

Welcome to: - Bible House of Grace.



God, through His Son Jesus, provides eternal grace for our failures and human limitations.

Psalm 78.

(2015)

The Bible not only reveals God's eternal plans purposes and promises

But also shows how you can know God for yourself.

Teach it, don't demand it.

Although I believe my aim is pure and God's will perfect this document is still the product of a human man. As to such I neither claim special knowledge or perfect understanding.

If you think items presented on this site to be in error, please let me know and I will gladly reconsider the content.

Psalm 78.

Topics.

- I will tell future generation the glorious deeds of God and his wonders.
- God established a testimony in Jacob and appointed a law in Israel.
- The Ephraimites turned back from battle and did not keep God's covenant.
- Can God spread a table in the wilderness? Can he give meat?
- God rained down manna and man ate the bread of the angels.
- Israel remembered God was their rock; the Most High, but they flattered him.
- Israel grieved God He restrained his wrath remembering Israel was flesh.
- In Egypt God turned rivers to blood and sent destroying angels.
- God led Israel through the sea and brought them to his holy land.
- God was full of wrath he rejected Israel and delivered his glory to captivity.
- God chose David to shepherd Jacob his people, Israel his inheritance.

INTRODUCTION: Psalms are songs and prayers offered to God by the nation Israel, they cover the range of human emotion, expressing praise, faith, victory, sorrow, despair, depression, frustration and the troubled heart of a mourner. They contrast the righteous with the wicked, and include the wisdom and the treasure of God's word. Psalms were written at the beginning of the 15th century BC and probably collected in their final form in the 3rd century.

FOR INFORMATION: concerning people, places and the meaning of words see the title: "Map Locations and People of the Bible," and the title: "Bible Dictionary" on Website Menu.

Following is the progression of the Psalm: Asaph tells the new generation of: -

- Israel's past History (v1-4).
- How God established the law and the covenant with Israel (v5-8).
- How God led Israel out of Egypt (v9-13).
- How God splits rocks open in the wilderness (v14-17).
- How God reigned down manna from heaven in the wilderness (v18-31).
- God's great patience with Israel in the wilderness (v32-40).

Asaph then reflects back over what he has previously said: -

- Concerning Israel's deliverance out of Egypt (v41-51).
- Concerning God leading Israel's out of Egypt and into the wilderness (v52-55).
- Concerning God forsaking Israel in the land of Canaan (v56-64).

Asaph then speaks of David building the Sanctuary on Mount Zion in Jerusalem (v65-72).

A Maskil of Asaph (this Psalm covers Israel's history and their sin).

Asaph tells the new generation he will tell of Israel's past History.

I will tell Future Generation the Glorious Deeds of God and His Wonders.

Psalm 78:1-4 ----- ¹Give ear, O my people, to my teaching; incline your ears to the words of my mouth! ²I will open my mouth in a parable; I will utter dark sayings from of old, ³things that we have heard and known, that our fathers have told us. ⁴We will not hide them from their children, but tell to the coming generation the glorious deeds of the LORD, and his might, and the wonders that he has done.

Parable: comes from the Hebrew word (*mashal*) and carries the idea of a poem, proverb, discourse or story.

Dark: comes from the Hebrew word (*chiydah*) and means a puzzle or riddle it carries the idea of a proverb or a hard question, saying or speech.

In Deuteronomy chapter four God said to Israel, "Take care, to make all the things that your eyes have seen to your children and your children's children so that they may teach their children. (Deut. 4:9-10). This is exactly what Asaph is doing in this Psalm. He addresses the Psalm to the entire congregation of Israel. The amazing thing is that Asaph does not hide any of his own nation's wickedness. This is the beauty of the Bible it does not try to hide the sin of God's people, but shines a light on both the good and bad. Asaph does not hide anything in fact the most common expression he uses throughout the entire Psalm is that the previous generations of Israel who had gone before them: -

- Did not keep God's covenant, but refused to walk according to his law (v10).
- Tested God in their heart and spoke against Him (v18-19).
- Continued to sin and despite all God's wonders they did not believe (v32).
- Rebelled against the Most High God the Holy One of Israel and did not keep his testimonies (v41, 56).

