

Psalm 78:1-72 Israel's Failure – Elohiym's Faithfulness – Journey Egypt to Promised Land – Rejected Ephraim – Chose Judah and Zion for Sanctuary - David chosen to Shepherd Israel

*God's Kindness to Rebellious Israel*

A Contemplation\* of Asaph.

1. Give ear, O my people, *to* my law; Incline your ears to the words of my mouth.
- 2 I will open my mouth in a parable; I will utter dark sayings of old,
- 3 Which we have heard and known, And our fathers have told us.
- 4 We will not hide *them* from their children, Telling to the generation to come the praises of Yahweh (the LORD), And His strength and His wonderful works that He has done.
  
- 5 For He established a testimony in Jacob, And appointed a law in Israel, Which He commanded our fathers, That they should make them known to their children;
- 6 That the generation to come might know *them*, The children *who* would be born, *That* they may arise and declare *them* to their children,
- 7 That they may set their hope in Elohiym (God), And not forget the works of El (God), But keep His commandments;
- 8 And may not be like their fathers, A stubborn and rebellious generation, A generation *that* did not set its heart aright, And whose spirit was not faithful to El (God).
  
- 9 The children of Ephraim, *being* armed *and* carrying bows, Turned back in the day of battle.
- 10 They did not keep the covenant of Elohiym (God); They refused to walk in His law,
- 11 And forgot His works And His wonders that He had shown them.
- 12 Marvelous things He did in the sight of their fathers, In the land of Egypt, *in* the field of Zoan.
  
- 13 He divided the sea and caused them to pass through; And He made the waters stand up like a heap.
- 14 In the daytime also He led them with the cloud, And all the night with a light of fire.
- 15 He split the rocks in the wilderness, And gave *them* drink in abundance like the depths.
- 16 He also brought streams out of the rock, And caused waters to run down like rivers.
  
- 17 But they sinned even more against Him By rebelling against Elyown (the Most High) in the wilderness.
- 18 And they tested El (God) in their heart By asking for the food of their fancy.
- 19 Yes, they spoke against Elohiym (God): They said, "Can El (God) prepare a table in the wilderness?"

20 Behold, He struck the rock, So that the waters gushed out, And the streams overflowed.

Can He give bread also? Can He provide meat for His people?"

21 Therefore Yahweh (the LORD) heard *this* and was furious; So a fire was kindled against Jacob, And anger also came up against Israel,

22 Because they did not believe in Elohiym (God), And did not trust in His salvation.

23 Yet He had commanded the clouds above, And opened the doors of heaven,

24 Had rained down manna on them to eat, And given them of the bread of heaven.

25 Men ate angels' food; He sent them food to the full.

26 He caused an east wind to blow in the heavens; And by His power He brought in the south wind.

27 He also rained meat on them like the dust, Feathered fowl like the sand of the seas;

28 And He let *them* fall in the midst of their camp, All around their dwellings.

29 So they ate and were well filled, For He gave them their own desire.

30 They were not deprived of their craving; But while their food *was* still in their mouths,

31 The wrath of Elohiym (God) came against them, And slew the stoutest of them, And struck down the choice *men* of Israel.

32 In spite of this they still sinned, And did not believe in His wondrous works.

33 Therefore their days He consumed in futility, And their years in fear.

34 When He slew them, then they sought Him; And they returned and sought earnestly for El (God).

35 Then they remembered that Elohiym (God) *was* their rock, And Elyown El (the Most High God) their Redeemer.

36 Nevertheless they flattered Him with their mouth, And they lied to Him with their tongue;

37 For their heart was not steadfast with Him, Nor were they faithful in His covenant.

38 But He, *being* full of compassion, forgave *their* iniquity, And did not destroy *them*. Yes, many a time He turned His anger away, And did not stir up all His wrath;

