

PSALM 77 AND 78

2. In the many prayers for help, do you feel the petitioner had a specific type of help in mind? Was it physical or spiritual?
3. Where is this man's faith? Read verses 3 and 4. Isn't this an admission of defeat?—Discuss.
4. Discuss the best use of past pleasant memories.
5. Should we ever think—feel—believe—that God has rejected us? Discuss.
6. Under two or three circumstances we can almost expect a negative, discouraged, exaggerated response. Name at least two and discuss.
7. What possible miracles were in the mind of the psalmist?
8. The holiness of God is such a basic belief—why?
9. The deliverance from bondage is an oft recurring theme. Should not this be also true of us? Discuss.
10. God leads through men. Read verse 20. Is this true now? Discuss.

PSALM 78

DESCRIPTIVE TITLE

A Didactic Poem, Counselling the Re-union of the Tribes.

ANALYSIS

Part I.—THE PRELUDE

(1) An Invitation to Attend to a Series of Problems Drawn from Antiquity—vers. 1, 2.

(2) An Appeal to the history-reciting instinct: sustained by the claim that Jehovah's Might and Wonders are to be Seen in This History—vers. 3, 4.

(3) Divine Authority pleaded for such Historical Recitations—ver. 5.

(4) Their Utility for the purposes of Knowing, Believing, Observing and Avoiding: Grave Ancestral Faults Implied—vers. 6-8.

Part II.—THE COMPLAINT

Specially lodged against Ephraim, first named with Honour, but charged with Disappointing Expectation—with being Unfaithful, Disobedient, and Forgetful—vers. 9-11.

Part III.—SUGGESTIVE HISTORICAL REMINISCENCES

(1) Divine Wonder-Working in Egypt: Deliverance—the Exodus: Guidance: Provision of Water—vers. 12-16.

STUDIES IN PSALMS

- (2) Sinful Doubts about Food, Provokingly Expressed—vers. 17-20.
- (3) Divine Displeasure, yet Provision of Manna—vers. 21-25.
- (4) Provision of Flesh, followed by Outburst of Divine Anger—vers. 26-31.
- (5) Further Sin brings Further Punishment, with Speedy but Superficial Reformation—vers. 32-37.
- (6) Divine Compassion and Forbearance; followed by People's Sin, causing Divine Pain—vers. 38-41.
- (7) Forgetfulness, writ large: concerning the Plagues of Egypt, and the Exodus (probably extracted from an older document)—vers. 42-53.
- (8) The Home-bringing into Canaan: followed by Provoking Disobedience in the form of Idolatry (? suggesting without naming the Ephraimites as Chief-Offenders)—vers. 54-58.
- (9) In Divine Anger, Israel is Largely Rejected, the Tent of Shiloh Abandoned, the Ark Suffered to go into Captivity, and Priests and People are Slain—vers. 59-64.

Summary of above details as suggesting "problems": *Time*—from Moses to the Judges; *Place*—Egypt, the desert, Canaan; *Freedom of Divine Action*—alternations of Anger, Punishment, Mercy, Deliverance.

Part IV.—CLOSING INDIRECT APPEALS

New Divine Activity as to Enemies—vers. 65, 66; Tribe—vers. 67-68a; Sanctuary—vers. 68b, 69; and King—vers. 70-72.

(Lm.) An Instructive Psalm—By Asaph.

(PART I.—THE PRELUDE)

- 1 Oh give ear my people to mine instruction,¹
incline your ear to the sayings of my mouth:
- 2 Let me open in a poem² my mouth,
let me pour forth problems³ out of antiquity.
- 3 What we have heard and come to know,
and our fathers have told us
- 4 We will not hide from their sons,
to an after generation telling the praises of Jehovah,
both his might and his wondrous works which he wrought;

1. U.: "law."

2. "After the manner of an epic. The individual historical statements have a gnome-like finish, and a gem-like elegance"—Del.

