

Christian student ministry workers in Sweden developed a series of questions to ask when reading a Bible passage. Called the “Swedish Method” because of its origins, these questions can be used when reading the Bible by yourself or with others.

The daily readings in this family worship guide have a few questions. However, we encourage you, as appropriate for your family, to ask the following general questions of the text each day.



Is there something that ‘shines’ from the passage—whatever impacts most, or draws attention?



Is there something you don’t understand, or a question the passage raises in your mind?



Is there a personal application to your life?



Is there something you plan to share with someone else – and who will you share it with?



How do ideas in the passage interrelate? Or with other passages in this book – or in the whole Bible?

Worshipping Together is part of the vision and is a ministry of the Reformed Presbyterian Church of Frankston, Victoria, Australia. frankstonrp.org.au bit.ly/WTrpcaf

The concept and layout draws heavily from *Let’s Worship God*, a ministry of the Reformed Presbyterian Church in Airdrie, Scotland. airdrierpcs.org

The readings are from Tim Chester’s 3-year weekly reading plan. bit.ly/WkBbl or bit.ly/3yrBbl

The quote on the cover is from the article *What Shampoo and Family Worship Have in Common*, Written by Randy Greenwald, (Quoted from *Tabletalk* magazine, Nov 1997.)

Notes this week are drawn in part from commentaries on the Psalms by John Calvin, Charles Spurgeon, and James Boice and notes from the NIV study Bible

Worshipping Together



We love God because He first loved us.

And we love to tell God that we love Him.

Joyful and faithful worship together twice each Lord’s Day is the highlight of our week. We are glad that they said, “Let us go to the House of the Lord.” Corporate worship prepares us for the week and prepares us for Heaven.

In addition, we regularly worship God as families and as individuals.

One father put it this way:

The back of my shampoo bottle says, “Lather, rinse, repeat.” Simple enough that even I can do it. Though family worship may be a bit more complicated than shampooing hair, it ought not to be rated with “home dentistry” in the scale of difficulty.



If you could buy family worship in the store, it would come in the form of a Bible, and the directions would simply say, “Read, pray, repeat.” Men should gather their families at least once daily. They should read a portion of the Scriptures to them. And they should pray with them. There need be no fireworks or pizzazz to keep the kids interested. There needs to be only a father* with a heart-love for God – who desires to see that love appropriated by his children.*

Read, pray, repeat.

* Fathers leading their family in worship is always the goal. When, in the Lord’s providence, the father is absent or uninterested a godly mother will lead her children

Reading Psalm 78:1-8 Hear, teach, learn

Notes
(See back page for authors)

Psalm 78 is the longest “history lesson” Psalm in the Psalter. Sometimes we might think, “Why do we need so much history about the Old Testament?” The NT tells us. So we don’t make the same sinful errors they made. (see 1 Cor 10:1-13) This Psalm begins with Asaph, the writer, calling God’s people to hear, to teach, and to learn.

They are to **hear** the history recounted of God’s gracious dealing with his people, specifically from the time of deliverance from Egypt to the time of David’s kingdom. Although God delivered His people, they continued to sin.

As well, they are to **teach**. These accounts of God’s care for His people are to be passed from fathers - to children - to those yet unborn. The goal of such teaching is that the children will trust God, remember His deeds, and keep His commands.

Finally they are to **learn** from the sinful past of their fathers who rebelled against God – and to live differently before God.

Are you learning from God’s dealings with His people in history? Do you know the OT accounts? Are you learning from your parents and teaching your children? And, are you, and those you teach, living as God’s saved, remembering, and obedient people?

Questions
(see back page for explanation of symbols)

1. What should we learn from OT history lessons?
2. What is Asaph calling God’s people to do?
3. What is the goal of teaching our children about God’s works?

4.     

