



**Do We Ever Truly Learn from the Past?
Learning Something That Jesus Would Want All of His Church to Know Today!
Psalm 78 Part 3**

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We have been walking along with Asaph as he is relating a long-term problem that his kinsmen in Israel suffered from. Terminal procrastination caused by not having a round tuit. It seems that the Lord has made numerous commands to His people to train up the next generation, but they never got around to it. Thus, the problem. Asaph repeats those commands here, but it is already too late.

Our current culture has the same problem. Not enough round tuits it seems. No one ever seems to get around to teaching the next generation. Pizza parties, yes, how to be good little boys and girls, yes.



But those churches that are not only making disciples, but have committed to do so across all generations, are very few and far between these days. Most church youth groups can tell you their favorite pizza type before they tell you their favorite verse from the Bible.

Through 42 verses so far, we have gone and the evidence is overwhelming. They do not learn from the past, and most today, are in the exact same boat.

Let's pick up from verse 40.

Psalm 78:40–42

“How often they rebelled against Him in the wilderness And grieved Him in the desert! Again and again they tempted God, And pained the Holy One of Israel. They did not remember His power, The day when He redeemed them from the enemy,” (NASB 2020)

As we learned last time, Asaph is using the awesome works of God connected with how He rescued and freed His people from slavery in Egypt and also related some of the other things He did for His people reflecting His grace and love for them despite their continuing unbelief.

And we also talked about tempting God.

Rather than cover that all over again. Let me refer you to the previous teaching and simply remind us, don't do it. It is a seriously presumptive sin to do this.

Here is the thing, they do not remember His power connected with the day He redeemed them from their enemy, that would be Egypt.

Time for some additional evidence of this. If you won't remember. Let me give you all the reasons why you should. Let's go through, again, what it is, in even more detail, that the Lord did for you as a nation to redeem you.

Pull up a rock and have a seat.

Psalm 78:43–51

“When He performed His signs in Egypt And His marvels in the field of Zoan, And turned their rivers to blood, And their streams, so that they could not drink. He sent swarms of flies among them that devoured them, And frogs that destroyed them. He also gave their crops to the grasshopper And the product of their labor to the locust. He destroyed their vines with hailstones And their sycamore trees with frost. He also turned their cattle over to the hailstones, And their herds to bolts of lightning. He sent His burning anger upon them, Fury and indignation and trouble, A band of destroying angels. He leveled a path for His anger; He did not spare their souls from death, But turned their lives over to the plague, And struck all the firstborn in Egypt, The first and best of their vigor in the tents of Ham.” (NASB 2020)

Yes, he is indeed going to cover a topic he has just covered. The history that is to be outlined will be from Egypt to Canaan. The highlights will be those events all should know about, but didn't. God did great signs and wonders to set His people free. Allan Harman explains this for us.

“He had promised to stretch out his hand against Egypt (Exod. 3:20), and did so, yet Israel forgot ‘his power’ (Heb. ‘his hand’). The redeemer of Israel had shown his ‘signs’ (‘otôt, cf. Exod. 4:9, 28, 30) and ‘wonders’ (môfetîm, cf. Deut. 29:3; 34:11), and even these miraculous demonstrations were not recalled. This is the first time in the Psalter that the combination of ‘signs and wonders’ occurs.” (Harman 2011, 592-593) And it is in describing the unbelief of the nation.



What happens here is the plagues are recalled, but not all of them and not in chronological order. What are they and in what order?

I am not going to go into the whole background of what God was doing with the plagues and how He was attacking the fallen members of the unseen realm, judging them as well as the Egyptians.

To do that would take me more time and would take us from the real purpose of what it is that Asaph, as a prophet and song leader is doing here. He is teaching them truth and encouraging them to repent and do what they promised God they would do. Remember, and teach their children to do so.

And there is a prophetic element in what Asaph is doing here.