3. So Sep. "Riddles"—Del., Dr., Leaser. "Similitudes"—Carter. "Weighty lessons"—P.B.

PSALM 78

- 5 So he raised up a testimony⁴ in Jacob,
and an instruction⁵ set he in Israel;
Which he commanded our fathers,
to make them known to their children.
- 6 To the end an after generation might know,
children who should be born might raise up and tell their
children;
- 7 That they might set in Elohim their confidence,
and not forget the doings of El;
but his commandments might observe;
- 8 And not become like their fathers
a generation rebellious and insulting,⁶
a generation that set not aright its heart,
nor faithful with God was its spirit.

(PART II.—THE COMPLAINT.)

- 9 The sons of Ephraim armed and shooting with the bow
turned in the day of battle:
- 10 Kept not the covenant of God,
and in his instruction refused to walk;
- 11 But forgot his doings,
and his wondrous works which he caused them to see.

(PART III.—HISTORICAL PARALLELS.)

- 12 Before their fathers⁷ wrought he wonderfully⁸
in the land of Egypt the country of Zoan⁹:
- 13 He clave open the sea and let them pass through
and reared up the waters as a mound;
- 14 And led them with a cloud by day,
and all the night with a light of fire.
- 15 He used to cleave open rocks¹⁰ in the desert,
and let them drink as of the deeps abundantly;
- 16 And brought forth streams out of a cliff,
and caused waters to flow down like rivers.

4. Cp. 81:5, 122:4.

5. U.: "law."

6. Cp. Deu. 21:20.

7. A compliment to Ephraim.

8. Or: "he did wonders."

9. "The district of which Zoan, ancient name for *Tanis* was the capital, situated on the east bank of the Tanitic arm of the Nile"—Br.

10. Exo. 17:6. Tense (cp. ver. 29) and number (pl.) prob. a poetic generalisation.

STUDIES IN PSALMS

- 17 Yet went they on still to sin against him,
to disobey¹¹ the Most High in a thirsty land;
- 18 And put GOD to the proof in their heart,
by asking food to their liking¹²
- 19 And they spake against God they said,—
“Will God be able to lay out a table in a desert?”
- 20 lo! he hath smitten a rock
and there have gushed out waters,
and torrents roll along,—
Bread also will he be able to give?
or provide flesh for his people?”
- 21 Therefore Jehovah heard and was indignant,
and a fire¹³ was kindled against Jacob,—
yea even anger mounted up against Israel:
- 22 Because they believed not in God,
nor trusted in his salvation.
- 23 Yet commanded he the skies above,
and the doors of the heavens he opened;
- 24 And rained on them manna to eat,
and the grain of the heavens gave he unto them;
- 25 And the bread of the mighty¹⁴ did they eat every one,
a supply of food¹⁵ sent he them to the full.
- 26 He put forth¹⁶ an east-wind in the heavens,
and drave on¹⁶ by his might a south-wind;
- 27 And rained on them flesh like dust,
and like the sand of the sea winged fowl;
- 28 Which he let fall in the midst of his camp,
round about his habitations;
- 29 So they did eat and were filled to abundance,
since their desire he would bring to them:¹⁷
- 30 They were not estranged from their desire,
yet was their food in their mouth

11. “Defy”—Dr.

12. Dr.: “appetite.” U.: “soul.” Cp. Intro., Chap. III., “Soul.”

13. Cp. Num. 11:1ff.

14. “Angels’ food (Sep., Vul., Syr.) is probably a right paraphrase of the words *the bread of the mighty*, though the term is nowhere applied to the angels. But cp. 103:20”—Kp.

15. Cp. Exo. 12:39.

16. As though the elements were flocks under Divine direction.

17. Or: “he brought to them.” But, strictly, the Heb. verb is so used here as to denote either *repetition* or *modality*, that is, to express the feeling of those concerned; as if to imply that the expected the supply of quails would be repeated.

