

## *PSALM 78:42-72*

In this last portion of the psalm, we read how Israel forgot God's miraculous works in releasing them from bondage in Egypt, as well as the judgments that came upon the Egyptians themselves. Yet in his great love for his people, God brought them to the holy land, the land of promise, and it was apportioned between the tribes. Even then, after God had driven out the nations so Israel could take possession, the twelve tribes rebelled and indulged in idolatry. The history of Israel given by Asaph in this psalm ends with the choice of David to be king.

### **A Maskil of Asaph.**

42 They did not remember His power,  
the day when He redeemed them from the adversary,  
43 when He performed His signs in Egypt and His marvels in the field of Zoan,  
44 and turned their rivers to blood, and their streams, they could not drink.  
45 He sent among them swarms of flies which devoured them,  
and frogs which destroyed them.  
46 He gave also their crops to the grasshopper and the product of their labor to the locust.  
47 He destroyed their vines with hailstones and their sycamore trees with frost.  
48 He gave over their cattle also to the hailstones and their herds to bolts of lightning.  
49 He sent upon them His burning anger, fury and indignation and trouble,  
a band of destroying angels.  
50 He leveled a path for His anger; He did not spare their soul from death,  
but gave over their life to the plague,  
51 and smote all the firstborn in Egypt, the first *issue* of their virility in the tents of Ham.  
52 But He led forth His own people like sheep  
and guided them in the wilderness like a flock;  
53 He led them safely, so that they did not fear; but the sea engulfed their enemies.

54 So He brought them to His holy land,  
to this hill country which His right hand had gained.  
55 He also drove out the nations before them  
and apportioned them for an inheritance by measurement,  
and made the tribes of Israel dwell in their tents.  
56 Yet they tempted and rebelled against the Most High God  
and did not keep His testimonies,  
57 but turned back and acted treacherously like their fathers;  
they turned aside like a treacherous bow. A [a]Maskil of Asaph.

58 For they provoked Him with their high places  
and aroused His jealousy with their graven images.

59 When God heard, He was filled with wrath and greatly abhorred Israel;  
60 so that He abandoned the dwelling place at Shiloh,  
the tent which He had pitched among men,  
61 and gave up His strength to captivity and His glory into the hand of the adversary.  
62 He also delivered His people to the sword, and was filled with wrath at His inheritance.  
63 Fire devoured His young men, and His virgins had no wedding songs.

64 His priests fell by the sword, and His widows could not weep.  
65 Then the Lord awoke as *if from* sleep, like a warrior overcome by wine.  
66 He drove His adversaries backward; He put on them an everlasting reproach.  
67 He also 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 founded forever.  
70 He also chose David His servant and took him from the sheepfolds;  
71 from the care of the ewes with suckling lambs  
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 with his skillful hands.

#### PRAYER

*O gracious and heavenly Father, we praise your name for your mighty works, not only on behalf of Israel but on behalf of the Gentiles also. Let us meditate often upon the troubling history and uplifting deliverance of your chosen people, and let us fervently pray for their salvation. To the people of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob were entrusted the oracles of God. Let us never forget that. May we with sincere hearts look forward to that day when the people of Israel shall see their Messiah Jesus come in power and great glory to take them to himself. Hear our prayers in their behalf, and watch over all your disciples this day, for we ask in the name of our great Redeemer. Amen.*