

Character of God

S.R. Psalm 78:1 – 8

1 – 7 - 2024

Intro.

- A. Longest of all psalms except 119
- B. One of the psalms of Asaph (50, 73 – 83)
- C. Geographical background: From Zoan (Egypt) to Zion in Judah.
- D. Several NT references: (vs.2 -Matt 13:35); (vs.3 - 1 John 1:1-4); (vs.18 -1 Cor 10:9); (vs. 24 - John 6:31); (vs. 37 - Acts 8:21); (vs. 44 - Rev 16:4) *Quotation or allusion*
- E. A sermon in song:
 - a. “Music has the ability to make an indelible impression on the mind.”
 - b. “More than any other book in the Bible Psalms reveals what a heartfelt, soul-starved, single – minded relationship with God looks like.” (115. Yancey)
 - c. The goal of the Psalms is to bring life in all its complexity into the presence of God.
- F. One of four great national psalms (78, 105, 106, 135 - 6)
- G. Finding this type of song in our Song Book – Category of History Lessons
 - a. “Salvation – history psalms”
 - b. This is a song to help us REMEMBER (Pearl Harbor, D – Day – 911)
- H. Historical Amnesia:
 - a. 51% of American high school students think Germany, Japan or Italy was an ally of the United States during WWII.;
 - b. 56% of seniors at America’s top 55 colleges do not know that Abraham Lincoln was the president during the Civil War.
 - c. 40% of that group do not know that it was the U.S. Constitution that established the separation of powers among branches of government.
 - d. (via the National Endowment for the Humanities)
- I. Asaph has similar concerns for the nation of Israel regarding its grand and dismal past.

I. Purpose of this Psalm (1 – 8)

- A. Listen up – people.
- B. Parable
- C. Parental responsibility
- D. Leads to praise
- E. Must continue the chain
- F. Purpose of the teaching
- G. History that must not repeat itself

II. Ephraim abandons God (9 – 11)

- A. Judges period? (Joshua 18:1; 1 Samuel 4 – 6)
- B. Rebellion by Jeroboam? (1 Kings 12) Ephraim stands for northern kingdom

III. God’s Actions (12 – 39)

- A. Redemption 12-14
- B. Provision 15-16
- C. Judgment 17-33 - Rebel is used in 8, 17, 40, 56 (cf. Num. 11 – 14)
- D. Mercy 34 – 39

IV. God's Actions (40 – 72)

- A. Redemption 40-53
- B. Provision 54-55
- C. Judgment 56-64
- D. Mercy 65 – 72

V. Lessons for Serious Consideration

A. Intergenerational Disconnect (Between Parents and Children)

1. Preamble (1 – 8)
 - a. Note the value of Oral and written law handed down.
 - b. Although we have countless Bibles in various formats parents still need to impress diligently upon their children the:
 - c. Deeds (4) works (7) and commands (7) of God (Deut. 6:4-9)
2. Abandoning the Lord occurs when "there arose another generation...who did not know the Lord or the work that he had done for Israel" (Judges 2:10 – ESV)
3. This generational disconnect occurs even though our kids can still recite some Bible teaching.
4. Subsequent generations were lost – (17-21)
 - a. "Every person did what was right in their own eyes."

5. Departures take 3 generations:

B. Spiritual Disconnect (Between People and Their God)

C. Tribal Disconnect (Between Brothers in God's Family)

1. Israel's two greatest tribes: Ephraim – (pride of Joseph) and Judah (Pride of Judah and David)
2. God chose the tribe of Judah and David as his king by covenant (2 Sam. 7 and Psalm 89)
3. Ephraim rebelled against God's priest and God's worship and God's temple.
4. They choose Jeroboam and the worship of golden calves.
5. God rejected Shiloh (v. 60) and chose Mt Zion in Jerusalem.

Conclusion:

Much can be learned from Psalm 78 about preventing the dangers against which it graphically warns.

- a. I can not over stress the urgency of parents passing the torch of God's history lessons to children and grandchildren.
- b. We must recite the righteous acts of God and warn of past mistakes.
- c. We must identify the markings of those who are loyal to God.
- d. Future generations will thrive or die based upon what is taught and sung at home.
- e. These were identity markers that preserved a pattern to be followed in future generations.