39 For He remembered that they *were but* flesh, A breath that passes away and does not come again.

40 How often they provoked Him in the wilderness, *And* grieved Him in the desert!

41 Yes, again and again they tempted El (God), And limited Qadowsh Yisrael (the Holy One of Israel).

42 They did not remember His power: The day when He redeemed them from the

enemy,

43 When He worked His signs in Egypt, And His wonders in the field of Zoan;

44 Turned their rivers into blood, And their streams, that they could not drink.

45 He sent swarms of flies among them, which devoured them, And frogs, which destroyed them.

46 He also gave their crops to the caterpillar, And their labor to the locust.

47 He destroyed their vines with hail, And their sycamore trees with frost.

48 He also gave up their cattle to the hail, And their flocks to fiery lightning.

49 He cast on them the fierceness of His anger, Wrath, indignation, and trouble, By sending angels of destruction *among them*.

50 He made a path for His anger; He did not spare their soul from death, But gave their life over to the plague,

51 And destroyed all the firstborn in Egypt, The first of *their* strength in the tents of Ham.

52 But He made His own people go forth like sheep, And guided them in the wilderness like a flock;

53 And He led them on safely, so that they did not fear; But the sea overwhelmed their enemies.

54 And He brought them to His holy border, This mountain *which* His right hand had acquired.

55 He also drove out the nations before them, Allotted them an inheritance by survey, And made the tribes of Israel dwell in their tents.

56 Yet they tested and provoked Elyown Elohiym (the Most High God), And did not keep His testimonies,

57 But turned back and acted unfaithfully like their fathers; They were turned aside like a deceitful bow.

58 For they provoked Him to anger with their high places, And moved Him to jealousy with their carved images.

59 When Elohiym (God) heard *this*, He was furious, And greatly abhorred Israel,

60 So that He forsook the tabernacle of Shiloh, The tent He had placed among men,

61 And delivered His strength into captivity, And His glory into the enemy's hand.

62 He also gave His people over to the sword, And was furious with His inheritance.

63 The fire consumed their young men, And their maidens were not given in marriage.

64 Their priests fell by the sword, And their widows made no lamentation.

65 Then Adonay (the Lord) awoke as *from* sleep, Like a mighty man who shouts because of wine.

66 And He beat back His enemies; He put them to a perpetual reproach.

67 Moreover He rejected the tent of Joseph, And did not choose the tribe of Ephraim,

68 But chose the tribe of Judah, Mount Zion which He loved.

69 And He built His sanctuary like the heights, Like the earth which He has established forever.

70 He also chose David His servant, And took him from the sheepfolds;

71 From following the ewes that had young He brought him, To shepherd Jacob His people, And Israel His inheritance.

72 So he shepherded them according to the integrity of his heart, And guided them by the skillfulness of his hands.

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#### Facts Revealed:

- ✧ Give ear, O my people, *to* my law; Incline your ears to the words of my mouth. I will open my mouth in a parable; I will utter dark sayings of old, Which we have heard and known, And our fathers have told us. We will not hide *them* from their children, Telling to the generation to come the praises of Yahweh (the LORD), And His strength and His wonderful works that He has done. [Psalm 78:1-4]
  - ✧ Asaph tells the history of Israel and Elohiym in parables.
  - ✧ To be passed on to generations yet to come.
  - ✧ Praises of Yahweh, the strength and wonderful works He has done.
- ✧ For He established a testimony in Jacob, And appointed a law in Israel, Which He commanded our fathers, That they should make them known to their children; That the generation to come might know *them*, The children *who* would be born, *That* they may arise and declare *them* to their children, That they may set their hope in Elohiym (God), And not forget the works of El (God), But keep His commandments; And may not be like their fathers, A stubborn and rebellious generation, A generation *that* did not set its heart aright, And whose spirit was not faithful to El (God). [Psalm 78:5-8]
  - ✧ Elohiym established a testimony in Jacob and appointed a law in Israel to be followed and passed on to all future generations.
  - ✧ The fathers became a stubborn and rebellious generation that did not set its heart aright, their spirit was not faithful to El.
- ✧ The children of Ephraim, *being* armed *and* carrying bows, Turned back in the day of battle. They did not keep the covenant of Elohiym (God); They refused to walk in His law, And forgot His works And His wonders that He had shown them. Marvelous things He did in the sight of their fathers, In the land of Egypt, *in* the field of Zoan. [Psalm 78:9-12]
  - ✧ The Children of Ephraim turned back in the day of battle because they did not keep the covenant of Elohiym and refused to follow His law.
  - ✧ They forgot the mighty works and wonders Elohiym had done in the sight of their fathers in the land of Egypt.

