

Pine Knoll Sabbath School Study Notes

First Quarter 2024: *The Book of Psalms*

Lesson 10 “Lessons of the Past”

Read for this week’s study

Psalm 78; Psalm 105; Galatians 3:29; Psalm 106; Psalm 80; Numbers 6:22–27; Psalm 135.

Memory Text

“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 the Lord, and His strength and His wonderful works that He has done” (Psalm 78:3, 4, NKJV).

Lesson Outline from Adult Sabbath School Study Guide

- I. Introduction
- II. The Lord’s Unstoppable Faithfulness
- III. Remembering History and the Praise of God
- IV. Remembering History and Repentance
- V. The Parable of the Lord’s Vine
- VI. The Lord’s Supremacy in History
- VII. Further Study

Questions and Notes for Consideration

Facilitator: Daniel Duda

1. “The special appeal of the historical Psalms is that they help us to see our lives as part of the history of God’s people and to claim that past as our own. [...] The final goal is to realize that each generation of God’s people plays a small but significant part in the grand historical unfolding of God’s sovereign purposes in the great controversy.” (Sabbath afternoon)
2. What three key historical epochs are highlighted in Psalm 78? (Sunday’s lesson) Just as the human rebellion did not cause God to abandon the creation project (Psalm 8), so Israel’s constant and humiliating failure did not cause God to abandon the project to rescue the world.
3. Why is it significant that this rescue mission was to be undertaken by a people who were themselves in sore need of the very same rescue? What lesson is there for us?

4. Compare and contrast Psalm 105 and 106. While Psalm 105 celebrates God's choice of Abraham and his family and his deliverance of them from slavery in Egypt, Psalm 106 immediately goes on to tell the dark side of the same story, showing that this rebellion did not stop when Israel reached the Promised Land. (Monday's & Tuesday's lessons)
5. Wednesday's lesson connects Psalm 80 and the Aaronic blessing from Numbers 6:22-27. There are two pictures of God's people: a flock (vv. 1-7) and a vine (vv. 8-19). In the end the psalm exhibits a confident trust in God, who can create a future and who will be the good shepherd. The New Testament presents God's people as sheep in the flock (John 10) and branches in the Vine (John 15). How can we exhibit faithfulness and fruitfulness in our time?
6. Thursday's lesson focuses on Psalm 135. There is a straightforward celebration telling the story of the Exodus and insisting that God is completely different from the idols of the nations. However, there is not merely triumph at past victories but trust for the future ones, implying that Israel will still need rescuing (135:13-14). The tub-thumping Psalm 136 is followed at once by the heart-stopping Psalm 137.
7. These Psalms (78, 105, 106, 135-137) provide a history of betrayal and disobedience, of surprise and deliverance. As we pray these psalms, that history becomes our history. We do not need to romanticize our history. Our history is also a memory of grasping and not trusting and thereby bringing trouble. Such understanding of history is a critique of our usual histories on which we count too heavily, a history of a triumphal church, or imperial nation or an intolerant culture.
8. How can praying these psalms lead us to another, converted identity? What can we do so that "we have nothing to fear for the future, except as we shall forget the way the Lord has led us, and His teaching in our past history." (LDE 72.1)?

Thoughts from Graham Maxwell

Do you notice Paul's subject, let God be true. In other words, righteous. He's still talking about the character of God, isn't he? Let God be true, even though you've let Him down. "That Thou mayest be justified in Thy words and prevail when Thou art judged." Now, that can be translated in various ways, but among all the versions, the point is clear, as from the Greek, that there have been questions about God, about His character, His truthfulness, His righteousness. Which shows to me, this is the subject of the book. True, he's giving the plan of salvation, God's way of setting us right. But instead of talking about us so much, he talks about God.

Is it God's way of setting us right, to reveal the truth about Himself? Well, in what way are we wrong? Isn't it that we have not had faith in our God? We have not trusted God. We have not been willing to listen. What leads us to trust, and a willingness to listen, but the revelation of the righteousness of God? Then what is God's way of setting us right? Revealing His own

righteousness. So if you translate “the gospel is the truth about God’s own righteousness” that doesn’t leave out the fact that that’s God’s way of making us righteous. But if you translate it “the gospel is God’s way of making us righteous”, you’ve left out the way. You’ve left out the fact that that depends upon our seeing the truth about God. And that’s the heart of the present great theological controversy among us.

There are some who say, “There is no need to reveal the righteousness of God. That’s a given. All we need is the methods and the steps He’s used to set us right.” But then they use the wrong methods. It’s by presenting the truth about God. “This is what God is like.” And you use all sixty-six books for that. Look at all the evidence as to what God is like. And does He want to be served from fear? What does He do to His wayward children? We have to explain that. What about His wrath, and the destruction of the wicked? He has to explain that in order to win us back to trust, and the kind of obedience that God desires, that springs not from fear, or law, but from love, trust, and admiration. God’s way is to tell the truth about Himself. But God has been judged as being untrue and unrighteous. And Paul says, “God, may You be shown to be right in what You have said, and win Your case when You take it into court.” “When Thou art judged” in the Greek can be translated “when You take it into court”.