The entire reason Asaph is teaching the new born children of God the law of God and the word of God and does not hide Israel's past wickedness is so that the new born children of God would: -

- Set their hope in God, keep His law and not forget His works (v7).
- Not be stubborn, rebellious and unfaithful to God (v8).

As their fathers before them were, but keep the LORD'S commandments and follow Him with a faithful heart.

Asaph tells of how God established the law and the covenant with Israel.

God Established a Testimony in Jacob and Appointed a Law in Israel.

Psalm 78:5-8 ----- ⁵He established a testimony in Jacob and appointed a law in Israel, which he commanded our fathers to teach to their children, ⁶that the next generation might know them, the children yet unborn, and arise and tell them to their children, ⁷so that they should set their hope in God and not forget the works of God, but keep his commandments; ⁸and that they should not be like their fathers, a stubborn and rebellious generation, a generation whose heart was not steadfast, whose spirit was not faithful to God.

The testimony God established with Israel was the Covenant He made with them at Mount Sinai and the law refers to the Ten Commandments and the Levitical Law. Again Asaph reinforces the principal of teaching God's word from generation to generation. Though this applies to Israel by extension it is one of the reasons the world has fallen so far away from God, even our schools today teach our children the theory of evolution as an absolute scientific truth and this teaching denies the existence of God.

Sadly the further each generation moves away from God the more corrupt they become causing God to lift His hand of blessing further away from the planet we live upon as He did with His chosen nation Israel, until the cup of iniquity, corruption and wickedness is overflowing and His judgment is poured out.

Asaph tells of how God led Israel out of Egypt.

The Ephraimites Turned Back from Battle and did Not Keep God's Covenant.

Psalm 78:9-13 ----- ⁹The Ephraimites, armed with the bow, turned back on the day of battle. ¹⁰They did not keep God's covenant, but refused to walk according to his law. ¹¹They forgot his works and the wonders that he had shown them. ¹²In the sight of their fathers he performed wonders in the land of Egypt, in the fields of Zoan. ¹³He divided the sea and let them pass through it, and made the waters stand like a heap.

Ephraim: was one of the largest tribes of Israel, and was the chief tribe in the rebellion and is therefore often used to denote the ten tribes of the Northern Kingdom and referred to as the kingdom of Israel in distinction to the Southern Kingdom (the two tribes) called the Kingdom of Judah.

The Ephraimites, armed with the bow, turned back on the day of battle: (v9) bows and arrow were one of the main weapons of war. The idea is that they were fully equipped with weapons of war and well-armed to meet the enemy, but they did not keep the Covenant or God's law and therefore could not stand their ground in the day of battle and turned back and fled from the enemy.

There is no specific reference here to any particular battle, many speculations have been made, but they are only speculations so it is better to keep it as Asaph intended and allow it to embrace any battle in which rebellious Ephraim fled from their enemy.

Zoan: the word Zoan means a place of departure. It was a very ancient royal city (Isa. 19:11, 13) (Isa. 30:4) of Lower Egypt (Num. 13:22) on the east side of the Tanitic arm of the Nile River. It is the cite mentioned in connection with the first mighty works of God by Moses and the plagues which leave no doubt that it is the city spoken of in Exodus where Pharaoh dwelt (Ps. 78:12) (Ps. 78:42-43). Vast heaps of ruined temples, obelisks, sphinxes, etc., attest to the ancient grandeur of this city and its ruin according to Ezekiel's prophecy, "I will make Pathros a desolation and will set fire to Zoan and will execute judgments on Thebes." (Ezek. 30:14).

The field of Zoan: (v12) was a rich plain extending thirty miles toward the east. The present field of Zoan is a barren waste that is very thinly inhabited. One of the principal capitals of Pharaoh is now the habitation of fishermen the resort of wild beasts and infested with reptiles and malignant fevers. There have been discovered a great number of monuments here which throw light upon Bible history.

Asaph reminds the children of Israel: -

- God performed wonders in the fields of Zoan the land of Egypt.
- God miraculously divided the Red Sea and let the people pass through it.
- During the day God led Israel by a thick cloud and at night by a fiery light.

