

Having A Basic Understanding of Some Old Testament Truths

Part 107 – Ignorance To God’s Anger Through Our Wondrous God (Psalms 74-77)

1. What question opens the seventy-fourth Psalm?

“O God, why hast thou cast us off for ever? why doth thine anger smoke against the sheep of thy pasture” (Psalms 74:1)?

**Sin is what causes anger from God (I Kings 1:9 and Psalms 7:11).*

2. Who did the Psalmist ask God to remember?

“Remember thy congregation, which thou hast purchased of old; the rod of thine inheritance, which thou hast redeemed; this mount Zion, wherein thou hast dwelt” (Psalms 74:2).

** They have forgotten this: “(For the LORD thy God is a merciful God;) he will not forsake thee, neither destroy thee, nor forget the covenant of thy fathers which he swore unto them” (Deuteronomy 4:31).*

*** At the same time, there is this application: “(38) But since ye say, The burden of the LORD; therefore thus saith the LORD; Because ye say this word, The burden of the LORD [point of this is in verse 36], and I have sent unto you, saying, Ye shall not say, The burden of the LORD; (39) Therefore, behold, I, even I, will utterly forget you, and I will forsake you, and the city that I gave you and your fathers, and cast you out of my presence: (40) And I will bring an everlasting reproach upon you, and a perpetual shame, which shall not be forgotten” (Jeremiah 23:38-40).*

3. Have the enemies of Israel emboldened themselves against God?

Oh, yes: “(3) Lift up thy feet unto the perpetual desolations; even all that the enemy hath done wickedly in the sanctuary. (4) Thine enemies roar in the midst of thy congregations; they set up their ensigns for signs. (5) A man was famous according as he had lifted up axes upon the thick trees. (6) But now they break down the carved work thereof at once with axes and hammers. (7) They have cast fire into thy sanctuary, they have defiled by casting down the dwelling place of thy name to the ground. (8) They said in their hearts, Let us destroy them together: they have burned up all the synagogues of God in the land” (Psalms 74:3-8).

4. Since there were no prophets at the time (Psalms 74:9), what timeframe was the Psalmist asking about?

*“(9) We see not our signs: there is no more any prophet: neither is there among us any that knoweth **how long**. (10) O God, **how long** shall the adversary reproach? shall the enemy blaspheme thy name for ever? (11) Why withdrawest thou thy hand, even thy right hand? pluck it out of thy bosom” (Psalms 74:9-11).*

5. Did the Psalmist realize God’s power?

Yes: “(12) For God is my King of old, working salvation in the midst of the earth. (13) Thou didst divide the sea by thy strength: thou brakest the heads of the dragons in the waters. (14) Thou brakest the heads of leviathan in pieces, and gavest him to be meat to the people inhabiting the wilderness. (15) Thou didst cleave the fountain and the flood: thou driedst up mighty rivers. (16) The day is thine, the night also is thine: thou hast

prepared the light and the sun. (17) Thou hast set all the borders of the earth: thou hast made summer and winter” (Psalms 74:12-17).

* Remember the point that God made about the Leviathan with Job: “None is so fierce that dare stir him up: ***who then is able to stand before me***” (Job 41:10)? Here should be a point when Job sees that the great creatures of the earth are not to be messed with, so why has he tried such with the CREATOR of these creatures (II Chronicles 32:18-21, Job 40:1-2, Isaiah 29:15-16, and Isaiah 45:9)?

6. What pleas did the Psalmist make to God as the seventy-fourth Psalm concludes?

*“(18) Remember this, that the enemy hath reproached, O LORD, and that the foolish people have blasphemed thy name. (19) O deliver not the soul of thy turtledove unto the multitude of the wicked: forget not the congregation of thy poor for ever. (20) Have respect unto the covenant: for the dark places of the earth are full of the habitations of cruelty. (21) O let not the oppressed return ashamed: let the poor and needy praise thy name. (22) **Arise, O God, plead thine own cause:** remember how the foolish man reproacheth thee daily. (23) Forget not the voice of thine enemies: the tumult of those that rise up against thee increaseth continually” (Psalms 74:18-23).*

7. Does God’s wondrous works declare anything about God?

Sure: “*Unto thee, O God, do we give thanks, unto thee do we give thanks: for that thy name is near thy wondrous works declare” (Psalms 75:1).*

8. Could Psalms 75:2-3 apply literally to any man?

No: “*When I shall receive the congregation [“When I choose the proper time – NKJV] I will judge uprightly. (3) The earth and all the inhabitants thereof are dissolved: I bear [set up – NKJV] up the pillars of it. Selah” (Psalms 75:2-3).*

*Seemingly, this would be of Christ (cf. Colossians 1:16-20).

9. With God as a judge, what advise does the fifty-fifth Psalm give to the foolish and the wicked?

*“(4) I said unto the fools, **Deal not foolishly:** and to the wicked, **Lift not up the horn:** (5) **Lift not up your horn on high: speak not with a stiff neck.** (6) For promotion cometh neither from the east, nor from the west, nor from the south. (7) But God is the judge: he putteth down one, and setteth up another. (8) For in the hand of the LORD there is a cup, and the wine is red; it is full of mixture; and he poureth out of the same: but the dregs thereof, all the wicked of the earth shall wring them out, and drink them” (Psalms 75:4-8).*

* A commentary on v. 8 can be found in **Jeremiah 25:15** and **Revelation 14:10**.