Did anyone drag God into court? Or would He have to take His own case into court? If God’s in court, He took Himself there. Nobody has power to drag Him into court. So I love the translation “and win Your case when You take it into court. {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series, The Picture of God in all 66 – Romans, recorded May 1982, Riverside, California} *To listen to the entire audio of the above reference, click on the following direct links:*

<http://pkp.cc/61MMPOGIA66> (Part 1) <http://pkp.cc/62MMPOGIA66> (Part 2)

Further Study with Ellen White

Love to man is the earthward manifestation of the love of God. It was to implant this love, to make us children of one family, that the King of glory became one with us. And when His parting words are fulfilled, “Love one another, as I have loved you” (John 15:12); when we love the world as He has loved it, then for us His mission is accomplished. We are fitted for heaven; for we have heaven in our hearts. {AG 54.6}

All the paternal love which has come down from generation to generation through the channel of human hearts, all the springs of tenderness which have opened in the souls of men, are but as a tiny rill to the boundless ocean when compared with the infinite, exhaustless love of God. {ML 365.4}

God regards us as His children. He has redeemed us out of the careless world and has chosen us to become members of the royal family, sons and daughters of the heavenly King. He invites us

to trust in Him with a trust deeper and stronger than that of a child in his earthly father. Parents love their children, but the love of God is larger, broader, deeper, than human love can possibly be. It is immeasurable. Then if earthly parents know how to give good gifts to their children, how much more shall our Father in heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him?

{COL 142.1}

He who fed the multitude with five loaves and two small fishes is able today to give us the fruit of our labor. He who said to the fishers of Galilee, "Let down your nets for a draft," and who, as they obeyed, filled their nets till they broke, desires His people to see in this an evidence of what He will do for them today. The God who in the wilderness gave the children of Israel manna from heaven still lives and reigns. He will guide His people and give skill and understanding in the work they are called to do. He will give wisdom to those who strive to do their duty conscientiously and intelligently. He who owns the world is rich in resources, and will bless everyone who is seeking to bless others. {MH 200.2}

From the opening of the great controversy it has been Satan's purpose to misrepresent God's character and to excite rebellion against His law, and this work appears to be crowned with success. The multitudes give ear to Satan's deceptions and set themselves against God. But amid the working of evil, God's purposes move steadily forward to their accomplishment; to all created intelligences He is making manifest His justice and benevolence. . . . {PP 338.2}

It was by deception that Satan seduced angels; thus he has in all ages carried forward his work among men, and he will continue this policy to the last. Should he openly profess to be warring against God and His law, men would beware; but he disguises himself, and mixes truth with error. The most dangerous falsehoods are those that are mingled with truth. It is thus that errors are received that captivate and ruin the soul. By this means Satan carries the world with him. But a day is coming when his triumph will be forever ended. {PP 338.3}

Since God is infinite, and in Him are all the treasures of wisdom, we may to all eternity be ever searching, ever learning, yet never exhaust the riches of His wisdom, His goodness, or His power. {Ed 172.2}

So long as the people of God preserve their fidelity to Him, so long as they cling by living faith to Jesus, they are under the protection of heavenly angels, and Satan will not be permitted to exercise his hellish arts upon them to their destruction. {OHC 92.5}

The grace of Christ is not confined to a few. The message of mercy and forgiveness brought from heaven by Christ was to be heard by all. Our Saviour says, "I am the light of the world." (John 8:12). His blessings are universal, reaching to all nations, kindreds, tongues, and peoples. Christ came to break down every wall of partition ... that every soul, whether Jew or Gentile, might be a free worshiper and have access to God.... {TMK 98.2}

God is the author of truth. He enlightens the darkened understanding and gives to the human mind power to grasp and comprehend the truths which He has revealed. {SL 49.1}

He who has given His precious life because He loved you, and wanted you to be happy, will be a Captain who will always be mindful of your interest. {SD 160.4}

It is Satan's work to fill men's hearts with doubt. He leads them to look upon God as a stern judge. He tempts them to sin, and then to regard themselves as too vile to approach their heavenly Father or to excite His pity. The Lord understands all this. Jesus assures His disciples of God's sympathy for them in their needs and weaknesses. Not a sigh is breathed, not a pain felt, not a grief pierces the soul, but the throb vibrates to the Father's heart. {DA 356.2}

Let us keep fresh in our memory all the tender mercies that God has shown us—the tears He has wiped away, the pains He has soothed, the anxieties removed, the fears dispelled, the wants supplied, the blessings bestowed—thus strengthening ourselves for all that is before us through the remainder of our pilgrimage. {CC 364.3}

We cannot but look forward to new perplexities in the coming conflict, but we may look on what is past as well as on what is to come, and say, "Hitherto hath the Lord helped us." "As thy days, so shall thy strength be" (Deuteronomy 33:25). The trial will not exceed the strength that shall be given us to bear it. Then let us take up our work just where we find it, believing that whatever may come, strength proportionate to the trial will be given. {CC 364.4}