Praise Pray

Psalm 85a² (optional: 78a)

1. Commit in prayer to hear, teach, and learn, by God’s help
2. Pray for a member of your church
3. Pray for your family
4. Pray for a non-Christian friend/family member

¹ You will notice we only have a printed guide for 6 days. We recommend each Lord’s Day you review the previous week’s readings and/or the previous or current week’s sermons and pray together

² Psalm selections are taken from the *Book of Psalms for Worship*. We encourage our congregation to sing the same selection each day for a week to gain familiarity with the selection

Reading Psalm 78:65-72 God gave them a shepherding king

Notes
(See back page for authors)

Now, following repeated rebellions and rejections, God rejects, in a measure Ephraim. Asaph uses language of a common sleepy, drunken warrior to picture God renewing His involvement with his people. Calvin says that *when [God], therefore, compares Himself to a drunken man, it was the drunkenness of the people; that is to say, their insensibility that constrained Him to speak thus: which was so much the greater shame to them.*

Now having their attention, God shows His grace yet again. He chooses David, from Judah’s tribe, to lead His people. The NIV notes read that *by these acts, the Lord established His people securely as His kingdom in the promised land, following the long period of Israel’s troubles from the death of Joshua to the death of Saul – by then God’s salvation of Israel begun in the exodus reached its climactic (if provisional) fulfilment.*

Boice stresses that *Asaph’s point is that it was entirely of grace that God chose Judah and elevated its shepherd boy, David, to be a great king. The people did not deserve this, any more than they deserved God’s other blessings.* Nor do we.

We know that once again Israel would rebel against God. The Davidic kingdom would be divided. As Asaph writes during the end of the northern kingdom he calls Judah, as God’s graced people, to hear, to teach, and to learn. Sadly, as we know, they failed miserably. What about you? Are you hearing? Are you teaching? Are you learning – of sin, and of grace?

Questions
(see back page for explanation of symbols)

1. What language is used to describe God’s response? Why?
2. What do we see in God choosing David to lead his people?
3. What must we learn – and teach – from this history?

4.     

Praise Pray

Psalm 85a (optional: 78j)

1. Commit in prayer to hear, teach, and learn, by God’s help
2. Pray for your family
3. Pray for a non-Christian friend/family member
4. Pray for the reading and preaching of God’s word tomorrow

Reading Psalm 78:40-64 Rebellious in the Promised Land

Notes (See back page for authors)
Again Asaph reminds us what Ephraim/Israel forgot. They forgot their deliverance from Egypt. Here he recounts 6 of the 10 plagues God brought to demonstrate his power over Pharaoh – ending with the terrible plague of the death all the firstborns who were not in homes marked with the blood of the lamb.

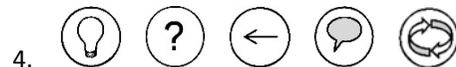
Then God led them out, as Boice notes, *like a flock of timid but safe and trusting sheep*. Yet these sheep continued to go astray. After leading them through the desert, God brought them into the land He had promised. And there, rather than delighting in obeying their deliverer, they instead once again rejected God. *Rebelliousness*, the NIV notes read, *continued to be Israel's way of life in the promised land*. This time they took up the idols of the nations around them.

God now gave them over to their enemies. Asaph seems to be recounting the wickedness in the time of Israel's Judges. In His anger, God removed His favour from Shiloh and permitted the ark of the covenant to be captured. Calvin states that *God intended by this to indicate that He had departed from Judea, and bidden the people farewell*. The NIV notes read that *so great was the catastrophe that both the wedding songs of the brides and the wailing of the widows were silenced in the land*.

There, but for the grace of God, go I – and you.

Questions (see back page for explanation of symbols)

1. What had God done for His people in Egypt?
2. How had they responded when brought into Canaan?
3. How serious for Israel was God removing His favour?



Praise Pray Psalm 85a (optional: 78g, h, i)

1. Confess, with your family, your tendency to depart from God apart from His grace
2. Pray for a member of your church
3. Pray for your family
4. Pray for a non-Christian friend/family member

Reading Psalm 78:9-16 Ephraim forgot God's deliverance

Notes (See back page for authors)
It is thought likely this Psalm was written during or shortly after Hosea's time. Hosea writes at the end of the 10 northern tribes – just before they were carried into captivity by Assyria. Hosea refers to them as Ephraim. Asaph speaks of Ephraim, it seems, as Israel, as he calls Judah not to repeat their sins.

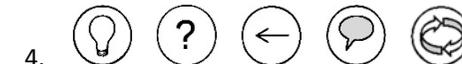
Ephraim had forgotten God's deliverance from Egypt, His guiding them through the wilderness, and Him giving them water to drink in the desert. However, they did not merely forget – they also rebelled against His law.