Yet they refused to keep God's law and covenant and forgot His works and the wonders that He had shown them. This does not mean that they mentally forgot no one could mentally forget such amazing wonders and horrors. It carries the idea that they gave God's amazing works no value, they place no importance upon them, but rather ignored the fact that they displayed how God loved and cared for them and they lacked any sense of gratitude for what He had done for them. Instead of the manifestation of God's great power toward them being a motivation for them to faithfully follow Him they ignored them and placed no value upon them and refused to keep the covenant and instead followed their own wicked ways.

It could be likened to a sinner hearing the message of the bloodstained cross of Calvary and the Gospel and accepting the Lord Jesus Christ as their Saviour and then after some time turning their back on him to go their own corrupt way. It could be said of them that they forgot what Christ suffered and the great price he paid to show his love toward them and save them to eternal life. Forgot in this context means that they gave Christ's sufferings no value and placed no importance upon it and instead of faithfully following him refused and went their own way.

Asaph tells of how God splits rocks open in the wilderness.

Israel Sinned against God, Rebelling Against the Most High in the Desert.

Psalm 78:14-17 ----- ¹⁴In the daytime he led them with a cloud, and all the night with a fiery light. ¹⁵He split rocks in the wilderness and gave them drink abundantly as from the deep. ¹⁶He made streams come out of the rock and caused waters to flow down like rivers. ¹⁷Yet they sinned still more against him, rebelling against the Most High in the desert.

Throughout this Psalm Asaph highlights the wickedness and ungrateful heart of Israel, after witnessing all the amazing wonders God has performed for them they sinned and rebelled even more against their God the Most High.

Asaph reminds the children of Israel: -

- God led them by day with a cloud and by night with a fiery light (v14).
- God split rocks open in the wilderness and fresh water flowed out to drink like rivers (v14).

Yet they gave all these wonders no value and sinned still more against their God the Most High in the wilderness.

Asaph tells how God reigned down manna from heaven in the wilderness.

Can God Spread a Table in the Wilderness? Can He Give Meat?

Psalm 78:18-22 ----- ¹⁸They tested God in their heart by demanding the food they craved. ¹⁹They spoke against God, saying, "Can God spread a table in the wilderness? ²⁰He struck the rock so that water gushed out and streams overflowed. Can he also give bread or provide meat for his people?" ²¹Therefore, when the LORD heard, he was full of wrath; a fire was kindled against Jacob; his anger rose against Israel, ²²because they did not believe in God and did not trust his saving power.

In colloquial language Israel's question and attitude could be expressed in the following words: -

- OK so God struck a rock and caused rivers of water to flow out and overflow so that we had more than enough to drink, but can He spread a table in the wilderness and give His people bread and meat to eat.

What makes this question and attitude such a great sin before God is that it is spoken sarcastically and in unbelief.

Instead of coming to God with a heart of thankfulness for all the wonders they had seen and for what he had done for them and in humble prayer asking Him for bread and meat they spoke with a sarcastic spirit of unbelief (i.e., can God spread a table in the wilderness). After seeing all the wonders they should have known God could and would do anything for His people Israel if they came to him with a humble heart of faithfulness and gratitude.

God rained down Manna and Man ate the Bread of the Angels.

Psalm 78:23-31 ----- ²³Yet he commanded the skies above and opened the doors of heaven, ²⁴and he rained down on them manna to eat and gave them the grain of heaven. ²⁵Man ate of the bread of the angels; he sent them food in abundance. ²⁶He caused the east wind to blow in the heavens, and by his power he led out the south wind; ²⁷he rained meat on them like dust, winged birds like the sand of the seas; ²⁸he let them fall in the midst of their camp, all around their dwellings. ²⁹And they ate and were well filled, for he gave them what they craved. ³⁰But before they had satisfied their craving, while the food was still in their mouths, ³¹the anger of God rose against them, and he killed the strongest of them and laid low the young men of Israel.

How stunning is this? God was full of wrath at Israel's lack of faith in His power to provide for them and lack of gratitude yet He still rained on them manna the bread of the angels to eat in abundance.