- First plague – Nile River water turns to blood. (Exodus 7:20, Psalm 78:44, Revelation 11:6, 16:4)
- Second plague – Frogs, everywhere. (Exodus 8:1-7, Psalm 78:45b, Revelation 16:13)
- Third plague – Gnats, everywhere. (Exodus 8:16-19, Psalm 78 No reference)
- Fourth plague – Thick swarms of biting flies everywhere except where God's people live. (Exodus 8:20-24, Psalm 78:45a, Revelation 19:17)
- Fifth plague – Death of all Egyptian livestock only. (Exodus 9:1-7, Psalm 78:48, Zechariah 14:15)
- Sixth plague – Boils on all the Egyptians only. (Exodus 9:8-12, Psalm 78 No reference, Revelation 16:2, 11)
- Seventh plague – Hail and lightening only on the Egyptians, Israel is excluded. (Exodus 9:18-26, Psalm 78:47, Revelation 8:7, 16:21)
- Eighth plague – Locusts, and only on Egypt. (Exodus 10:3-20, Psalm 78:46, Joel 2)
- Ninth plague – Darkness that can be felt for three days over Egypt only. (Exodus 10:21-29, Psalm 78 No reference, Joel 2, Amos 5, 8:9, Zephaniah 1:15, Revelation 16:10)
- Tenth plague – Death of the firstborn. (Exodus 11, Psalm 78:50-51, Revelation 6:8)

And the very first thing that pops up is, why pass over the 3rd, 6th, and 9th plagues?

Remember, Asaph is dealing with the ingratitude of the people in the present by showing the ingratitude of the people in the past. Those who knew their Torah and remembered, would fill in the blanks, those who did not, are now being challenged to check it out for themselves.

But this is clear, God remembered their weaknesses verse 39.

But the bulk of the nation does not remember the power, majesty or awesome works that God did on their behalf to get them to where they are in the time of David. They did not remember because they willingly disobeyed the command to remember. Philip Eveson expands on this.

“While God's wrath was always restrained toward Israel (see verse 38), the build-up of words expresses the full ‘fierceness of his anger, wrath, indignation, and trouble’ (verse 49) in the final plague when God sent ‘angels of destruction’ to destroy the descendants of Ham (see Genesis 10:6 where ‘Mizraim’ is the Hebrew for Egypt).” (Eveson 2014-2015, 55)

This is also all a picture of a yet future event. Remember, Asaph is also a prophet of God. What he has described here is also a picture of what is to come in the Day of the Lord here on this planet.

Did you happen to notice the references that are yet future pointing to the Day of the Lord?

Here, as described by Asaph, God pours out His wrath on the people of Egypt while at the same time, sparing His own people who are gathered together in Goshen. While the entirety of Egypt is dealt with, Goshen is left untouched after the gnats. The same will happen for the remnant of Israel after they have



followed the instructions of Jesus in Matthew 24:15-16 and gone to the place that He has prepared for them to be protected for the remaining time of the Tribulation. Just as the people sustained a few of the inconveniences of the first few plagues, so they will also suffer from the initial judgments from God during the Tribulation, but then protection.

2 Thessalonians 1:6–10

“since indeed **God considers it just to repay with affliction those who afflict you, and to grant relief to you who are afflicted as well as to us**, when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with his mighty angels in flaming fire, inflicting vengeance on those who do not know God and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus. They will suffer the punishment of eternal destruction, away from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his might, when he comes on that day to be glorified in his saints, and to be marveled at among all who have believed, because our testimony to you was believed.” (ESV)

Zechariah 14:12–15

“And this shall be the plague with which the LORD will strike all the peoples that wage war against Jerusalem: their flesh will rot while they are still standing on their feet, their eyes will rot in their sockets, and their tongues will rot in their mouths. And on that day a great panic from the LORD shall fall on them, so that each will seize the hand of another, and the hand of the one will be raised against the hand of the other. Even Judah will fight at Jerusalem. And the wealth of all the surrounding nations shall be collected, gold, silver, and garments in great abundance. And a plague like this plague shall fall on the horses, the mules, the camels, the donkeys, and whatever beasts may be in those camps.” (ESV)

Psalms 78:49–51

“He sent His burning anger upon them, Fury and indignation and trouble, A band of destroying angels. He leveled a path for His anger; He did not spare their souls from death, But turned their lives over to the plague, And struck all the firstborn in Egypt, The first and best of their vigor in the tents of Ham.” (NASB 2020)

Yes, it really does say in the Hebrew a band or troop of destroying angels was involved in this. The word used in Hebrew for destroying here is not the same Hebrew word associated with the destroyer.

In other passages we learn about this. Michael Heiser provides some clarity.