10. Will all of the strength [horns] of the wicked be cut off while the righteous will be exalted?

Yes: “*All the horns of the wicked also will I cut off; but the horns of the righteous shall be exalted” (Psalms 75:10).*

* Horns represent strength/authority (**Deuteronomy 33:17**).

11. Was God known and feared in the time the seventy-sixth Psalm was written?

Yes: “(1) In Judah is God known: his name is great in Israel. (2) In Salem also is his tabernacle, and his dwelling place in Zion. (3) **There brake he the arrows of the bow,**

*the shield, and the sword, and the battle. Selah. (4) Thou art more glorious and excellent than the mountains of prey. (5) The stouthearted are spoiled, they have slept their sleep: and none of the men of might have found their hands. (6) **At thy rebuke**, O God of Jacob, both the chariot and horse are cast into a dead sleep. (7) Thou, even thou, art to be feared: and **who may stand in thy sight when once thou art angry?** (8) Thou didst cause judgment to be heard from heaven; the earth feared, and was still, (9) When God arose to judgment, to save all the meek of the earth. Selah. (10) Surely the wrath of man shall praise thee: the remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain” (Psalms 76:1-10).*

*Who can stand in God’s sight when He’s angry (Hebrews 10:31; 12:29)?

- “Who knoweth the power of thine anger? even according to thy fear, so is thy wrath” (Psalms 90:11).

- “God is jealous, and the LORD revengeth; the LORD revengeth, and is furious; the LORD will take vengeance on his adversaries, and he reserveth wrath for his enemies” (Nahum 1:2).

- “Who can stand before his indignation? and who can abide in the fierceness of his anger? his fury is poured out like fire, and the rocks are thrown down by him” (Nahum 1:6).

12. Is it wise to not pay what one vows to God?

No: “Vow, and pay unto the LORD your God: let all that be round about him bring presents unto him that ought to be feared” (Psalms 76:11).

* You must keep you vows to God (Judges 11:35; cf. Numbers 30:2, Psalms 50:14-15; 66:13-14 and Ecclesiastes 5:4-6).

* You better think before you speak (Proverbs 21:23 and Ecclesiastes 5:2).

13. Are the kings of the earth superior to God?

No: “He shall cut off the spirit of princes: he is terrible to the kings of the earth” (Psalms 76:12).

14. Who did the Psalmist cry unto in a time of trouble?

“(1) I cried unto God with my voice, even unto God with my voice; and he gave ear unto me. (2) In the day of my trouble I sought the Lord: my sore ran in the night, and ceased not: my soul refused to be comforted. (3) I remembered God, and was troubled; I complained, and my spirit was overwhelmed. Selah” (Psalms 77:1-3).

* “Cast thy burden upon the LORD, and he shall sustain thee: he shall never suffer the righteous to be moved” (Psalms 55:22).

15. As the Psalmist laid awake and considers the days of old, what does he recall and question?

“(4) Thou holdest mine eyes waking: I am so troubled that I cannot speak. (5) I have considered the days of old, the years of ancient times. (6) I call to remembrance my song in the night: I commune with mine own heart: and my spirit made diligent search. (7) **Will the Lord cast off for ever? and will he be favourable no more?** (8) **Is his mercy clean gone for ever? doth his promise fail for evermore?** (9) **Hath God forgotten to be gracious? hath he in anger shut up his tender mercies?** Selah” (Psalms 77:4-9).

16. In his time of suffering, was the Psalmist willing to meditate on God's wondrous works?

Yes: "(10) *And I said, This is my infirmity: but I will remember the years of the right hand of the most High. (11) I will remember the works of the LORD: surely I will remember thy wonders of old. (12) I will meditate also of all thy work, and talk of thy doings*" (Psalms 77:10-12).

17. Did the Psalmist recall and record anything specific about God's great works?

Yes: "(13) *Thy way, O God, is in the sanctuary: who is so great a God as our God? (14) Thou art the God that doest wonders: thou hast declared thy strength among the people. (15) Thou hast with thine arm redeemed thy people, the sons of Jacob and Joseph. Selah. (16) The waters saw thee, O God, the waters saw thee; they were afraid: the depths also were troubled. (17) The clouds poured out water: the skies sent out a sound: thine arrows also went abroad. (18) The voice of thy thunder was in the heaven: the lightnings lightened the world: the earth trembled and shook. (19) Thy way is in the sea, and thy path in the great waters, and thy footsteps are not known. (20) Thou leddest thy people like a flock by the hand of Moses and Aaron*" (Psalms 77:13-20).

* God's work over the water (Exodus 14:19-31 and Joshua 3:14-17).

* God's power in the clouds (Genesis 9:13-14, Psalms 68:8-9, and Habakkuk 3:10-11).

* God's voice of thunder (Job 40:9 and John 12:28-29).

* God's lightning (Exodus 20:18-19).

* God can shake the earth (Exodus 19:18, Matthew 27:51, and Hebrews 12:24-27).

* No one can understand the steps God takes when He does not spell it out (Romans 11:33-36).

* God led His people (Exodus 13:21) through Moses and Aaron (Isaiah 63:11-12).