PSALM 78

- 31 When the anger of God mounted up against them
and he slew of their vigorous ones,
yea the young men of Israel bowed he down.
- 32 For all this they sinned still,
and did not believe in his wondrous works:
- 33 So he ended with a breath their days,
and their years in dismay.¹⁸
- 34 If he slew them then they inquired after him,
yea they turned and early sought GOD;
- 35 And remembered that Elohim was their Rock,
yea El Most High their Redeemer:
- 36 So they spake him fair with their mouth,
and with their tongue were ready to lie unto him;¹⁹
- 37 But their heart was not steadfast with him,
nor were they trusty in his covenant.
- 38 But he *full of compassion*²⁰
would²¹ cover²² iniquity and not destroy;
Yea many a time turned he back his anger,
and would not stir up all his wrath;
- 39 But remembered that flesh they were,
breath²³ departing which could not return.
- 40 How often used they to disobey²⁴ him in the desert,
to grieve him in the wilderness!
- 41 Yea they again put GOD to the proof,
and to the Holy One of Israel caused pain.²⁵
- 42 They remembered not his hand,
the day when he ransomed them from the adversary:
- 43 When he set forth in Egypt his signs,
and his wonders in the country of Zoan:—²⁶
- 44 When he turned into blood their Nile-streams,
and their own rivers could they not drink:

18. So Dr. "Made to haste away in suddenness"—Br. "in sudden haste"
—Del. Cp. Num. 14.

19. See note on ver. 29.

20. Cp. Exo. 34:6, 7.

21. Again see note on ver. 29. Driver and others prefer to regard the verb as expressing a standing truth: "cancelleth." The context, however, rather favours conception of *habit at that period*.

22. See 65:3 (note).

23. Or: "wind."

24. "Defy"—Dr.

25. So O.G., w. Sep. A.V.: "limited." Tregelles (in T.G.): "to set marks or limits gives a good sense in the passage." Thrupp: "crossed."

26. Cp. ver. 12.

STUDIES IN PSALMS

- 45 He would send²⁷ among them the gad-fly and it devoured them,
and the frog and it despoiled them ;
- 46 And he gave to the corn-locust their produce,
and their toil to the swarming-locust :
- 47 He would kill²⁷ with hail their vine,
and their sycamores with frost.
- 48 And delivered up to hailstones their beasts,
and their cattle to pointed flames :
- 49 He would send among them the glow of his anger,—
wrath and indignation and distress,
a mission of messengers of misfortune !
- 50 He would level a path for his anger,
withheld not from death their soul,
but their life to the pestilence delivered ;
- 51 And smote every first-born in Egypt,
the beginning of their strength in the tents of Ham.
- 52 And he put forth²⁸ like sheep his own people,
and led them on like a flock in the desert ;
- 53 Yea he guided them securely and they dreaded not,
and their enemies the sea covered.
- 54 So he brought them into his own holy bounds,
the mountain-range which his right-hand acquired ;
- 55 And drove out from before them nations,
and allotted them by line an inheritance,
and caused to dwell in their homes²⁹ the tribes of Israel.
- 56 But they put to the proof and disobeyed³⁰ God Most High,
and his testimonies did not observe ;
- 57 But drew back and proved treacherous like their fathers,
they turned aside like a deceitful bow ;
- 58 And provoked him to anger with their high-places,
and with their images used to move him to jealousy.³¹
- 59 God heard and was indignant,
and largely³² rejected Israel ;
- 60 And abandoned the habitation of Shiloh,
the tent he had set up among men ;

27. See note on ver. 29.

28. "Moved forth by stages"—Dr.

29. *ML.*: "tents."

30. "Defied"—Dr.

31. *Cp.* note on ver. 29.

32. *ML.*: "with muchness," *gen.*—"greatly."

PSALM 78

- 61 And gave to captivity his strength,³³
 yea his glory³⁴ into the hand of the foe;
 62 And delivered up to the sword his people,
 and with his own inheritance was indignant:
 63 A fire devoured his young men,
 and his virgins were not praised in song:
 64 His priests by the sword did fall,
 and his widows could³⁵ not bewail.

(PART IV.—CLOSING INDIRECT APPEALS.)

