

# Psalm 78:5

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

For he established a testimony in Jacob, and appointed a law in Israel, which he commanded our fathers, that they should make them known to their children:

## Analysis

The psalm establishes God's law: "For he established a testimony in Jacob, and appointed a law in Israel, which he commanded our fathers, that they should make them known to their children" (Hebrew va-yaqem edut b-Ya-aqov v-torah sam b-Yisra-el asher tzivvah et-avoteynu l-hodi-am liv-neyhem). "Testimony" (Hebrew eduth) and "law" (Hebrew torah) indicate God's revealed will. The intergenerational command is explicit: fathers must teach children. This establishes Scripture's authority and transmission pattern. Faith depends on faithful teaching.

## Historical Context

God gave the law at Sinai (Exodus 20-24) with explicit commands for parental instruction (Deuteronomy 6:4-9, 11:18-21). The pattern: God reveals, parents teach, children receive and transmit. When this breaks (Judges 2:10), apostasy follows. The synagogue system developed to formalize this teaching. Jesus and Paul continued this pattern (Matthew 28:19-20, 2 Timothy 2:2).

## Related Passages

**Matthew 25:31** — Final judgment

**Revelation 20:12** — Judgment according to deeds

## Study Questions

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1. How are you fulfilling the command to "make known" God's truth to the next generation?
2. What happens when a generation fails to transmit faith to children?
3. How does Scripture itself function as the "testimony" and "law" passed from generation to generation?

## Interlinear Text

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בִּשְׁבַּע אֵל שָׁם וְתַּרְבָּה בְּיַעֲקֹב בְּעַד וְתַּנְשִׁלְתָּה  
For he established a testimony in Jacob a law and appointed in Israel  
H6965 H5715 H3290 H8451 H7760 H3478

לְהַדִּיעַ מִן אֲבֹתֵינוּ אֲתָּה אֲשֶׁר  
which he commanded our fathers that they should make them known  
H834 H6680 H853 H1 H3045

לְבָנֵיכֶם:  
to their children  
H1121

## Additional Cross-References

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**Deuteronomy 6:7** (Parallel theme): And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up.

**Ephesians 6:4** (Parallel theme): And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.

**Psalms 81:5** (Witness): This he ordained in Joseph for a testimony, when he went out through the land of Egypt: where I heard a language that I understood not.

**Deuteronomy 4:45** (References Israel): These are the testimonies, and the statutes, and the judgments, which Moses spake unto the children of Israel, after they came forth out of Egypt,

**Isaiah 38:19** (Parallel theme): The living, the living, he shall praise thee, as I do this day: the father to the children shall make known thy truth.

**Isaiah 8:20** (Word): To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them.

**Psalms 19:7** (Word): The law of the LORD is perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple.

**Psalms 147:19** (Word): He sheweth his word unto Jacob, his statutes and his judgments unto Israel.

**Exodus 40:3** (Witness): And thou shalt put therein the ark of the testimony, and cover the ark with the vail.

**Exodus 25:21** (Witness): And thou shalt put the mercy seat above upon the ark; and in the ark thou shalt put the testimony that I shall give thee.

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