- ☆ He divided the sea and caused them to pass through; And He made the waters stand up like a heap.  
In the daytime also He led them with the cloud, And all the night with a light of fire.  
He split the rocks in the wilderness, And gave *them* drink in abundance like the depths.  
He also brought streams out of the rock, And caused waters to run down like rivers. [\[Psalm 78:13-16\]](#)
- ✧ They forgot how Elohiym had brought Israel through the Red Sea on dry ground and led them by a pillar of cloud in the day time and a pillar of fire by night.
- ✧ He provided water for them in abundance in the wilderness.
- ✧ He brought streams out of the split rock which flowed like rivers.
- ☆ But they sinned even more against Him By rebelling against Elyown (the Most High) in the wilderness.  
And they tested El (God) in their heart By asking for the food of their fancy.  
Yes, they spoke against Elohiym (God): They said, "Can El (God) prepare a table in the wilderness?  
Behold, He struck the rock, So that the waters gushed out, And the streams overflowed.  
Can He give bread also? Can He provide meat for His people?" [\[Psalm 78:17-20\]](#)
- ✧ Though they had witnessed these mighty works, they sinned and rebelled against Elyown in the wilderness.
- ✧ They questioned His ability to provide food and water in the wilderness.
- ✧ The rock was struck and overflowing streams of water gushed out.
- ☆ Therefore Yahweh (the LORD) heard *this* and was furious; So a fire was kindled against Jacob, And anger also came up against Israel,  
Because they did not believe in Elohiym (God), And did not trust in His salvation.  
Yet He had commanded the clouds above, And opened the doors of heaven,  
Had rained down manna on them to eat, And given them of the bread of heaven.  
Men ate angels' food; He sent them food to the full. [\[Psalm 78:21-25\]](#)
- ✧ Yahweh was angered and sent fire against Jacob and Israel because they did not believe Him or trust in His Salvation.
- ✧ Still He provided manna (angels food) in abundance.
- ☆ He caused an east wind to blow in the heavens; And by His power He brought in the south wind.  
He also rained meat on them like the dust, Feathered fowl like the sand of the seas;  
And He let *them* fall in the midst of their camp, All around their dwellings.  
So they ate and were well filled, For He gave them their own desire.  
They were not deprived of their craving; But while their food *was* still in their mouths,  
The wrath of Elohiym (God) came against them, And slew the stoutest of them,  
And struck down the choice *men* of Israel. [\[Psalm 78:26-31\]](#)
- ✧ Provided Quail to appease their craving.
- ✧ Struck down the choice men of Israel because of their complaining and distrust.

- ✧ In spite of this they still sinned, And did not believe in His wondrous works. Therefore their days He consumed in futility, And their years in fear. [Psalm 78:32-33](#)
  - ✧ Granting their desire did not end their sin and disbelief.
  - ✧ The rebellious generation died in the wilderness.
- ✧ When He slew them, then they sought Him; And they returned and sought earnestly for El (God).
 

Then they remembered that Elohiym (God) *was* their rock, And Elyown El (the Most High God) their Redeemer.

Nevertheless they flattered Him with their mouth, And they lied to Him with their tongue;

For their heart was not steadfast with Him, Nor were they faithful in His covenant. [\[Psalm 78:34-37\]](#)

  - ✧ When Elohiym slew them they returned and earnestly sought El remembering that Elohiym was their rock of defense and Elyown El was their redeemer.
  - ✧ It is interesting that they earnestly returned hypocritically with flattering words.
  - ✧ Their heart was not steadfast nor were they faithful to His covenant.
- ✧ But He, *being* full of compassion, forgave *their* iniquity, And did not destroy *them*. Yes, many a time He turned His anger away, And did not stir up all His wrath;
 

For He remembered that they *were but* flesh, A breath that passes away and does not come again. [\[Psalm 78:38-39\]](#)

  - ✧ Demonstrating the great compassion, mercy and grace of Elohiym.
- ✧ How often they provoked Him in the wilderness, *And* grieved Him in the desert! Yes, again and again they tempted El (God), And limited Qadowsh Yisrael (the Holy One of Israel).
 