- 65 Then awoke as one sleeping the Sovereign Lord,
 as a hero that shouteth from wine;
 66 And smote his adversaries behind,³⁶
 the reproach of ages laid on them;
 67 But rejected the tent of Joseph,
 and of the tribe of Ephraim made not choice;
 68 But chose the tribe of Judah,
 the mountain of Zion which he loved;
 69 And built like the heights his sanctuary,
 in³⁷ the earth founded it to the ages:—
 70 And made choice of David his servant,
 and took him from the folds of the sheep;
 71 From after suckling ewes brought him in,
 to be shepherd over Jacob his people,
 and over Israel his inheritance;
 72 And he tended them according to the blamelessness³⁸ of his
 heart,
 and with the discernment of his hands he guided them.

(Nm.)

PARAPHRASE

PSALM 78

O my people, listen to my teaching. Open your ears to what I am saying.

33. Cp. 132:8.

34. Or: "beauty." Cp. 89:17, 96:6.

35. Cp. note on ver. 29.

36. "Backward"—Dr. "God smote the Philistines most literally *in posteriora* (LXX., Vulg., Luther). Still ver. 66 embraces all the victories gained by Israel in the time of Samuel, Saul and David, from I Sam. 5 onwards and still later"—Del.

37. So some cod. (w. 2 ear. pr. edns., Sep., Syr., Vul.)—Gn. M.T.: "Like."

38. Or: "devotion." "singleness," (ml.) "wholeness."

STUDIES IN PSALMS

2, 3 For I will show you lessons from our history, stories handed down to us from former generations.

4 I will reveal these truths to you so that you can describe these glorious deeds of Jehovah to your children, and tell them about the mighty miracles He did.

5 For He gave His laws to Israel, and commanded our fathers to teach them to their children.

6 So that they in turn could teach their children too. Thus His laws pass down from generation to generation.

7 In this way each generation has been able to obey His laws and to set its hope anew on God and not forget His glorious miracles.

8 Thus they did not need to be as their fathers were—stubborn, rebellious, unfaithful, refusing to give their hearts to God.

9 The people of Ephraim, though fully armed, were defeated in battle.

10 Because they didn't obey His laws. They refused to follow His ways.

11, 12 And they forgot about the wonderful miracles God had done for them, and for their fathers back in Egypt.

13 For He divided the sea before them and led them through! The water stood banked up along both sides of them!

14 In the daytime He led them by a cloud, and at night by a pillar of fire.

15 He split open the rocks in the wilderness to give them plenty of water, as though gushing from a spring.

16 Streams poured from the rock, flowing like a river!

17 Yet they kept on with their rebellion, sinning against God who is above all gods.

18 They murmured and complained, demanding other food than God was giving them.

19, 20 They even spoke against God Himself. "Why can't He give us decent food as well as water?" they grumbled.

21 Jehovah heard them and was angry; the fire of His wrath burned against Israel,

22 Because they didn't believe in God or trust in Him to care for them.

23 Even though He commanded the skies to open—He opened the windows of heaven—

24 And rained down manna for their food. He gave them bread from heaven!

PSALM 78

25 They ate angels food! He gave them all that they could hold.

26 And He led forth the east wind and guided the south wind by His mighty power.

27 He rained down birds as thick as dust, clouds of them like sands along the shore!

28 He caused the birds to fall to the ground among the tents!

29 The people ate their fill. He gave them what they asked for.

30 But they had hardly finished eating, and the meat was yet in their mouths,

31 When the anger of the Lord rose against them and killed the finest of Israel's young men.

32 Yet even so the people kept on sinning and refused to believe in miracles.

33 So He cut their lives short and gave them years of terror and disaster.

34 Then at last, when He had ruined them, they walked awhile behind Him; how earnestly they turned around and followed Him!