Asaph presents those two as connected issues. Forgetting God's works is related to turning away from His commands. Asaph presents the order here as disobedience, then forgetting. Calvin suggests their forgetting was not the common, gradual kind, *but that the Israelites had perversely and wickedly shut their eyes, that they might not be restrained in their sinful course, by beholding the glory of God*.

How can you keep from repeating their sinful error? Meditate on God's word and His works. Consider what He has done in history – in the Bible and in your life. Seek His help in obeying. Seek His help in remembering. (see <http://bit.ly/18E40sr>)

Questions (see back page for explanation of symbols)

1. Who is Ephraim and what has he done?
2. What had God done for Ephraim?
3. What 2 major errors did Ephraim commit?



Praise Pray Psalm 85a (optional: 78c)

1. Commit yourself and your family in prayer to remembering God's word and works, with God's help.
2. Pray for a member of your church
3. Pray for your family
4. Pray for a non-Christian friend/family member

Reading Psalm 78:17-33 Rebellious in the wilderness

Notes
(See back page for authors)

Asaph continues recounting Ephraim’s (Israel’s) sin. Having received water from God in the wilderness, they are now presented as scoffing, “Can He prepare a table of food, now that He gave us water?” Can He indeed!

And, God provided no ordinary meal. Instead He gave them “angel’s food” as Asaph called it – so called, according to the NIV notes, *because it came down from heaven*. God provided this heavenly bread/manna until they entered the Promised Land. And, He flew in meat – on the wing – as thick as the dust or the sand over which they journeyed. They ate and were filled, yet God was angry with their rebellion and put some of their strongest to death. Calvin says it is *as if with the meat they had swallowed the flame of the divine wrath*.

But what about us? As Spurgeon says, *if we have ever fed upon Jesus, we have tasted better than angel’s food*. Yet are we not sometimes ungrateful? Don’t we sometimes wonder if God can continue to provide for us? Don’t we sometimes forget all His benefits?

Instead, as we see God’s goodness, let’s remember how deep His grace has been poured out on us and let’s feast at the table He has set for us – even in the presence of our enemy.

Questions
(see back page for explanation of symbols)

1. What did God provide for His people to eat and drink?
2. How did they respond?
3. What does God do to those who reject His good graces?

4.     

Praise Pray

- Psalm 85a (optional: 78d, e)
1. Confess with your family how you sometimes respond to God’s goodness with ingratitude and sin
 2. Pray for a member of your church
 3. Pray for your family
 4. Pray for a non-Christian friend/family member

Reading Psalm 78:34-39 False repentance

Notes
(See back page for authors)

This section starts out with tragedy, then what seems encouraging. God, in His just wrath, killed some of His people. In response, they remembered and turned back to Him. Yet they only repented when they were judged. As Spurgeon says, *they obeyed only so long as they felt the whip*.

And even their repentance and seeking after God was hypocritical. Boice points out that *Hosea notes that true repentance involves an honest acknowledgement of sin, a turning from it, and an appeal to God’s grace (see Hosea 14:1-3)*. *All this is absent here*. Instead, even though they remembered God’s redemption, they lied to Him with their mouths and their hearts.

Though their words of allegiance to God sounded good, their heart was unfaithful. Maybe we do the same thing. We say we love God, yet spend little time in His word and prayer. We claim to be His, yet live like the world. We profess to delight in our Saviour, yet spend little time with His visible bride in worship and true fellowship.

Yet, in spite of Israel’s sin, in spite of our sin, God forgives. He provided atonement in the face of their rebellion. While we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. If Christ died for us, then we have died to sin and must truly repent and turn from our sin to Him.

Questions
(see back page for explanation of symbols)

1. How did the people respond to God’s judgement?
2. How do we know their repentance was hypocritical?
3. What did God do in spite of their hypocritical repentance?

4.     

Praise Pray

- Psalm 85a (optional: 78f)
1. Rejoice with your family that Christ died for you while you were yet sinners
 2. Pray for a member of your church
 3. Pray for your family
 4. Pray for a non-Christian friend/family member