“The mashhîṭ who was the angel of Yahweh in 1 Chronicles 21 and 2 Samuel 24 is...distinguished from Yahweh by the line, “the LORD will pass over the door and will not allow the destroyer [mashhîṭ] to enter your houses to strike you.” Yet we read elsewhere that it was Yahweh who destroyed the firstborn...Remember: the destroying angel of Yahweh is actually the visible Yahweh.” (Heiser 2018, 66-67) The pre-incarnate Christ.

But here, Asaph uses the term troop of destroying angels. Dr. Heiser continues.

“The Hebrew term translated “destroying” is not the word mashhîṭ associated with the destroyer in the passages we saw earlier. We should also observe that Psalm 78:49 does not say the “destroying angels” killed the firstborn. That act is, once again, attributed to Yahweh (v. 51). Yahweh may have sent angels to enact the other plagues, but the death of the firstborn is attributed to him. These angels do not act in the role of the destroyer.” (Heiser 2018, 67)

The picture is one of angels in service to the Lord involved in the various plagues visited upon Egypt with the exception of the final plague which God claims as His act alone.



This is serious spiritual angel on fallen angel warfare going on here. The Gods of Egypt, who are being systematically destroyed, were backed by or impersonated by the fallen ones. This is rather personal at the spiritual level.

A quick reread of the book of Revelation shows us the same thing taking place during the Tribulation. Deep angelic involvement in the various plagues visited upon the earth. This also includes to release of fallen members of the unseen realm to be used to judge fallen man as we see in Revelation 9. Other faithful angelic involvement includes seven trumpet playing angels as well as seven other angels who deliver the bowl judgments to the earth; and other duties we also see in Revelation being performed by the Heavenly Host.

But the final judgment is done in person by the same one who dealt with the first born in Egypt who were not covered by the blood.

Jesus Christ was the destroyer who visited death onto the first born and He is the King who returns and destroys the armies of the beast when He returns the second time. Once again dealing with those who are not under the blood of His sacrifice on the cross.

It was Jesus who struck the tents of Ham. Ham of course is one of the three sons of Noah who were on board the ark with him, he was also the youngest. What is up with the specific mention?

It goes back to an incredibly bad decision Ham made after the flood that we read of in Genesis 9. It also reflects just how corrupted the world was prior to the flood for someone to think what he does post flood is ok.

Genesis 9:20–27

“Then Noah began farming and planted a vineyard. He drank some of the wine and became drunk, and uncovered himself inside his tent. **Ham, the father of Canaan, saw the nakedness of his father, and told his two brothers outside.** But Shem and Japheth took a garment and laid it on both their shoulders and walked backward and covered the nakedness of their father; and their faces were turned away, so that they did not see their father’s nakedness. When Noah awoke from his wine, he knew what his youngest son had done to him. So he said, **“Cursed be Canaan; A servant of servants He shall be to his brothers.” He also said, “Blessed be the LORD, The God of Shem; And may Canaan be his servant. “May God enlarge Japheth, And may he live in the tents of Shem; And may Canaan be his servant.”**” (NASB 2020)

Is this judgment taking place due to the sin of Ham? Yes. What is his sin? This is a seriously sordid story. First a bit of background. A key phrase we see is uncovered or saw the nakedness of his father.

Leviticus 20:17

“If a man takes his sister, a daughter of his father or a daughter of his mother, and sees her nakedness, and she sees his nakedness, it is a disgrace, and they shall be cut off in the sight of the children of their people. He has uncovered his sister’s nakedness, and he shall bear his iniquity.” (ESV)

Paul Kissling tells us ““uncovering” is euphemistic for sexual intercourse in Leviticus 18 and 20. Whatever it is precisely that Ham did, it was probably sexual in nature.” (Kissling 2004-, 348)

The sin could be simple disrespect for seeing his father’s nakedness and making sport of it. But I think there is more going on. I think that what took place was Ham asserting that he was now to be the leader of the family by having intercourse with his mother. Yes, it also ties in with Leviticus, the cursing of Canaan and the reference to judgment on the tents of Ham we see here. Dr. Heiser continues with this thought.