Introduction to manna: when the people of Israel were in the wilderness of Sin (Exod. 16:1) all of Israel accused Moses and Aaron of killing them with hunger (Exod. 16:3), so the LORD said He would rain bread from heaven (Exod. 16:4). The people of Israel were to gather manna for six days (Exod. 16:26) and not to leave any of it over till the morning (Exod. 16:19). They were only to gather as much as each person was able to eat for the day (Exod. 16:16). There would be no manna on the seventh day (the Sabbath Day) (Exod. 16:25, 30). On the sixth day the LORD would give Israel bread for two days (Exod. 16:29) so they were to gather twice as much as they gathered on the other days of the week (Exod. 16:5). The extra manna they took for the Sabbath Day (Saturday) would not stink or breed worms (Exod. 16:24) as the manna did for the other six days of the week if the people tried to store it up for the next day (Exod. 16:20).

The LORD'S purpose for the manna: the LORD would use the manna to test Israel to see whether they would walk in His law or not (Exod. 16:4). He fed Israel with manna so that He might humble Israel and test them, to do them good in the end (Deut. 8:16). God humbled Israel and let them hunger then fed them with manna, so that He might make Israel know that man does not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of the LORD (Deut. 8:3).

Israel's disobedience regarding the manna: some of the people of Israel rebelled against the word of the LORD and stored some of the manna for the morning, but it bred worms and stank (Exod. 16:20) and on the seventh day some people disobeyed God and went out to get manna on the Sabbath Day, but they found none (Exod. 16:27) thus Israel failed the test to obey the word of the LORD (Exod. 16:28).

Manna was like: white coriander seed (Exod. 16:31) and the taste of it was like wafers made with honey (Exod. 16:31). Every morning they had manna to eat (Exod. 16:13) and in the evening they had quail to eat (Exod. 16:13). Israel ate manna forty years, till they came to the border of Canaan (Exod. 16:35). The day after Israel ate of the produce of the land of Canaan the manna stopped (Joshua 5:12). Even though God had supplied all Israel an abundance of manna to eat they disobeyed Him by gathering more than they needed. Throughout this Psalm Israel's attitude could be compared to a loving earthy father giving his son the bike he had always craved and the son instead of thanking him immediately complains that he hasn't got the latest PlayStation.

Asaph reminds the children of Israel: -

- Israel spoke against God, saying, Can God give bread or provide meat for his people (v20).

- Israel did not believe in God and did not trust his saving power. (v20).
- God rained down manna to eat and gave them the grain of heaven. (v24).

Yet they gave this amazing wonder no value and sinned still more against their God the Most High in the wilderness.

Asaph tells of God's great patience with Israel in the wilderness.

Israel remembered God was their Rock, the Most High but they Flattered Him.

Psalm 78:32-37 ----- ³²In spite of all this, they still sinned; despite his wonders, they did not believe. ³³So he made their days vanish like a breath, and their years in terror. ³⁴When he killed them, they sought him; they repented and sought God earnestly. ³⁵They remembered that God was their rock, the Most High God their redeemer. ³⁶But they flattered him with their mouths; they lied to him with their tongues. ³⁷Their heart was not steadfast toward him; they were not faithful to his covenant.

When he killed them, they sought him: (v34) this is a common principal of life, even the secular world cry out to God when they are hit with a crisis, but they are not crying out to God because they want to know Him or follow Him, but because they want to be delivered from their troubles. This is called worldly sorrow, because the sorrow stems not from the hurt they have caused others, but because of the punishment they are going to suffer. Godly sorrow is sorrow that stems from the hurt that has been inflicted upon the victim of the offense or crime.

They flattered him with their mouths: (v36) means they praised God, but it was only words in the wind their heart was not involved. It is much like people who confess to believe in Christ and go to church every Sunday, but on every other day of the week give God no thought and live exactly as they please.

Israel Grieved God, He restrained His wrath Remembering Israel was Flesh.

Psalm 78:38-40 ----- ³⁸Yet he, being compassionate, atoned for their iniquity and did not destroy them; he restrained his anger often and did not stir up all his wrath. ³⁹He remembered that they were but flesh, a wind that passes and comes not again. ⁴⁰How often they rebelled against him in the wilderness and grieved him in the desert!

