

Psalm 78

*A teaching poem
of Asaph*

Listen, my people, as I instruct you:
Incline your ear to hear the things I say,
For I will speak to you in parables
And I will utter dark sayings of old!

Things which we have known and which we have heard:
Things which our fathers made known unto us:
We will not hide them from their children now:
We'll tell the generations yet to come!

We'll tell them of the praises of the LORD,
And of His strength, and wonders He has done,
For He has made a witness in Jacob
And He appointed laws for Israel.

And He commanded our fathers to teach
Them to their children, that those yet to come
May rise and teach them to their children too
So that they put their confidence in God!

And they shall not forget the ways of God
And they shall keep the laws that He has giv'n
And they will not be like their fathers were,
A stubborn and rebellious race of men!

That generation had a stubborn heart:
They were not faithful to God's Spirit then:
The sons of Ephraim were equipped with bows,
Yet they turned back the day the battle raged!

They did not keep the covenant of God
And in His teaching they refused to walk,
And they forgot the things that He had done,
The miracles that He had shown to them!

For He did wonders in their fathers' time,
In Egypt's land, and the fields of Zoan.
He split the sea and brought them safely through
And made the waters stand up like a heap!

And He led them on in a cloud by day
And ev'ry night, in a bright light of fire:
He split the rocks within the wilderness
And gave them drink as from a flowing spring!

He brought forth streams of water from the rock:
He caused them to run down like rivers flow,
Yet they still kept on sinning against Him,
Rebelling in the desert against God!

And in their heart they put God to the test:
They asked the Most High for food for themselves:
They spoke against God and they said with scorn:
"Can God prepare food in the wilderness?"

Behold, He split the rock: water gushed out,
And it was like an overflowing stream!
And is He able now to give us bread?
Will He provide meat for His people now?"

The LORD heard this, and He was full of wrath:
A fire was kindled against Jacob's race.
His anger mounted against Israel
Because they did not trust their saving God!

He gave command unto the clouds above:
He opened wide the doors of heav'n above:
He rained down on them manna they could eat
And gave them grain from heaven as their food!

Man ate the bread that angels always eat:
He sent them food superabundantly:
He caused the east wind to blow in the sky:
He made the south wind blow at His command!

He rained upon them meat just like the dust,
And birds just like the sand on the seashore:
He let them fall around their dwelling place -
The food fell in the middle of their camp!

They ate, and they were filled exceedingly:
He gave them their desire excessively:
But their desires were still not satisfied:
Their food was in their mouths when trouble struck!

The anger of the LORD rose against them:
In wrath He slew their stoutest, strongest ones:
The choicest men of Israel He subdued:
In spite of this they kept on sinning still!

And they did not believe His wondrous works
Though their days ended in futility,
Their years in sudden terror from His hand:
When He killed them, they sought Him once again!

Yes, they returned, and sought God earnestly,
And they remembered that God was their Rock,
And their Redeemer was the Most High God,
And yet they still deceived Him with their mouth!

And with their tongue they lied to the Most High:
Their heart was never steadfast towards Him:
They were not faithful to His covenant,
And yet to them He was compassionate!

And He forgave their great iniquity,
And He did not destroy them utterly,
And often He restrained His angry plans
And did not rouse all of His awesome wrath.

And He remembered that they were but flesh -
A wind that passes and does not return :
How often they rebelled against the LORD
And grieved Him in the desert wilderness!

Repeatedly they put God to the test:
They pained the Holy One of Israel, :
And they forgot the things His hand had done,
The day that He redeemed them from their foes.

When He performed His signs in Egypt's land
And wondrous deed in Zoan's fields around:
He turned their rivers' waters into blood:
They could not drink the water from their streams!

He sent them swarms of flies to eat them up,
And frogs that came to menace and destroy:
He gave the grass-hoppers the crops they grew:
He gave the locusts all their produce too!

And He destroyed with hailstones all their vines
And ruined their sycamore trees with frost:
He gave their cattle to the hailstones' wrath,
And bolts of lightning then struck all their herds!

He sent His burning anger upon them,
With indignation, trouble and fury -
A band of angels of calamity!
He made a level pathway for His wrath!

He did not spare those peoples' soul from death,
And He delivered their lives to the plague:
In Egypt He smote all of the first-born:
The eldest son in all the tents of Ham!

And He led out His people like a flock,
And guided them like sheep in desert lands:
He led them safely and they did not fear:
The sea engulfed their cruel enemies!

And He brought them into His holy land,
To the hill country which His hand acquired,
And He drove out the nations before them
And then appointed their inheritance.

He made the Israelites to dwell in tents,
But they rebelled against the Most High God:
They put Him to the test and did not keep
His testimonies - they showed little sense!

They turned aside and acted treach'rously,
Just like their fathers, like a treach'rous bow,
And they provoked Him with their idol shrines,
And made Him jealous with their images.

God saw and heard, and He was filled with wrath,
And He greatly abhorred the Israelites:
He left His dwelling place in Shiloh town,
His tent in which He dwelt with humankind.

He gave His strength up to captivity:
His glory went to the adversary,
And He gave up His people to the sword
And His inheritance was filled with wrath!

His young men were devoured by the fire:
His virgins had no wedding songs to sing:
And God then slaughtered His priests by the sword:
Their widows could not weep and wail for them!

But then the LORD awoke as if from sleep
Just like a hero, overcome with wine,
And He drove back His adversaries then
And put an everlasting shame on them!

And He rejected Joseph's dwelling place:
He did not choose the tribe of Ephraim,
But chose the tribe of Judah as His own
And chose Mount Zion as the place He loved.

He built His sanctuary like the heights,
And, like the earth, He founded it to last,
And He chose David as His servant then
And took him from the sheepfolds to the throne!

From leading ewes He brought David to be
The shepherd of His people, Jacob's tribe:
He tended them with true integrity,
And with His skilful hands he guided them!

, 2 Roger Rd, Morphett Vale, SA, AUSTRALIA - 5162