

PSALMS: DIARIES OF GODLY OLD TESTAMENT SAINTS

Psalm Seventy-Eight - Examplifying The "Training And Instruction Of The Lord" By Godly Parents (Psalm 78:1-72)

I. Introduction

- A. God calls parents to rear their children "in the training and instruction of the Lord," Eph. 6:4 NIV.
- B. Now, most Christian parents know that they must encourage, discipline and instruct their children in what is basically right and wrong, but much more is involved than just "right and wrong" **rules**. The "training and instruction of the **Lord**" is higher training, and Psalm 78 details it for parents as follows:

II. Examplifying The "Training And Instruction Of The Lord" by Godly Parents, Psalm 78:1-72.

- A. The psalmist, Asaph called on the people of Israel to heed his instruction in the psalm, for it contained information from the past that taught valuable lessons for Israel in her present era, Ps. 78:1-3.
- B. These lessons were to be **retold** from generation to generation throughout history, Ps. 78:4a, 6.
- C. This passing along of information from generation to generation was commanded by God, and it included instruction in God and His law which Israel needed to trust and obey for blessing, Ps. 78:5b.
- D. What exactly was **narrated** was God's law and dealings with Israel relative to her being blessed to the degree of her obeying and trusting God and His Law, Ps. 78:4b, 7-8.
- E. Accordingly, Asaph **practiced** obeying this decree of **narrating** the blessings and cursings of the nation to the degree they obeyed God's Word and trusted in Him, and **applied** the lesson to **his** generation, v. 9-72:
 - 1. Though it is hard to know what event is meant by Ephraem's faithlessness in Ps. 78:9-11, Asaph tells of Ephraem's historical loss of blessing in conflict as a warning to his audience to trust in the Lord's power.
 - 2. Asaph then detailed the numerous events in Israel's history where **former** generations had gone in and out of faith and obedience in God with corresponding widely varying results of divine blessing:
 - a. He detailed God's miracles in delivering Israel from Egypt and leading them through the wilderness only to have them rebel out of unbelief in the wilderness so that God had to judge them, 78:12-22.
 - b. He told how God delivered manna and meat miraculously, but, because of their lust at gorging themselves on the meat, how God executed a number of them, Ps. 78:23-31.
 - c. However, these cycles of judgment did not keep the nation from sinning: Israel kept going in and out of faith and obedience with resulting blessings or judgments from God, Ps. 78:32-41. This is because that **first** generation of the nation, Israel **itself** had forgotten God's previous blessings and miracles of deliverance in their behalf just to get them out of Egypt, Ps. 78:42-51.
 - d. Though God brought Israel into the Promised Land, she still failed to trust and obey God, and ended up in judgment in the period of the Judges, Ps. 78:52-64.
 - 3. However, in grace, God again turned the tide in Israel's favor, beating back her enemies, and establishing Judah and David as new leadership that would trust and obey Him in replacement of the faithless people and tribes in Israel of Her past, Ps. 78:65-71.
 - 4. Thus, in Asaph's era, Israel had a new chance for blessing with a skillful king with a heart of integrity in David to fear and obey the Lord and His Law, Ps. 78:72. **By implication, Asaph was warning his generation to pay attention to the lessons of Israel's history so they THEMSELVES would not ruin their chance for fulfillment under David, but trust and obey God for blessing NOW!**

Lesson: Besides instructing in "rules," the "training and instruction of the Lord" that godly parents must teach children is the awareness that the baton of responsibility to trust and obey God is being passed from parent to child! In effect, the parents must teach that, "Mom and Dad are becoming less and less your parents -- YOU must now answer to GOD as YOUR FATHER! Thus, we earnestly suggest that you trust and obey God as your destiny is in HIS hands, NOT OURS!"

Application: Godly parents must take time to (1) teach Bible accounts of Israel's history that reveal the REALITY of EACH GENERATION'S need to trust and obey God for blessing. (2) They must also include the testimony of similar lessons learned in NEARER generations, including their OWN lives, with the SAME application. (3) Then the children will clearly see the REALITY of THEIR OWN need to trust and obey God, or else, and assume a RESPONSIBLE faith and obedience!