Israel constantly provoked and grieved the LORD, but because He is full of compassion He turned His anger away many times and did not destroy them, but forgave their iniquity time and time again, because He understood that they were but flesh (corrupted, decaying and mortal) a wind that passes away forever never to return, but they constantly provoked him to great anger. Though God is enormously patient and longsuffering and does not want to judge and punish His people, they by their ungrateful heart attitude, their gross wickedness, unfaithfulness, lack of belief and trust eventually force Him to do so to protect His Holy name. Israel brought God's judgment upon themselves by their own wicked behaviour.

Asaph reminds the children of Israel their fathers: -

- Lived a life of unbelief and religious hypocrisy before God (v36).
- Where not steadfast toward God or faithful to His covenant (v37).
- God being compassionate atoned for their iniquity and often restrained his wrath (v38).

Yet even though God atoned for them they placed no value upon it and sinned still more against their God the Most High in the wilderness.

Asaph reflects back over what he has previously said (v(9-17) concerning Israel's deliverance out of Egypt.

In Egypt God Turned Rivers to Blood and Sent Destroying Angels.

Psalm 78:41-51 ----- ⁴¹They tested God again and again and provoked the Holy One of Israel. ⁴²They did not remember his power or the day when he redeemed them from the foe, ⁴³when he performed his signs in Egypt and his marvels in the fields of Zoan. ⁴⁴He turned their rivers to blood, so that they could not drink of their streams. ⁴⁵He sent among them swarms of flies, which devoured them, and frogs, which destroyed them. ⁴⁶He gave their crops to the destroying locust and the fruit of their labor to the locust. ⁴⁷He destroyed their vines with hail and their sycamores with frost. ⁴⁸He gave over their cattle to the hail and their flocks to thunderbolts. ⁴⁹He let loose on them his burning anger, wrath, indignation, and distress, a company of destroying angels. ⁵⁰He made a path for his anger; he did not spare them from death, but gave their lives over to the plague. ⁵¹He struck down every firstborn in Egypt, the firstfruits of their strength in the tents of Ham.

The fields of Zoan: (v43) see the title: "The fields of Zoan," following (v9-16) (above). Here we read that God turned Egypt's rivers to blood and sent swarms of flies, frogs, locust, hail amongst them in the fields of Zoan which clearly show that the city of Zoan was the place where Moses confronted Pharaoh the king of Egypt. Asaph in these verses is highlighting what he has already said, to amplify how grossly wicked the previous generations of Israel were and to warn teach the new born children the awesomeness of Israel's God and to encourage them not to follow in the ways of their forefathers.

Asaph reflects back over what he has previously said (v9-13) concerning God leading Israel's out of Egypt and into the wilderness

God led Israel through the Sea and brought them to His Holy Land.

Psalm 78:52-55 ---- ⁵²Then he led out his people like sheep and guided them in the wilderness like a flock. ⁵³He led them in safety, so that they were not afraid, but the sea overwhelmed their enemies. ⁵⁴And he brought them to his holy land, (the border of his sanctuary in KJV), to the mountain which his right hand had won. ⁵⁵He drove out nations before them; he apportioned them for a possession and settled the tribes of Israel in their tents.

God brought Israel to His holy land: does not mean that the people who came out of Egypt actually entered that land, but that their descendants did. The only two that came out from Egypt and entered the land of Canaan, were Caleb and Joshua the remainder of the ones who came out of Egypt died in the wilderness because they refused to cross the River Jordan and enter the Promised Land when God originally told them to do so (this is one of the reasons they spent forty-years in the wilderness).

To the mountain which his right hand had won: (v54) amongst various scholars there are different ideas concerning which mountain Asaph had in mind. The four most common thoughts are: -

1. Mount Sinai upon which God descended and gave Israel the Ten Commandments. The expression the power of His right hand in this context would refer to God's power.
2. The entire land of Canaan seen as a mountain because it is God's exalted Holy Land and has within it great and mighty enemies to overcome. The expression the power of His right hand in this context would refer to God's power and the mighty armies of Israel.
3. To Shiloh, since it held the status of Israel's main worship centre for over 360 years until shortly before David's elevation of Jerusalem and the first Temple was built in the city of Jerusalem.