"If we go with maternal incest as what Ham does—he sexually violates his mother, Noah's wife—what he is doing is, he is usurping the leadership, the prominence of the family. Really they are the only people left, in the story, on earth. It establishes himself as, "Now I am the clan leader. I am taking control of our family." Possessing another man's wife supplants that man. In this case, it would supplant the patriarch. Ham wants his brothers to know that he intends to take charge. He intends to take power away from his father." (Heiser, BI161 Problems in Bible Interpretation: Difficult Passages I 2016)

Unless something else was going on, then why curse Canaan? Canaan was the result of this illicit power play. Ham is trying to rule the clan, rule the world. Something his descendant named Nimrod will also try.

If Canaan is the son born to Noah's wife as a result of this continuing sexual confusion, now confirmed to have been brought into the new world by Ham. Side note, Sodom and Gomorrah also come from his line. Noah would have to take affirmative action to prevent Canaan being the new dynastic power if Ham is allowed to continue. Dr. Heiser adds:

"Noah curses Canaan. He forbids, to everyone present, he forbids to assent to the notion that Canaan is the next in line to inherit leadership in the tribe. This is why Canaan is cursed. What Ham does is heinous, but Noah sort of cuts it off, nips it in the bud, and says, "No, Canaan is not going to be in control of us. He is not going to be the one who holds power. Instead, he is going to be a servant to everyone else." (Heiser, BI161 Problems in Bible Interpretation: Difficult Passages I 2016)

Another pointer could be connected with what is in Leviticus 18 which is where we get three listings of sexual law in the Old Testament. The prohibitions listed there are linked to Egypt and Canaan, descendants of Ham.

Leviticus 18:2–5

"Speak to the people of Israel and say to them, I am the LORD your God. **You shall not do as they do in the land of Egypt, where you lived, and you shall not do as they do in the land of Canaan, to which I am bringing you. You shall not walk in their statutes. You shall follow my rules and keep my statutes and walk in them.** I am the LORD your God. You shall therefore keep my statutes and my rules; if a person does them, he shall live by them: I am the LORD." (ESV)

The listing here is intentional. God wants those of the nation to, when they think in terms of sexual sin, to think specifically of Ham's line.

It appears that after God destroyed the planet to eliminate the sins that were being encouraged by the fallen watchers, and many of those sins were connected to destroying the human genetic line and were sexual in nature. Now here we are, after the flood, and Ham, taking a note from the preflood world, becomes the defender and promulgator of these so-called lifestyle choices all over again.

Donald Fortner adds to this, "Ham was an apostate. He professed to be one with Noah and to believe the gospel Noah preached. But it was all a show of hypocrisy. In time, he turned from the way of Noah to the way of Cain. He behaved as a reprobate man, rejoicing in the iniquity of his father and making it known (1 Cor. 13:4–6; Gal. 6:1; Prov. 10:12; 12:6; 17:9)." (Fortner 2002, 122)

But only Canaan was cursed. Ham was not cursed and the other children of Ham were not. But his influence did indeed extend to them.

By the way, this curse has been conflated to support slavery. It has nothing to do with it at all.

The descendants of Canaan were the Canaanites of the Promised Land who were cursed by God and destroyed by the Israelites in the book of Joshua. (Geisler 2003, 455)



Ham had three other sons, Cush, Mizraim (Egypt) and Put. So, why the add on here at about the tents of Ham, a reflection of the judgment. Now, with the 10th plague, God is obviously honoring what He told Abraham in Genesis 12:3.

Those who oppressed Israel, are in turn, judged by the God who has already demonstrated mastery over their entire pantheon, and it was a troop of destroying angels who did this. He has also demonstrated that Pharaoh is not a god either as the first born of pharaoh is also taken.

Egypt is devastated, but the nation is now free, and how does God lead them out?

Psalm 78:52–53

“But He led His own people out like sheep, And guided them in the wilderness like a flock; He led them safely, so that they did not fear; But the sea engulfed their enemies.” (NASB 2020)

All the wolves of Egypt, those who wanted to destroy the nation, are either dead or so seriously disillusioned that they want the Jews gone. Wolves are dying left and right and on one single night, the death toll was unthinkable.

God now leads His people out of slavery into freedom. He has now redeemed them from slavery in Egypt.

The greatest army in the known world at that time was unable to do anything about them leaving. Like defenseless sheep, they walk out of Egypt. They are all together now like a flock, guided by Great Shepherd. Spurgeon adds this.