Christ accepts and communes with the most lowly. He does not accept men because of their capabilities of eloquence, but because they seek His face, desiring His help. His Spirit, moving upon the heart, arouses every faculty to vigorous action. In these unpretentious ones the Lord sees the most precious material, which will stand storm and tempest, heat and pressure. God sees not as man sees. . . . {TDG 227.2}

It is not the will of God that His people should be weighed down with care. But our Lord does not tell us that there are no dangers in our path. He does not propose to take His people out of the world of sin and evil, but He points us to a never-failing refuge. He invites the weary and care-laden, "Come unto Me, all ye that labor and are heavy-laden, and I will give you rest." Lay off the yoke of anxiety and worldly care that you have placed on your own neck, and "take My yoke upon you, and learn of Me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls." Matthew 11:28, 29. We may find rest and peace in God, casting all our care upon Him; for He careth for us. See 1 Peter 5:7. {PP 294.1}

It is for our own benefit to keep every gift of God fresh in our memory. By this means faith is strengthened to claim and to receive more and more. There is greater encouragement for us in the least blessing we ourselves receive from God than in all the accounts we can read of the faith and experience of others. The soul that responds to the grace of God shall be like a

watered garden. His health shall spring forth speedily; his light shall rise in obscurity, and the glory of the Lord shall be seen upon him. {MH 100.3}

No tongue can express, no finite mind can conceive, the blessing that results from appreciating the goodness and love of God. Even on earth we may have joy as a wellspring, never failing, because fed by the streams that flow from the throne of God. {SD 122.4}

The Saviour would have passed through the agony of Calvary that one might be saved in His kingdom. He will never abandon one for whom He has died. Unless His followers choose to leave Him, He will hold them fast. {DA 480.5}

God is ever seeking to instruct finite men that they may exercise faith in Him and trust themselves wholly in His hands. Every drop of rain or flake of snow, every spire of grass, every leaf and flower and shrub, testifies of God. These little things so common around us, teach the lesson that nothing is beneath the notice of the infinite God, nothing too small for His attention (GCB Feb. 18, 1897). {3BC 1141.3}

Constantly the heavenly agencies are communicating with men and women on the earth. We cannot see personally the angels of God round about us; nevertheless they are with us, guiding and directing. We are to be so fully under the influence of the Spirit of God that we shall be susceptible to His leadings. {HP 322.4}

It is our privilege to have a calm, close, happy walk with Jesus every day we live. {TMK 320.4}

The Lord's care is over all His creatures. He loves them all and makes no difference, except that He has the most tender pity for those who are called to bear life's heaviest burdens. {FLB 63.2}

The life of Christ established a religion in which there is no caste, a religion by which Jew and Gentile, free and bond, are linked in a common brotherhood, equal before God. No question of policy influenced His movements. He made no difference between neighbors and strangers, friends and enemies. That which appealed to His heart was a soul thirsting for the waters of life. {9T 191.1}

Heaven's plan of salvation is broad enough to embrace the whole world. God longs to breathe into prostrate humanity the breath of life. And He will not permit any soul to be disappointed who is sincere in his longing for something higher and nobler than anything the world can offer. Constantly He is sending His angels to those who, while surrounded by circumstances the most discouraging, pray in faith for some power higher than themselves to take possession of them and bring deliverance and peace. In various ways God will reveal Himself to them and will place them in touch with providences that will establish their confidence in the One who has given Himself a ransom for all, "that they might set their hope in God, and not forget the works of God, but keep His commandments." Psalm 78:7. {PK 377.1}

Christ is ready to set us free from sin, but He does not force the will; and if by persistent transgression the will itself is wholly bent on evil, and we do not *desire* to be set free, if we *will* not accept His grace, what more can He do? We have destroyed ourselves by our determined rejection of His love. “Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.” “Today if ye will hear His voice, harden not your hearts.” 2 Corinthians 6:2; Hebrews 3:7, 8. {SC 34.2}

It is that men may understand the joy of forgiveness, the peace of God, that Christ draws them through the manifestation of His love. If they respond to His drawing, yielding their hearts to His grace, He will lead them on step by step, to a full knowledge of Himself, and this is life eternal. {1SM 323.2}

It is not by inherent power that year by year the earth yields its bounties and continues its march around the sun. The hand of the Infinite One is perpetually at work guiding this planet. It is God’s power continually exercised that keeps the earth in position in its rotation. It is God who causes the sun to rise in the heavens. He opens the windows of heaven and gives rain. . . . {MH 416.2}

It is by His power that vegetation is caused to flourish, that every leaf appears, every flower blooms, every fruit develops. {MH 416.3}

The mechanism of the human body cannot be fully understood; it presents mysteries that baffle the most intelligent. It is not as the result of a mechanism, which, once set in motion, continues its work, that the pulse beats and breath follows breath. In God we live and move and have our being. The beating heart, the throbbing pulse, every nerve and muscle in the living organism, is kept in order and activity by the power of an ever-present God. {MH 417.1}