Shiloh was situated in the hill-country of Ephraim (Judg. 21:19) and can be referred to poetically and prophetically as a mountain that God's right hand had won not because it was a high mountain, but because it became the capital city and worship centre of Israel for such a long period of time.

Asaph in the following verses (v60) talks of God forsaking Shiloh in the land of Canaan where the Tent of Meeting and the Ark of the Covenant was during the united monarchy. The expression the power of His right hand in this context would not only refer to God's power, but also to the armies of Israel.

The following shows that mountains can be used to symbolise nations: -

- Glorious are you (the LORD) more majestic than the mountains of prey. (Psalm 76:4).

The King James Bible says: -

- Thou art more glorious and excellent than the mountains of prey.

This clearly shows that it is God who is more majestic than the mountains of prey. In the context of these verses the mountains of prey refer to prideful men and the armies of Egypt who God drowned in the Red Sea and by extension to all other great nations and empires that came against God's people.

Nations that are enemies of Israel are referred to as mountains: -

- Behold, I make of you (Israel) a threshing sledge, new, sharp, and having teeth; you shall thresh the mountains and crush them, and you shall make the hills like chaff (Isaiah 41:15).

Babylon is referred to as a mountain: -

- I will repay Babylon and all the inhabitants of Chaldea before your very eyes for all the evil that they have done in Zion, declares the LORD. ²⁵"Behold, I am against you, O destroying mountain, declares the LORD, which destroys the whole earth; I will stretch out my hand against you, and roll you down from the crags, and make you a burnt mountain. (Jer. 51:24-25)

Judah is referred to as an eternal mountain and Israel as everlasting hills.

- He (the LORD) stood and measured the earth; he looked and shook the nations; then the eternal mountains (Judah) were scattered; the everlasting hills (Israel) sank low. His were the everlasting ways. (Hab. 3:6).

These verses show that in prophetic writings of Scripture Israel, Judah, great victorious secular nations, great kings and empires of the earth are often referred to as mountains.

4. Mount Zion because the following verses (v68-69) speaks of God choosing Mount Zion which he loves and building His sanctuary like the high heavens forever upon it

Whichever of these four Asaph had in mind matters little since God did bring Israel to Mount Sinai, the land of Canaan, Shiloh and Mount Zion by the his power and the power of the mighty armies of Israel which can both be spoken of as the power of God's right hand.

Asaph reminds the children of Israel: -

- God led Israel safely out of Egypt and guided them in the wilderness (v52).
- God drowned Israel's enemies in the sea (v53).
- God brought Israel to His holy land (v54).
- God brought Israel to the mountain which his right hand had won (v54).

- God drove out nations before Israel and settled them in their land (v54).

Asaph reflects back over what he has previously said (v52-55) concerning God forsaking Israel in the land of Canaan.

God was full of wrath He Rejected Israel and Delivered His Glory to Captivity.

Psalm 78:56-64 ----- ⁵⁶Yet they tested and rebelled against the Most High God and did not keep his testimonies, ⁵⁷but turned away and acted treacherously like their fathers; they twisted like a deceitful bow. ⁵⁸For they provoked him to anger with their high places; they moved him to jealousy with their idols. ⁵⁹When God heard, he was full of wrath, and he utterly rejected Israel. ⁶⁰He forsook his dwelling at Shiloh, the tent where he dwelt among mankind, ⁶¹and delivered his power to captivity, his glory to the hand of the foe. ⁶²He gave his people over to the sword and vented his wrath on his heritage. ⁶³Fire devoured their young men, and their young women had no marriage song. ⁶⁴Their priests fell by the sword, and their widows made no lamentation.

Shiloh: the meaning of Shiloh is unclear sometimes it is translated as the Messianic title that means, "he whose it is," at other times, as peacemaker, tranquillity town, fair haven or pleasantville. When the Israelites arrived in the land of Canaan Joshua set up the Tent of Meeting and the Ark of the Covenant at Shiloh. It became the main worship centre of the Israelites during the united monarchy for more than 360 years. The people made pilgrimages there for major feasts and sacrifices and (Judges 21:19-23) records Shiloh as the site of an annual dance of maidens among the vineyards.