“Knowing nothing of the way by their own understanding or experience, they were, nevertheless, rightly directed, for the All-wise God knew every spot of the wilderness. To the sea, through the sea, and from the sea, the Lord led his chosen; while their former taskmasters were too cowed in spirit, and broken in power, to dare to molest them.” (Spurgeon n.d., 342)

His people were unarmed, and the Lord leads His people to Red Sea, arriving ahead of the Egyptian military which had reconstituted itself enough to form a formidable force intent on forcing all Israel to return to slavery in Egypt. But the people are safe and God takes them from one side of the Red Sea to the other, Egypt was so close but at the end of the day, they lost the entire force when the Red Sea returned to its normal operation. Literally engulfing them as they stood on the bottom of the Red Sea with tons of water coming down onto them in a moment.

Asaph then bypasses the wilderness years of history, he already covered that, and with the next verse, enters the land.

Psalm 78:54–55

“So He brought them to His holy land, To this hill country which His right hand had gained. He also drove out the nations from them And apportioned them as an inheritance by measurement, And had the tribes of Israel dwell in their tents.” (NASB 2020)

God lovingly leads His people to the border of Canaan, His holy land. It is once they are there that God's right hand wins the entire land for the people through the faithfulness of Joshua and those with him. There was still more to do but the nation proved to be once again, unfaithful. They did not teach the next generation, and they were unwilling and unable to remember what they should remember.

The land is apportioned out (Joshua 13:7) to the various tribes by Joshua with the understanding that they need to complete the job begun by Joshua and those who were with him at the time. The next generation did not do that.



Once the elders who had served with Joshua died, it became obvious that the nation was still not learning from history.

They were not even being obedient to what they had promised God they would do, and the Angel of the Lord, the pre-incarnate Christ, came to see them about that problem.

Judges 2:1–3

“Now the angel of the LORD came up from Gilgal to Bochim. And he said, “I brought you up out of Egypt and led you into the land which I have sworn to your fathers; and I said, ‘I will never break My covenant with you, and as for you, you shall not make a covenant with the inhabitants of this land; you shall tear down their altars.’ **But you have not obeyed Me; what is this thing that you have done? Therefore I also said, ‘I will not drive them out from you; but they will become like thorns in your sides, and their gods will be a snare to you.’**” (NASB 2020)

Psalms 78:56–58

“**Yet they tempted and rebelled against the Most High God And did not keep His testimonies, But turned back and acted treacherously like their fathers;** They turned aside like a treacherous bow. For they provoked Him with their high places And moved Him to jealousy with their carved images.” (NASB 2020)

So, here we are, once again, unable to recall and remember. The generation that took the land, after experiencing the loving care of the Lord in the wilderness, claimed their inheritance and for two generations obeyed. Well, not entirely so. Moses left instructions.

Deuteronomy 4:9

“Only **be careful for yourself and watch over your soul diligently, so that you do not forget the things which your eyes have seen and they do not depart from your heart all the days of your life; but make them known to your sons and your grandsons.**” (NASB 2020)

Later though, prior to ending his third sermon to the nation here in Deuteronomy, Moses prophetically tells the nation what is going to take place because they will not remember.

Deuteronomy 32:16–18

“They made Him jealous with strange gods; With abominations they provoked Him to anger. They sacrificed to demons, who were not God, To gods whom they have not known, New gods who came lately, Whom your fathers did not know. **You forgot the Rock who fathered you, And forgot the God who gave you birth.**” (NASB 2020)

The first chapter of Judges tells us of failure after failure to finish taking the land. Unbelief has become a problem and as time went by, the remembering was not taking place. They began to act like that generation that passed away in the wilderness. The one that saw and still did not believe.

God’s intent was for the people to take the land and remove all the altars and high places in the land. The whole story is in Judges.

Judges 2:7–10

“The people served the LORD all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the elders who survived Joshua, who had seen all the great work of the LORD which He had done for Israel. Then Joshua the son of Nun, the servant of the LORD, died at the age of 110. And they buried him in the territory of his inheritance in Timnath-heres, in the hill country of Ephraim, north of Mount Gaash. **All that generation also were gathered to their fathers; and another generation rose up after them who did not know the LORD, nor even the work which He had done for Israel.**” (NASB 2020)



They were supposed to cleanse the land from the false gods, they failed. They were to remain a distinctive people pointing the nations to the Lord, they failed there too. An all-too-common phrase in Judges is as follows.