35 Then they remembered that God was their Rock—that their Savior was the God above all gods.

36 But it was only with their words they followed Him, not with their hearts;

37 Their hearts were far away. They did not keep their promises.

38 Yet He was merciful and forgave their sins and didn't destroy them all. Many and many a time He held back His anger.

39 For He remembered that they were merely mortal men, gone in a moment like a breath of wind.

40 Oh, how often they rebelled against Him in those desert years and grieved His heart.

41 Again and again they turned away and tempted God to kill them, and limited the Holy One of Israel from giving them His blessings.

42 They forgot His power and love, and how He had rescued them from their enemies;

43 They forgot the plagues He sent upon the Egyptians in Tanis¹—

1. Literally, "the plains of Zoan."

STUDIES IN PSALMS

44 How He turned their rivers into blood, so that no one could drink;

45 And how He sent vast swarms of flies to fill the land, and how the frogs had covered all of Egypt!

46 He gave their crops to caterpillars. Their harvest was consumed by locusts.

47 He destroyed their grapevines and their sycamores with hail.

48 Their cattle died in the fields, mortally wounded by ice-balls from heaven. Their sheep were killed by lightning.

49 He loosed on them the fierceness of His anger, sending sorrow and trouble. He dispatched against them a band of destroying angels.

50 He gave free course to His anger and did not spare the Egyptians' lives, but handed them over to plagues and sickness.

51 Then He killed the eldest son² in each Egyptian family—he who was the beginning of its strength and joy.

52 But He led forth His own people like a flock, guiding them safely through the wilderness.

53 He kept them safe, so they were not afraid. But the Sea closed in upon their enemies and overwhelmed them.

54 He brought them to the border of His land of blessing, to this land of hills He made for them.

55 He drove out the nations occupying the land, and gave each tribe of Israel its apportioned place as its home.

56 Yet though He did all this for them, they still rebelled against the God above all gods, and refused to follow His commands.

57 They turned back from entering the Promised Land and disobeyed as their fathers had. Like a crooked arrow, they missed the target of God's will.

58 They made Him angry by erecting idols and altars to other gods.

59 When God saw their deeds, His wrath was strong and He despised His people.

60 Then He abandoned His tabernacle at Shiloh, where He had lived among mankind,

61 And allowed His ark to be captured; He surrendered His glory into enemy hands.

62 He caused His people to be butchered because His anger was intense.

2. Literally, "all the first-born."

PSALM 78

63 Their young men were killed by fire and their girls died before they were old enough to sing their wedding songs.

64 The priests were slaughtered and their widows died before they could even begin their lament.

65 Then the Lord rose up as though awakening from sleep, and like a mighty man aroused by wine

66 He routed His enemies and drove them back and sent them to eternal shame.

67 But He rejected Joseph's family, the tribe of Ephraim,

68 And chose the tribe of Judah—and Mount Zion which He loved.

69 There He built His towering temple, solid and enduring as the heavens and the earth.

70 He chose His servant David, taking him from feeding sheep,

71, 72 And from following the ewes and lambs; God presented David to His people as their shepherd and he cared for them with a true heart and skillful hands.

EXPOSITION

To judge aright of the design of this psalm, it is important to notice both what it includes and what it omits; as well as to observe the special adaptation of its several parts to secure its main purpose. The psalm was most probably composed to promote the efforts of the Good King Hezekiah to secure the reunion of the Twelve Tribes. As Thrupp has well said, the king himself sought to bring the Northerners to worship at Jerusalem, modestly saying nothing of himself as their rightful monarch (2 Ch. 30:6, 9). The psalmist goes further: claiming not only the Divine preference of Judah over Ephraim (the leading tribe of the north), and of Jerusalem over Shiloh (the first resting-place of the ark); but of David as the appointed Shepherd-King over all Israel.

