

God is Faithful, Even When His People Aren't

Psalm 78

Outline

- 1-4 | A call to listen to instruction
- 5-8 | The need to instruct each generation to worship God
- 9-16 | The “sons of Ephraim” forgot God's deliverance
- 17-20 | They forgot God's provisions in the wilderness
- 21-33 | God provided manna and quails
- 34-39 | God allowed that generation to die in the wilderness for not trusting God to provide and deliver
- 40-53 | The people forgot God's victory over the Egyptian gods through the plagues and the Egyptian army in the sea
- 54-64 | The people turned again to worshipping idols
- 65-72 | God establishes the nation and David as His king

Reflections

This psalm is called a *maskil*. The exact meaning is uncertain but it is clear that this is a didactic or teaching psalm used to remind the people of God's faithfulness despite the people's rebellion. Consider the first verse.

Psalms 78:1 NASB A Maskil of Asaph. Listen, O my people, to my instruction; Incline your ears to the words of my mouth.

In verses 1-4, the psalmist promises to not hide the message in the psalm but to show it plainly so that each generation might be able to tell the next of "His strength and His wondrous works."

In verses 5-8, the psalmist encourages the reader to do just that so that they would "not be like their fathers." I know that I refer to this verse often but its importance seems to grow with me as I read, study more, and get older.

Deuteronomy 6:1-9 NASB "Now this is the commandment, the statutes and the judgments which the LORD your God has commanded me to teach you, that you might do them in the land where you are going over to possess it, **2** so that you and your son and your grandson might fear the LORD your God, to keep all His statutes and His commandments which I command you, all the days of your life, and that your days may be prolonged. **3** "O Israel, you should listen and be careful to do it, that it may be well with you and that you may multiply greatly, just as the LORD, the God of your fathers, has promised you, in a land flowing with milk and honey. **4** "Hear, O Israel! The LORD is our God, the LORD is one! **5** "You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. **6** "These words, which I am commanding you today, shall be on your heart. **7** "You shall teach them diligently to your sons and shall talk of them when you sit in your house and when you walk by the way and when you lie down and when you rise up. **8** "You shall bind them as a sign on your hand and they shall be as frontals on your forehead. **9** "You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.

The psalmist then gives a brief history of the experiences in the wilderness after the exodus from Egypt up through the establishment of the Davidic line of kings. The psalmist highlights how God continually provided for the people while the people continued to be rebellious and complaining.

How often do I/you forget God's provision in my/your life and turn to grumbling or complaining? Remember the words of Job during those times.

Job 1:20-22 NASB Then Job arose and tore his robe and shaved his head, and he fell to the

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ground and worshiped. **21** He said, "Naked I came from my mother's womb, And naked I shall return there. The LORD gave and the LORD has taken away. Blessed be the name of the LORD." **22** Through all this Job did not sin nor did he blame God.

Lord, may I never forget to worship You and to teach the generation coming behind me to worship You: in good times and in bad, in sickness and in health, for better or for worse, until the day I stand in Your presence and are able to praise Your name before Your face. May Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven, in Jesus' name. Amen.

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