Judges 3:7a

"And the people of Israel did what was evil in the sight of the LORD. They forgot the LORD their God ..." (ESV)

Remember our discussion early on in this psalm when we discussed the tribe of Ephraim and the battle with the Philistines that will see the capture of the Ark.

Asaph is bringing this up again when he comments on the people being like a treacherous bow. The tribes from Joseph were more numerous and had the military capability to assist in removing the usurpers from the land, completing the judgment on Canaan as God had begun with Joshua. They did not assist. So, what we see quickly summarized, is the downward spiral that we read of in the book of Judges and the defection of the nation continually away from the one who placed them in the land, YAHWEH. As a result, we arrive at verse 59.

Psalm 78:59–64

"When God heard them, He was filled with wrath And He utterly rejected Israel; So that **He abandoned the dwelling place at Shiloh**, The tent which He had pitched among people, And **He gave up His strength to captivity And His glory into the hand of the enemy**. He also turned His people over to the sword, And was filled with wrath at His inheritance. **Fire devoured His young men, And His virgins had no wedding songs. His priests fell by the sword, And His widows could not weep.**" (NASB 2020)

This is a summary of the events of 1 Samuel 4 that reflect what Asaph is writing about here.

1 Samuel 4:3–4

"And when the people came to the camp, the elders of Israel said, "Why has the LORD defeated us today before the Philistines? Let us bring the ark of the covenant of the LORD here from Shiloh, that it may come among us and save us from the power of our enemies." So the people sent to Shiloh and brought from there the ark of the covenant of the LORD of hosts, who is enthroned on the cherubim. And the two sons of Eli, Hophni and Phinehas, were there with the ark of the covenant of God." (ESV)

No one prayed at all about this. No one sought the Lord. They treated the Ark of the Covenant like just another idol, a symbol of their God.

The elders of Israel are the ones who made this call, and, as we read in Psalm 78:59, God heard them, "was filled with wrath and He utterly rejected Israel." And, as we read further in 1 Samuel, it became obvious that God had left His people.

1 Samuel 4:10–22

"So the Philistines fought, and Israel was defeated, and they fled, every man to his home. And there was a very great slaughter, for thirty thousand foot soldiers of Israel fell. And the ark of God was captured, and the two sons of Eli, Hophni and Phinehas, died. A man of Benjamin ran from the battle line and came to Shiloh the same day, with his clothes torn and with dirt on his head. When he arrived, Eli was sitting on his seat by the road watching, for his heart trembled for the ark of God. And when the man came into the city and told the news, all the city cried out. When Eli heard the sound of the outcry, he said, "What is this uproar?" Then the man hurried and came and told Eli. Now Eli was ninety-eight years old and his eyes were set so that he could not see. And the man said to Eli, "I am he who has come from the battle; I fled from the battle today." And he said, "How did it go, my son?" **He who brought the news answered and said, "Israel has fled before the Philistines, and there has also been a**



great defeat among the people. Your two sons also, Hophni and Phinehas, are dead, and the ark of God has been captured.” As soon as he mentioned the ark of God, Eli fell over backward from his seat by the side of the gate, and his neck was broken and he died, for the man was old and heavy. **He had judged Israel forty years.** Now his daughter-in-law, the wife of Phinehas, was pregnant, about to give birth. And when she heard the news that the ark of God was captured, and that her father-in-law and her husband were dead, she bowed and gave birth, for her pains came upon her. And about the time of her death the women attending her said to her, “Do not be afraid, for you have borne a son.” But she did not answer or pay attention. **And she named the child Ichabod, saying, “The glory has departed from Israel!” because the ark of God had been captured and because of her father-in-law and her husband. And she said, “The glory has departed from Israel, for the ark of God has been captured.”**” (ESV)

The Ark, His strength and glory, goes into captivity with the Philistines. Thousands of Israel are killed by the sword. So many young men died that there were thousands of families never to start.

Of course, priests did indeed fall by the sword and and final realization, uttered by the widow of Phineas who died in childbirth, that the son born to her would be named Ichabod, the Spirit has departed. It looks very dark now for the nation.

The realization that Asaph is hoping for is that those who fail to remember God, do not fear Him either and wind up bringing death and destruction onto themselves. This happens today as well. In many great families across this nation, there has been a reliance on the church to provide the spiritual nurturing for their children. But the church stepped away from that in the 1970s.