It is observable that, though the psalmist goes back to the time of Moses, he comes no further forward than to the time of the Judges: an excellent stroke of policy, since the period thus spanned was abundantly sufficient to afford the historical parallels of which he desired to make use, while he could nevertheless avoid irritating references to later events, of which the Northerners had no need to be reminded. Again, the omission of Saul and Solomon on either side of David—to whom so much prominence is given at the close of the psalm—justifies itself

STUDIES IN PSALMS

in each case as a wise omission: of Saul, because the kingship was taken from him and his heirs, and because the opposition which had for a time lingered in the tribe of Benjamin (the tribe of Saul) against the Davidic Royalty had now died away; and of Solomon, because any allusion to him might have revived inconvenient memories of those oppressions of his which clearly paved the way for the great disruption. It was enough, for the end in view, to set David high on the pedestal of Divine approval and appointment: all hearers of the psalm could in a moment pass from David to David's loyal and worthy son, Hezekiah—and that was enough. But though Solomon is not named, yet the Temple he built is brought into prominence: thus supporting the invitation to renewed worship there—in a shrine so magnificent and to all appearance so abiding.

Then if we pass on to notice the manner in which the assumed design of the psalm is sought to be obtained, we shall be able to detect many tokens of exquisite adaptation. Not only is there, in the psalm, all the winsomeness of poetic form and beauty; but a skilful appeal is at once made to the patriotic sentiment which loves to hear the story of one's ancestors, especially as entwined around the formation of a unique nationality; which appeal is made the more telling when the poet avows that he is about to bring forth from the venerated past *problems* of present-day application.

It is true that the psalmist's serious purpose compels him to lodge a grave complaint against one of the most powerful of the Northern Tribes—that of *Ephraim*; but both the way in which he leads up to this complaint and the terms in which he expresses it, are well fitted to secure for it attention. He breathes not a word against any single tribe, until he has first made against the nation's ancestors as a body an indictment expressed in the startling terms in which parents were authorized by Moses to bring their refractory sons as *rebellious and insulting* before the elders of their city for condign punishment in the event of continued obstinacy. Then, although he does level his charge against the tribe of *Ephraim* thus early in the psalm (vers. 9-11),—without which specification it is not easy to see how he could have quickened the apprehension of the Ephraimites to see their own likeness in the mirror which he was about to hold up to their gaze,—yet it is not difficult to detect in his allusion to their proficiency with the *bow*, a compliment, and a reminiscence of their father Joseph which were not likely

PSALM 78

to be lost upon them (Gen. 49:23, 24). If their *bow* was no longer "abiding in strength," was that not due to moral defection? If they had *turned in the day of battle* (which, in the absence of specification, one may perhaps refer broadly to the day of entrance into the land under Joshua, followed by sinful compromise with idolatry), were they not the more chargeable with blame by reason of their high national aspirations?

There is no need here to dwell in detail on the historical reminiscences to which attention has been called by our "Analysis." The one obvious thing to do, if we would use the "mirror" of history to profit, or at least perceive how the Northerners might be expected so to use it,—is to go back to the "prelude" and fetch up therefrom the significant term *problems* (ver. 2) as applied to the history here in Part III. recited. In what way does this application of the word *problems* to the history furnish a suitable appeal to the Ten Tribes? This has already been suggested by the aforesaid Analysis. High above the limitations of "Time" and "Place" there sufficiently alluded to, stands the great question of the "Freedom of Divine Action." Let us assume—as we reasonably may—that, at the time this psalm is composed and sent forth on its mission, the North has been overrun by Assyria, and that Samaria is already in siege, or if we would make the picture still blacker, that that city has already capitulated,—how and where do the *problems* find application? Look back over those historical details with this especial feature in view: How did God *act* in those sinful and perilous times of old? and note especially this: That the Divine action is various: always doubtless holy, always right; yet, in its springs, far above, out of our sight; in its activities and modifications, many a time taking us by surprise. Sometimes he is angry, and yet grants the blessing; sometimes his rising displeasure is checked—he will not *stir up all his wrath*; sometimes, pent-up wrath suddenly breaks forth as if to bring up arrears of displeasure, and make a clean sweep of the rebels whose insults can no longer be endured. Behind all these adjustments and adaptations, lies the great primal fact of Divine Redemption out of Egypt; and high above all is descried the Divine fountain-head of *compassion* and the Divine remembrance of human frailty. This, God never forgets. So that, as applied to Ephraim, the lesson briefly is this: It is yet *problematical* how Jehovah may deal with you: he may smite and yet spare; may carry away and yet bring back. Do not *despair*: Jehovah of old brought out of Egypt; and even now he

