



# Now & Next

## Growth Group Curriculum April 24, 2022 – Psalm 78:1-7

**Growth groups are one of the best and easiest ways to find community at church. Thank you for loving and caring for each other.**

Psalm 78 is a psalm of Asaph. Many of the psalms that Asaph wrote (50, 73-83) have to do with the theme of memory or remembering. 1 Chronicles 25 tells us that Asaph was both a prophet and a poet. He was one of King David's three chief musicians. This psalm also has a connection with wisdom which is seen in the heading of the psalm where it is called a maskil of Asaph. The word maskil has its roots in the idea of wisdom.

There is a three-part structure to Psalm 78, but we will only be considering the first part this week. Verses 1-11 introduce the psalm and its purpose. Verses 12-39 focus on the wilderness stories and traditions and verses 40-72 look at the exodus from Egypt and the movement to the Promised Land.

The community is called to remember the faithfulness of God, and to pass that story on to future generations. People are to learn from the lessons of history. God had been faithful and God had provided, and those stories needed to continually be told. The past is shared so that the future might be glorious. Sharing Israel's past is not just about passing along information, but also about learning from the history of the Jewish people. Learning from when they got it right, but also when they did not obey God fully (verses 12-64).

The people of Israel are to teach the future generations about the "*works*" of God (verse 4) as well as the "*words*" of God (verse 5). The future generations must know about what God has done. Asaph describes God's work with three phrases - *the praiseworthy deeds of the LORD, his power, and the wonders he has done*. In verse 5, Asaph talks about the statutes and word of God. God's word is God's testimony about what is good for us, as well as what can bring harm to us.

In the end, the stories of God are told so that the next generation will trust their lives to God. If no one tells the story of the faithfulness of God, then future generations will not know where to place their trust and they will look in different places for hope and security.



## Exploring the Text

Psalm 78:1-7

<sup>1</sup> My people, hear my teaching; listen to the words of my mouth. <sup>2</sup> I will open my mouth with a parable; I will utter hidden things, things from of old— <sup>3</sup> things we have heard and known, things our ancestors have told us. <sup>4</sup> We will not hide them from their descendants; we will tell the next generation the praiseworthy deeds of the LORD, his power, and the wonders he has done. <sup>5</sup> He decreed statutes for Jacob and established the law in Israel, which he commanded our ancestors to teach their children, <sup>6</sup> so the next generation would know them, even the children yet to be born, and they in turn would tell their children. <sup>7</sup> Then they would put their trust in God and would not forget his deeds but would keep his commands.

## Questions

*If you are answering these questions alone, we would urge you to try journaling. Rather than just pondering the answers, try writing them out along with a prayer to the Lord.*

- 1) What's a favorite story that you like to tell in your family?
- 2) Is there something you wish you knew about your family's past, or some family member you wish you had known?
- 3) In Joshua 4 we read, "the Lord said to Joshua, *"Choose twelve men from among the people, one from each tribe, and tell them to take up twelve stones from the middle of the Jordan, from right where the priests are standing, and carry them over with you and put them down at the place where you stay tonight,"* and... *"In the future, when your children ask you, 'What do these stones mean?' tell them that the flow of the Jordan was cut off before the ark of the covenant of the Lord. When it crossed the Jordan, the waters of the Jordan were cut off. These stones are to be a memorial to the people of Israel forever."* What are some of the reminders you have had in your life (physical, spiritual, etc...) that speak to you of God's faithfulness?
- 4) Who has spoken wisdom into your life, and who are you speaking wisdom into? If you don't have someone you are speaking wisdom into, is there someone you can think of that could benefit from your wisdom? Or is there someone in your past that you feel like you were able to share your wisdom with?
- 5) Pastor Paul quoted 1 Corinthians 3:5-7 which says, *"What, after all, is Apollos? And what is Paul? Only servants, through whom you came to believe—as the Lord has assigned to each his task. I planted the seed, Apollos watered it, but God has been making it grow. So neither the one who plants nor the one who waters is anything, but only God, who makes things grow."* What do these verses teach us about our role and God's role in telling the story of our faith?
- 6) In our society who do you feel is responsible for teaching values and principles to children? School? Church? Family? Someone else?
- 7) Psalm 78 tells us to place our trust and confidence in God, because God is faithful and has done praiseworthy things. Where do you place your confidence and trust? How about your children and grandchildren?
- 8) How are we to instruct future generations if those generations are no longer showing up for church, or seem disinterested in the things of God?