They did not remember His power: The day when He redeemed them from the enemy,

When He worked His signs in Egypt, And His wonders in the field of Zoan; Turned their rivers into blood, And their streams, that they could not drink. He sent swarms of flies among them, which devoured them, And frogs, which destroyed them.

He also gave their crops to the caterpillar, And their labor to the locust. He destroyed their vines with hail, And their sycamore trees with frost. He also gave up their cattle to the hail, And their flocks to fiery lightning. He cast on them the fierceness of His anger, Wrath, indignation, and trouble, By sending angels of destruction *among them*.

He made a path for His anger; He did not spare their soul from death, But gave their life over to the plague,

And destroyed all the firstborn in Egypt, The first of *their* strength in the tents of Ham. [\[Psalm 78:40-51\]](#)

  - ✧ Story of the ways Israel tempted Elohiym in their travels from Egypt to the Promised Land.
  - ✧ Description of the plagues Elohiym brought against the Egyptians.
- ✧ But He made His own people go forth like sheep, And guided them in the wilderness like a flock;
 

And He led them on safely, so that they did not fear; But the sea overwhelmed

their enemies.

And He brought them to His holy border, This mountain *which* His right hand had acquired.

He also drove out the nations before them, Allotted them an inheritance by survey, And made the tribes of Israel dwell in their tents. [Psalm 78:52-55]

✧ Elohiym's care for Israel through the wilderness to the inheritance of the Promised Land.

☆ Yet they tested and provoked Elyown Elohiym (the Most High God), And did not keep His testimonies,

But turned back and acted unfaithfully like their fathers; They were turned aside like a deceitful bow.

For they provoked Him to anger with their high places, And moved Him to jealousy with their carved images. [Psalm 78:56-58]

✧ Israel's unfaithful rebellion against Elyown Elohiym in the Promised Land.

☆ When Elohiym (God) heard *this*, He was furious, And greatly abhorred Israel, So that He forsook the tabernacle of Shiloh, The tent He had placed among men,

And delivered His strength into captivity, And His glory into the enemy's hand. He also gave His people over to the sword, And was furious with His inheritance.

The fire consumed their young men, And their maidens were not given in marriage.

Their priests fell by the sword, And their widows made no lamentation. [Psalm 78:59-64]

✧ Elohiym withdrew His protection of Israel allowing the enemy to destroy them.

☆ Then Adonay (the Lord) awoke as *from* sleep, Like a mighty man who shouts because of wine.

And He beat back His enemies; He put them to a perpetual reproach.

Moreover He 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. [Psalm 78:65-69]

✧ When Israel had been punished enough Adonay beat back the enemies to a perpetual reproach.

✧ He rejected Joseph and Ephraim representing the rebellious of Israel.

✧ When the kingdom was divided after Solomon, the northern kingdom was often referred to as Ephraim.

✧ He chose Judah and Mount Zion which He loved.

✧ When the kingdom was divided after Solomon, the southern kingdom was called Judea or Judah.

✧ He exalted His Sanctuary like the heights, like the earth he has established forever.

☆ He also chose David His servant, And took him from the sheepfolds;

From following the ewes that had young 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 by the skillfulness of his hands. [Psalm 78:70-72]

- ✧ David was chosen to shepherd Israel from the tribe of Judah.
- ✧ David's descendant Messiah was from the tribe of Judah.
- ✧ One day He will reign King of kings and Lord of lords over the entire earth for His thousand year reign of righteousness and peace. [[1 Timothy 6:13-16](#), [Revelation 17:14, 19:16, 20:4](#), [Micah 5:3-5, 7:14](#), [Matthew 2:6](#), [Luke 1:31-33](#)]