

LESSONS THIS QUARTER

- 1) 04 June Psalm 001 The Path
- 2) 11 June Psalm 078 The Past**
- 3) 18 June Psalm 023 The Shepherd
- 4) 25 June Psalm 138 Our Response
- 5) 02 July Psalm 084 His Presence
- 6) 09 July Psalm 095 The Creator
- 7) 16 July Psalm 019 God Revealed
- 8) 23 July Psalm 136 His Love
- 9) 30 July Psalm 146 His Faithfulness
- 10) 06 Aug Psalm 051 The Confession
- 11) 13 Aug Psalm 032 The Cleansing
- 12) 20 Aug Psalm 141 The Protector
- 13) 27 Aug Psalm 042 The Longing

INTRODUCTION

- **Psalm 78 has a duel role:**
 - ♦ 1st, it gives us an historical panorama of Israel's shortcomings and accomplishments beginning with their Egyptian Exodus to the time of King David and the building of God's Sanctuary.
 - ♦ 2nd, Psalm 78 is didactic or instructive in how we should treat God and His word if we want to position ourselves for blessings
- **Recall God's dealings with Israel.** God wanted to bless His people immensely if they simply, humbly, and willingly obeyed His commands; but they preferred to chase after illicit sex & false gods. God then had to ratchet up His discipline of His people:
 - ♦ He allowed them to reap what they sowed [Jer 25:14](#)
 - ♦ He sent economic & environmental challenges [Is 29:6](#)
 - ♦ He sent foreign armies to harass them [2Ki 21:14](#)
 - ♦ He sent plagues to try and turn their hearts [Lev 26:16](#)
 - ♦ He allowed them to be conquered by evil nations [Hab 1:13](#)
 - ♦ God would punish them 7x for their sins [Lev 26:18,21,24,28](#)
 - ♦ God continuously told His people to return & repent, then He would fully heal & restore – until He reached His breaking point.
 - ♦ When King Manasseh “caused Israel to sin” atrociously with rampant child sacrifices and allowing male cult prostitutes in His Temple, then God said, “I will no longer forgive” [2Ki 24:3-4](#)

| Passage | Comments |
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| 78:21-33 | <p>The Anger of God Rose Against Him</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remember – These were His children, so God had the right to discipline them in His love, mercy, justice, & righteousness • v22. Core issue – They did not believe in God & did not trust in His salvation – and it was willful refusal on their part <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Recall what Jesus said to unbelieving Jews of His day, “...I say these things so that you may be saved...but you are unwilling to come to me so that you may have life” – So, eternal life is based on one's willingness to come to God on His terms John 6:34-40 |
| 78:34-39 | <p>When God Killed His People, Then Survivors Sought Him</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why do people wait till the roof falls in before they seek God? • What more can God do to turn His wayward children around? • He tried love and tough love before ratcheting up His wrath? • vv35-36. Even their repentance was contrived, feigned, fake • v38. Yet, His wrath was tempered toward them • v39. Fortunately, God remembers our frailty. As my daughter says, “Dad, Scripture says we are “Butt Dust”....Psalm 103:14 |
| 78:40-53 | <p>Israel Continually Provoked God by Their Sins</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Israel's character traits mimic those of other unbelievers • v41 They sinned continually; • v42 They failed to recall God's wonders & goodness; • v58 They provoked God to the breaking point <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ God's patience with the wayward is not infinite – Today is the day of salvation (2Cor 6:2); “Seek the LORD while He may be found; Call upon Him while He is near” (Isa 55:6) |
| 78:54-64 | <p>God Greatly Abhorred His Own Children</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • v59. Finally, it is stated God “abhorred” His own children <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ The result was near total annihilation of His people; destruction of His temple; and the slaying of even the priests ♦ God even warned His people He would abhor them if they commit similar sins as the Canaanites (homosexuality, bestiality, child sacrifice) whom they displaced – and they did, so He did Leviticus 26:30 |
| 78:65-72 | <p>God Focused on the Tribe of Judah & His True Shepherd</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Many Psalms often end on a positive note, and Psalm 78 seems to do that, at least from an Israelite perspective • From a human perspective, Ps 78 seems to convey that God finally woke up from a deep sleep after His people were slain and His temple ransacked and demolished • vv65-67. Yet, He not only rebuked Israel's enemies, but proceed to thrash the various tribes of Israel, except for Judah • vv68-72. With hindsight, we realize, Jesus is “David His servant” and will one day be Israel's “skillful” Shepherd |

| Passage | Comments |
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| Psalm 78:1-4 | <p>LISTEN UP</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • v2. We are commanded to “listen” and “incline” our ears to God's word. HOW do we do this? <input type="checkbox"/> Willingly? <input type="checkbox"/> Casually? <input type="checkbox"/> Eagerly? <input type="checkbox"/> When it is Convenient? <input type="checkbox"/> Seriously? <input type="checkbox"/> Continually? <input type="checkbox"/> Temporarily? HOW do we measure up? • v4. We should tell future generations what great wonders God did in the past. This conveys God may not always work wondrously or supernaturally in every generation – BUT He is still the same God – Yesterday, Today, and Forever! |
| 78:5-8 | <p>Teach the Next Generation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • vv5-7. We need to teach the next generation how to teach succeeding generations of the truth of God's word and of His greatness 2Timothy 2:2 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ HOW do we do this? When should we do this? ♦ How frequently should we do this? Daily? Weekly? Yearly? • v8. HOW NOT TO DO IT → DO NOT BE UNPREPARED <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ First, prepare our own hearts – HOW? |
| 78:9-16 | <p>Israel Refused to Obey</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • vv10-11. Israel “REFUSED to walk in His Law” and FORGOT His mighty wonders and miracles <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ This was WILLFUL disobedience and UNWILLINGNESS to prepare their hearts to stay faithful ♦ God did not make any of us robots, but gave us Free Will ♦ How do we challenge ourselves and others to stay faithful? ♦ Can we change those who really don't want to change? ♦ Even God cannot lead unruly cows Hos 4:16 |
| 78:17-20 | <p>What More Can God Do?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • v17. God's chosen people continued to willfully sin against Him even after giving them free food & water for 40 years <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Why were such blessed people so ungrateful? ♦ How do we maintain a thankful and grateful heart for God's goodness to us? It begins with willfully preparing our heart |

CONCLUSION / APPLICATIONS / CONSIDERATIONS

- There are several considerations to glean from Psalm 78:
 - ♦ Most Israelites, though labeled as God's covenant people, were predominantly unsaved. God always dealt with a remnant (unlike the Lord's Church, who are predominantly saved)
 - ♦ God often punished the majority for the sinful actions of a minority, which were representative of the majority
 - ♦ Better days are coming for the remnant of Israel and for the Church when the True Shepherd (Jesus) arrives to guide us 'skillfully'
 - ♦ **Application.** The core ingredient for success is the heart of God's people – Do we willingly obey His word or ignore it?

NEXT WEEK: Psalm 23. This classic Psalm depicts God being able to lead us through dark and troubling valleys to eventually come out the other side fully promoted before our enemies