It has only accelerated to the point that today, kids who have been raised in the church are very confused and they no longer have a Biblical worldview. Dr. Barna will relate a conclusion based on the data he has seen that also reflects what it is that Asaph has been telling us. It all does indeed circle around remembering who God is and what He has done for us in the person of Jesus Christ.

“Surveying the population of thirteen- and fourteen-year-olds will give us a good grip on how well we have done over the past decade of discipling and what we can expect in the years to come because of those efforts. Right off the bat, though, our research among young teens indicates that there are some serious deficiencies that will have dramatic implications. To start with, barely one-third of newly minted teens (36%) believe that God exists and is the all-knowing, all-powerful Creator of the universe, who is perfect and just, and who rules the universe today. In contrast, closer to half (43%) are Don’ts—people who don’t know if there is a God, don’t believe in His existence, or don’t care one way or the other.¹⁹ At the same time, we find severe deficits in their knowledge of the character of Jesus. A majority of the youngest teens (61%) either believe Jesus Christ sinned while He was on Earth or hold open the possibility that He did. While they have heard that He was sinless and pure, most of them are not buying it. Things are no better when it comes to beliefs about God’s adversary. Seven out of ten young teens (70%) either reject the existence of Satan or don’t know if he exists. This is a major shift from the beliefs of their parents, who may not have given much thought to Satan’s existence, but at least a majority of them believe Satan is real. **That point-of-view has not been handed down from one generation to the next.**” (Barna 2023, 32-33)

What we see from Psalm 78 is that God reached a point where He was done with Shiloh and He was done with Ephraim forsaking the tribes of Joseph in favor of Judah.

Psalm 78:65–72

“Then the Lord awoke as if from sleep, Like a warrior overcome by wine. He drove His adversaries backward; He put on them an everlasting disgrace. **He also rejected the tent of Joseph, And did not choose the tribe of Ephraim, But chose the tribe of Judah, Mount Zion, which He loved.** And He



built His sanctuary like the heights, Like the earth which He has established forever. **He also chose His servant David And took him from the sheepfolds; From the care of the ewes with nursing lambs He brought him To shepherd Jacob His people, And Israel His inheritance. So he shepherded them according to the integrity of his heart, And guided them with his skillful hands.**" (NASB 2020)

And now we get a fast forward through the rest of Samuel up to the anointing of David as King. Mount Zion would be the location for the Temple, not Shiloh. James Hamilton summarizes what Asaph is saying here.

Asaph seems to have the covenant Yahweh made with David in mind, and in 78:72 he seems to describe the integrity of David's heart and the skillfulness of David's hands, though it could be that the Lord himself is the one of upright heart and skillful hands. At any rate, the Lord will shepherd his people through David and his seed. (Hamilton Jr. 2021, 60)

The primary focus of this psalm is that Israel must remember what it is Torah teaches and who YAHWEH is. Learn from history and raise up the next generation to also follow the Lord.

That is also what we learn from this psalm as well. We see all around us the impact of multiple generations now abrogating their responsibility to train up the next generation and they did it via delegation. It was delegated to the churches and to the schools. Many of the churches became part of the world and the schools, they have been a lost cause for over 70 years.

I was not raised in a Christian home. I had a set of Christian grandparents who tried their best but many times I wonder what it would have been like if my Father had known the Lord and taught us about Him. My mother came to the Lord, but she was never able to fully counteract the impact that an ungodly father had.

But for those who are growing up in a Christian family, please, mother and dad, especially dad, do not delegate your very specific God commanded duties.

Proverbs 22:6

"Train up a child in the way he should go, Even when he grows older he will not abandon it." (NASB 2020)
Ephesians 6:4 "Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord." (NASB 2020)

For those who follow Jesus, I have good news, even though we are all wholly inadequate for this task, in Jesus, we can indeed do it. The Holy Spirit in us is waiting and willing to have us rely on Him to come alongside and train our children in the Lord.

Spiritual training doesn't just happen; it must be intentional and takes patience and persistence. Yes, it may seem like herding kittens but there is indeed a payoff coming. Let's take a final look at Deuteronomy 6:6-7 in the NLT.

Deuteronomy 6:6-7

"And you must commit yourselves wholeheartedly to these commands that I am giving you today. Repeat them again and again to your children. Talk about them when you are at home and when you are on the road, when you are going to bed and when you are getting up." (NLT)

Let's pray.



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