It was here that Joshua divided the land among the twelve tribes. Shiloh held the status of Israel's main worship centre until shortly before David's elevation of Jerusalem and the first Temple was built in the city of Jerusalem. The Tent of Meeting remained at Shiloh for more than 360 years until the Ark was captured and taken in a battle by the Philistines after which it began its wanderings which lasted almost to the days of Solomon's Temple. From the time the Ark was removed from Shiloh, Shiloh gradually lost its importance, especially when David made Jerusalem the capital of the Kingdom of Israel.

This loss of importance was principally because God forsook the Tabernacle of Shiloh the Tent which he placed among men (v60). Even after Israel divided into two Kingdoms (the two tribes of Judah) and (the ten tribes of Israel) and the Ark and the Temple were at Jerusalem and Jeroboam, the apostate king, had established two worship centres, one at Dan and another at Bethel another Ahijah a prophet of the LORD was still at Shiloh representing God before a remnant of men who remained at Shiloh amongst the Northern Kingdom (the ten tribes).

God delivered His power to captivity and His glory to the foe: (v61) God's power in this context refers to the armies of Israel and His glory refers to His people. This means that it is safe to apply the words, "God's right hand," in the following verse, "God brought Israel to His Holy Land to the mountain which his right hand had won" (v54) to the mighty armies of Israel.

Their young women had no marriage song: (v63) means that they had no young men to marry (they had all been slaughtered in war).

Asaph reminds the children of Israel that the previous generations: -

- Rebelled against the Most High God and did not keep his testimonies (v56).
- Turned away and acted treacherously (v57).
- Set up idols in the land God had given them (v58).
- Where utterly rejected by God and given over to their enemies (v59-64).

This Psalm shines a brilliant spotlight upon the longsuffering patience of God, how many of us as earthly fathers would tolerate such open rebellion, lack of gratitude and wickedness in our sons. God loved His people Israel, He did not want to judge and punish them, but rather that they would repent and turn from their rebellion and wicked ways, sadly they refused to do so and suffered the consequences of their rebellion, unbelief, lack of trust, wickedness and worship of other gods and idols. They by their own unbelief and wickedness brought God's judgment upon themselves.

Asaph tells of David building the Sanctuary on Mount Zion in Jerusalem.

God chose David to Shepherd Jacob His People, Israel His Inheritance.

Psalm 78:65-72 ----- ⁶⁵Then the Lord awoke as from sleep, like a strong man shouting because of wine. ⁶⁶And he put his adversaries to rout; he put them to everlasting shame. ⁶⁷He rejected the tent of Joseph; he did not choose the tribe of Ephraim, ⁶⁸but he chose the tribe of Judah, Mount Zion, which he loves. ⁶⁹He built his sanctuary like the high heavens, like the earth, which he has founded forever. ⁷⁰He chose David his servant and took him from the sheepfolds; ⁷¹from following the nursing ewes he brought him to shepherd Jacob his people, Israel his inheritance. ⁷²With upright heart he shepherded them and guided them with his skillful hand.

The tent of Joseph: refers to his two sons Manasseh and Ephraim.

Joseph and Ephraim; Joseph while in Egypt saved the sons of Israel, so he was seen as the head of Israel. Then when Joseph died this position passed onto Joseph's son Ephraim. Israel is often called Ephraim because he is seen as the head or leader of the nation, but Ephraim constantly sinned therefore God rejected Ephraim as the head and chose Judah.

When Israel divided into two nations called Israel (the ten tribes of the Northern Kingdom) and Judah (the two tribes of the Southern Kingdom) Israel became known as the rebellious son (or rebellious race) and Judah became called the holy son (or holy race) it was from Judah the Messiah the Christ came.

David was of the tribe of Judah, he made Jerusalem the capitol city of Israel. David led the people according to the integrity of his heart and with his son Solomon built the Temple in Jerusalem which sits on Mount Zion. The LORD chose Solomon's Temple as His House forever and Jerusalem became known as the Holy City of God (v67-70).

The following verses show how much God valued Jerusalem.