STUDIES IN PSALMS

can deliver from Assyria. Do not *presume*: beware of pent-up wrath; do not provoke once too often. Humble yourselves AND RETURN (2 Ch. 30:6, 9). And, in your thoughts of return, forget not, that some forfeited honours may never be restored, some past provisions may never be renewed. Your leadership in Israel has been forfeited for ever. Shiloh has been abandoned for ever. You have lost the ark, and to you it may never return. The Shepherd of Israel may be now leading his flock to fresh pastures." But this brings us up to Part IV., on which a few words will suffice.

If we wisely avoid resenting the anthropomorphism which likens Jehovah to a waking hero, and honestly endeavour to enter into the spirit of the teaching thereby conveyed, we shall not fail to perceive the new tone which now makes itself manifest. We have done with *problems*, so far as the poetic development of them is concerned; and are now brought face to face with facts—facts calculated to urge on a settlement of the great practical problem of the then immediate future: *to return or not to return*. It was time that the old enemies, the Philistines, were decisively dealt with; and so *reproach* was cast upon them when they were ignominiously smitten before the very ark they had taken captive; and later on (as we may supply) when they were finally subjugated at the hands of a shepherd stripling that *reproach* has been made notorious and *age-abiding*. But it was also time that the historic claims of Joseph and his son Ephraim were disposed of for ever by the choice of Judah, by the erection of the temple in Jerusalem, and by the selection of David as King for all Israel; and so the psalm comes to a powerful conclusion. It was left to silence, and other psalms, and other agencies, to do the rest.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Graham Scroggie has well observed: "Some think it was written in David's reign, or early in Solomon's, because the record does not go further than David (70-72). Others think it was written after the disruption of the Tribes, because of the references to Ephraim and Shiloh. (9, 67, 60). Others, again, place the Psalm in the time of Hezekiah and Isaiah". What is Rotherham's preference? Why? How supported?
2. Why not go any further forward in the history than the time of the Judges?

PSALM 78 AND 79

3. Why is Saul and Solomon omitted?
4. How is "patriotic sentiment" appealed to? For what purpose?
5. Ephraim is both rebuked and complimented at the same time—explain.
6. This psalm teaches "that the action of God is conditioned on the conduct of men; that the divine promises were not, and are not, inalienable gifts to either Israel or the church, but that His blessings are granted to those who willingly cooperate with God in His moral government of the world". (Scroggie) Give examples of this truth and discuss.
7. Notice the words describing Israel's reaction to God's law: (1) stubborn, (2) rebellious, (3) forgetful, (4) not steadfast, (5) rebelled, (6) tempted, (7) spoke against. Give the seven responses of God to these seven attitudes of Israel.
8. Discuss this provocative thought: "There is an immorality of forgetfulness".

PSALM 79

DESCRIPTIVE TITLE

Invasion, Desecration, Demolition, Massacre and Derision call forth Lamentation, Expostulation, Petition and Pleading; and the Hope of Deliverance evokes a Promise of Perpetual Praise.

ANALYSIS

Stanza I., vers. 1-4, Lamentation; Stanza II., vers. 5-8, Expostulation and Petition; Stanza III., vers. 9-12, Pleading; Stanza IV., ver. 13, Promise of Perpetual Praise.

(Lm.) Psalm—By Asaph.

- 1 O God! nations¹ have entered into thine inheritance, have made unclean thy holy temple;² have made Jerusalem heaps of ruins:³
- 2 have given the dead bodies of thy servants⁴ as food to the bird of the heavens,

1. Or: "Gentiles."

2. Cp. 74:4-8, Lam. 1:10.

3. Mi. 3:12, Jer. 26:18.

4. Deu. 28:26, Jer. 7:33, 16:4, 19:7, 34:20.