

Psalm 78:3

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Which we have heard and known, and our fathers have told us.

Analysis

The psalmist establishes tradition: "Which we have heard and known, and our fathers have told us" (Hebrew asher shama-nu va-neda-em va-avoteynu sipperu lanu). Three verbs trace faith transmission: "heard" (received teaching), "known" (personally appropriated), "told" (passed to next generation). This verse models intergenerational discipleship—faith isn't invented but received, known experientially, then transmitted. Each generation must personally own what parents taught, then teach their children.

Historical Context

This reflects Deuteronomy 6:4-9's command to teach children diligently about God's works and commandments. Ancient Israel lacked mass literacy; oral tradition preserved through family catechesis was crucial. The pattern continues: parents teach children (Ephesians 6:4), who teach their children (2 Timothy 2:2). Each generation fights the same battle: receiving, owning, and transmitting faith.

Related Passages

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Study Questions

1. What has been "heard and known" from spiritual fathers/mothers that you must now tell the next generation?
2. How do you personally "know" (experientially) what you've "heard" from others?
3. What practices ensure you're faithfully transmitting gospel truth to those coming after you?

Interlinear Text

רָאָשׁוֹת אֲשֶׁר שֶׁמְלָנוּ מִתְּבִּיעַ מִתְּבִּיעַ אֶבֶּן לְפָרָה לְנָהָר
H834 Which we have heard and known and our fathers have told H0
H8085 H3045 H1 H5608

Additional Cross-References

Psalms 44:1 (Parallel theme): We have heard with our ears, O God, our fathers have told us, what work thou didst in their days, in the times of old.

Psalms 48:8 (Parallel theme): As we have heard, so have we seen in the city of the LORD of hosts, in the city of our God: God will establish it for ever. Selah.

Exodus 13:8 (Parallel theme): And thou shalt shew thy son in that day, saying, This is done because of that which the LORD did unto me when I came forth out of Egypt.