- The LORD said to him (Solomon), "I have heard your prayer and your plea, which you have made before me. I have consecrated this house (the Temple at Jerusalem) that you have built, by putting my name there forever. My eyes and my heart will be there for all time. (1 Kings 9:3).

The future of Jerusalem the Holy City of God: the Old Testament says, Jesus the messenger of the covenant will suddenly come to Jerusalem, but who will endure the day of his coming, and who can stand when he appears? For he is like a refiner's fire and will purify the sons of Levi (the priests and religious leaders) and refine them like gold and silver and they will bring offerings in righteousness to the LORD (Malachi 3:1-4) (Christ did not achieve this in his first appearance rather than offer the Lord righteousness the religious leaders plotted his murder).

Zechariah wrote: Jerusalem God's Holy City will be inhabited, on that day that the LORD gives salvation to Jerusalem. God will protect the feeblest of its inhabitants and destroy all the nations that come against it. The LORD will pour out on the inhabitants of Jerusalem a spirit of grace and pleas for mercy, so that, when they look on him who they pierced, they will mourn with great mourning and weep for him, as one mourns for an only child (Zech. 12:5-11).

The New Jerusalem the Holy City of God: there will be a New Jerusalem a Holy City built by God and established on earth. The glory of the LORD and of the Lamb will be its light and by its light the nations will walk and the kings of the earth will bring their glory into it. Jesus will end all forms of war and speak peace to the nations, he will rule from sea to sea and to the ends of the earth (Matt. 5:34-35) (Rev. 21:10) (Rev. 21:24) (Zech. 9:9-10).

The return of the Lord Jesus Christ: when the Lord Jesus Christ returns in glory as, King of kings and Lord of lords (Rev. 19:11-16) to rule and reign from God's Holy City Jerusalem (on Mount Zion God's Holy Mountain) to destroy the antichrist and his kingdom and establish God's Kingdom on earth during his glorious millennial reign. The dead in Christ (Old and New Testament) and the faithful, who are alive, will be gathered together in the first resurrection (Rev. 20:4-6) to rule and reign as kings and priests with the Lord over those nations who are left outside the Holy City of God. Christ the King united with his people will not only bring peace to the Middle East, but establish God's Kingdom of steadfast love, faithfulness, righteousness, joy and peace throughout the world and the glory of God will cover the earth.

Jesus will do justice to the poor and oppressed, he will be a faithful and compassionate King forever. He will not allow anyone to strike terror in the earth or use lies and deception to enlarge their own wealth and power. The land will abundantly produce and even the deserts will flourish. The animals will not feed on each other and even the lamb will be able to lie down with the wolf and everyone will eat of their own hands because all that they plant will produce. All nations the LORD has made will come and worship before the Lord Jesus Christ. They will glorify God's Name, proclaiming the LORD is great and does wondrous things and that He alone is God.

The book of Revelation states: -

- Jesus Christ, the faithful witness who loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood has made us kings and priests unto God and his Father is coming in glory and every eye shall see him, and they also who pierced him and all kindreds of the earth (Revelation 1:5-7).

In Revelation chapter five we are told that: -

- Christ was slain, and by his blood he redeemed a people for God from every tribe and language and people and nation and made them a kingdom and priests to God and they shall reign on the earth (Revelation 5:9-10).

The great prophet Isaiah wrote: -

- They shall not hurt or destroy in all my holy mountain; for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD as the waters cover the sea. (Isaiah 11:9).

At the end of this glorious Kingdom age God descends to earth on a Great White Throne the sea, death and hades (the grave) give up the dead. They stand before God and are judged according to what is written in certain heavenly books according to what they have done. Death and those counted unworthy are cast into the Lake of Fire a symbol of eternal destruction (i.e., total extinction) (also called the, Second Death) (Rev. 20:11-15). Christ hands the Kingdom over to his heavenly Father and God is ALL in ALL and ETERNITY begins in all its fullness and majestic royal glory.

For further information see the titles: -

- Kingdom of God (ON WEBSITE MENU).
- The Second Resurrection or Great White Throne Judgment.

In, Resurrection (ON WEBSITE MENU).

End