to worshiping (and obeying) Him - and Him *only*.

And, while it's true we must love God in our heart and mind, if we don't strive sincerely to obey Him, then we really don't love Him. As we say today 'actions speak louder than words'. But the way God said it was that: *this people draw near me with their mouth, and **with their lips do honour me, but have removed their heart far from me**, and their fear toward me is taught by the precept of men* (Isa 29:13). And Jesus actually quoted this verse in Matt 15:8-9 and Mark 7:6-9, when answering the religious hypocrites of His day, who accused His apostles of being unrighteous because they didn't do the ritual 'hand washings' that the other 'religious' men did. As Psalms 50 pointed out, all of our outward worship means absolutely *nothing* to God *unless* we actually worship Him *inwardly* (in our heart and mind). And if we are not actually obeying Him (trying sincerely to do so, which also means studying His Word to understand *how* to obey Him) then *we really don't love Him*.

This is why Jesus said that **if** we truly love Him, *we'll keep His commandment* (John 14:15), which are truly commandments from God (John 7:16). And that's why Jesus also gave us a parable explaining that, those who *don't* obey Him are like those who build their house (heart and mind) upon the sand (lies). They will *spiritually* fall to deception (i.e. worship Satan and other evil angels via idols). But those who really do love God *will* obey Him and *that's* why they are likened to a man who built His house (heart and mind) on a rock (God and Jesus Christ, Deut 32:4 and 1 Cor 10:4). Those who don't fall for deception have their heart (desires, emotions) and mind (thoughts) solid upon *the truth*, which is God's Word (Matt 7:24-27).

So again, the only way they (or we) could be saved was by turning their hearts and minds back to God *and* striving *sincerely* to obey Him. The word 'save' here is the Hebrew word **yasha'** (#3467), which means **to be open, wide** or **free**, i.e. (by implication) **to be safe**; causatively, to **free** or **succor**. And it's one of the two prime roots that the Hebrew word (#3091) for Jesus' Greek name (#2424) comes from. And it was Jesus Christ (God incarnate, John 1:1,14) who came to earth and paid for our sins *to free us from Satan's deception* (Heb 2:14) The reason people willingly do evil is because they believe there are no consequences for them. As Prov 16:6 says, *only by the fear of the LORD men depart from evil*. But the lie of Satan is that we can

‘become gods’ (as he told Eve) by doing whatever we want; Satan (and those who serve him) claim we won’t die for disobeying God... and *that* lie has been told *over and over again* - in many ways, shapes and forms – throughout the centuries since poor Eve first fell for it! So, the bottom line is that: people are fooled into sinning because they don’t believe in (or love) the truth – which is what saves us (2 Thess 2:10, John 6:63, 17:17) – but rather *find pleasure in unrighteousness* (2 Thess 2:12). And *that’s* the problem this Psalmist is pleading with God to fix in the heart of Israel. And this truly is what God wanted also. As he said in Ezek 18:31: *Cast away from you all your transgressions, whereby ye have transgressed; and **make you a new heart and a new spirit: for why will ye die, O house of Israel?*** Yet, God had an answer for this, which He explained again in the book of Ezekiel...

24 For I will take you from among the heathen, and gather you out of all countries, and will bring you into your own land.

25 Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you.

*26 **A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you:** and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh.*

*27 **And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them.***

28 And ye shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers; and ye shall be my people, and I will be your God.

Ezek 36:24-28

So, God *did* have plans to ‘turn back’ Israel from their idols and false gods (i.e. restoring them *spiritually* so they could be restored back into a Covenantal relationship with Him *and* receive His blessings). And this was fulfilled *after* Jesus Christ died for our sins, and then gave us the precious gift of the Holy Spirit - for accepting Jesus Christ’s atoning blood (and receiving the Holy Spirit that comes from faith in Jesus) is the only way our heart and mind *can* ‘turn back’ to the *true* God Almighty (YHWH). Paul calls this putting off the ‘old man’ (our carnal mind, which is the part of us that wants to sin, Rom 8) and putting on the ‘new man’, which is created (by studying God’s Word, Col 3:10) in the image of God’s righteousness and holiness (Eph 4:24). So, the problems Israel was having when this Psalmist was writing this Psalm were truly no different than ours (the Christian nations) are today. And while we’d all like to see our nations become great again (i.e. see God’s face shine on us again), that’ll never happen unless we turn back to Him sincerely, as the study on **How Do We Get Out of this National Mess** well explains [<https://t.me/BibleStudyDownload/493>].

Therefore, even though God indeed led Jacob through the wilderness – which He also did for Israel in the wilderness *and* for the ‘scattered tribes’ Israel – and blessed him (and us) greatly, we have (like Israel of old, Ps 78), corrupted ourselves yet again (Ex 32:7, Deut 32:5, Jud 2:19, Hosa

9:9, 2 Cor 11:3, 13-15). Therefore, we too need to be ‘turned back’ to the true God (YHVH) in order to be saved. For salvation *only* comes from knowing the *true* God (Yehovah) and the *true* Jesus Christ (*not* the false one <https://t.me/BibleStudyDownload/345>], as Jesus clearly told us in John 17:17. And if we want God Almighty to ‘have our back’ – as He did for Israel of old *when* they were *obedient* to Him – then we’ve got to make darn sure that we cleave to the one and only true God, with *all* our heart, mind and soul *for the rest of our life*...

- 1 *My son, forget not my law; but **let thine heart keep my commandments**:*
- 2 *For length of days, and long life, and peace, shall they add to thee.*
- 3 *Let not **mercy and truth** forsake thee: bind them about thy neck; **write them upon the table of thine heart**:*
- 4 *So shalt thou find favour and good understanding in the sight of God and man.*
- 5 ***Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding.***
- 6 *In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.*
- 7 *Be not wise in thine own eyes: **fear the LORD, and depart from evil.***
- 8 *It shall be health to thy navel, and marrow to thy bones.*

Prov 3:1-8

We’ll pick this up in part 2...

AMEN.