

78 O my people, hear my teaching

F Dm F C F A⁷ Dm F C F

1 O my peo-ple, hear my teach-ing; par - a - bles I will un-fold.
 2 We will tell them to our chil-dren, gen-er - a - tions yet to come;
 3 These he or - dered our fore - fa - thers to their fam - i - lies to tell,

Gm⁷ C⁷ F C C⁷ F C F

Give at - ten - tion as I ut - ter dark and hid - den things of old -
 we will show the LORD's great pow-er and the won-ders he has done.
 so the com-ing gen - er - a - tion, not yet born, would know them well,

B^b F⁷ B^b F⁷ B^b D⁷ Gm F C⁷ F

things that we have heard and known; by our fa - thers they were shown.
 Laws for Is - ra - el he made, stat - utes firm to be o - beyed.
 and their chil-dren, in their turn, God's com-mands and laws would learn.

4 Then to God they would be faithful,
 mindful of what he had done –
 not like their disloyal fathers,
 stubborn rebels every one;
 for God's word they had denied
 and his precepts they defied.

5 Such were those of Ephraim's army
 who, though strong and armed with bows,
 to the covenant were disloyal,
 turned their back upon their foes.
 They forgot what God had done
 and the wonders he had shown.

6 He showed wonders to their fathers
 while they were in Egypt's land –
 split the sea and led them through it,
 waters heaped on either hand.
 With the cloud he led by day;
 fire by night revealed their way.

7 In the desert God brought water
 from the rock to quench their thirst –
 waters brimming like the ocean,
 streams from rocky crags that burst.
 But they always would defy
 and reject him, God Most High.

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- 8 They provoked God in the desert:
“Can he satisfy our taste?
When he struck the rock, it opened,
down the crag the waters raced.
Now our thirst is satisfied,
can he food for us provide?”
- 9 When the LORD heard, he was angry,
and his wrath broke out like fire;
Jacob knew his fierce displeasure,
Israël his righteous ire.
Faith in God they cast aside
and his saving power denied.
- 10 To the skies he gave the order;
heaven’s doors he opened wide.
Manna rained down for his people;
grain of heaven he supplied.
Angels’ bread lay at their feet;
they had all that they could eat.
- 11 From the heavens he loosed the east wind,
led the south wind forth with power.
Meat, like dust, he rained upon them,
birds like sand upon the shore.
In the camp came down the quail,
all around their tents like hail.
- 12 Thus in gluttony they feasted,
for he gave them their desire.
But, before they finished eating,
God’s displeasure blazed like fire.
So their stoutest warriors fell,
and the youth of Israël.
- 13 Still they disbelieved his wonders,
kept on sinning nonetheless.
So he closed their days in terror
and their years in emptiness.
When he punished them, they turned,
and with zeal for him they burned.
- 14 God their Rock they then remembered,
their Redeemer, God Most High;
but their words were meant to flatter,
what they told him was a lie.
In their hearts they were untrue;
from his covenant they withdrew.
- 15 Yet in mercy he forgave them;
from destruction he refrained.
Many times he curbed his anger
and his utmost wrath restrained.
That they were but flesh, he knew –
like a passing breeze that blew.
- 16 How they grieved him in the desert,
ever ready to rebel –
vexed the Holy One and tested
the great God of Israël!
They forgot his wonders shown
to them in the fields of Zoan.
- 17 They forgot his signs in Egypt,
when from hardship they were saved,
when to blood he turned its river,
making foul the drink they craved.
God sent swarms of flies to bite,
hordes of frogs their land to blight.
- 18 He gave Egypt’s crops to locusts,
and the swarms ate all their store.
Freezing rain destroyed their fig trees,
and the hail their vineyards tore.
Hailstones battered all their stock;
lightning bolts their cattle struck.
- 19 Egypt felt his indignation,
dread hostility and wrath.
By his angels of destruction
for his rage he made a path.
E’en from death he did not spare;
mortal plague he made them bear.
- 20 All the firstborn sons of Egypt
in the tents of Ham he struck.
But from there he led his people
through the desert like a flock.
Fearless, they were safely led;
in the sea their foes lay dead.
- 21 To his holy land he brought them,
to the hills seized by his hand;
He drove nations out before them
and assigned to them their land,
where, as their inheritance,
Israel’s tribes found residence.

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Psalm 78 continued

F Dm F C F A⁷ Dm F C F

22 But once more their God they test-ed, spurn-ing God Most High a - new.
 23 When God heard them, he was an - gry; he a - ban - doned Is - ra - el.
 24 An - gry, he for - sook his peo - ple, slew his own in - her - i - tance.

Gm⁷ C⁷ F C C⁷ F C F

They were faith - less like their fa - thers, like a fault - y bow, un - true.
 He for - sook the tent of Shi - loh, where he vowed with them to dwell,
 Fire con - sumed their choice young man - hood; maid - ens had no wed - ding dance.

B^b F⁷ B^b F⁷ B^b D⁷ (Gm) F C⁷ F

Their high plac - es stirred his ire; their false gods, his jeal - ous fire.
 sent his glo - ry far a - way, gave his ark with foes to stay.
 Priests lay slaugh - tered by the sword; wid - ows could not speak a word.

25 Then the Lord awoke from slumber,
 as a man with wine replete
 wakes recovered from his stupor.
 Then he made his foes retreat;
 like a rabble they became,
 put to everlasting shame.

26 He passed by the tents of Joseph
 and the tribe of Ephraim;
 but he chose the tribe of Judah,
 and Mount Zion, loved by him.
 There he built his dwelling sure,
 like the earth, to stand secure.

27 So he chose his servant David,
 bringing him from tending sheep,
 to be shepherd of his people,
 God's inheritance to keep.
 Faithfully by David fed,
 they with skilful hands were led.