

Psalm 78:8

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And might not be as their fathers, a stubborn and rebellious generation; a generation that set not their heart aright, and whose spirit was not stedfast with God.

Analysis

The warning: "And might not be as their fathers, a stubborn and rebellious generation; a generation that set not their heart aright, and whose spirit was not stedfast with God" (Hebrew v-lo yih-yu ka-avotam dor sorer u-moreh dor lo-hekhim libbo v-lo-ne-emanah et-Elohim rucho). Four indictments: "stubborn" (resistant), "rebellious" (defiant), "set not their heart aright" (uncommitted), "spirit not stedfast" (unfaithful). The verse describes covenant unfaithfulness requiring intergenerational correction. Each generation must choose whether to repeat or reverse parents' failures.

Historical Context

The wilderness generation epitomized this—despite seeing miracles, they rebelled repeatedly (Numbers 14, 16, 20-21). Their failure resulted in forty years' wandering and death before entering the Promised Land. Hebrews 3-4 applies this as warning to Christians: unbelief disqualifies from entering God's rest. Each generation faces the same test: faith or unbelief.

Related Passages

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

James 2:17 — Faith and works

1 John 4:8 – God is love

1 Corinthians 13:4 – Characteristics of love

Study Questions

1. What patterns of unfaithfulness from previous generations must you intentionally break through God's grace?
2. How does recognizing your own "stubborn and rebellious" heart cultivate humility and dependence on Christ?
3. What does it mean to have your "heart set aright" and your "spirit steadfast with God"?

Interlinear Text

אַל	וְיִ	וְיִ	מִאָבֹתָם	דָּוֶר	רָסֶוּ
H3808	H1961		And might not be as their fathers	a generation	a stubborn
		H1		H1755	H5637
וְמִבְּנָה	לֹא	לֹא	הַכִּי	לְבָבֶךָ	וְלֹא
and rebellious	a generation	H3808	aright	not their heart	H3808 was not stedfast
H4784	H1755		H3559	H3820	H539
אַתָּה	אַל	רָוחַקְנוּ			
H854	with God	and whose spirit			
H410		H7307			

Additional Cross-References

Psalms 78:37 (Parallel theme): For their heart was not right with him, neither were they stedfast in his covenant.

Exodus 32:9 (Parallel theme): And the LORD said unto Moses, I have seen this people, and, behold, it is a stiffnecked people:

Deuteronomy 31:27 (Parallel theme): For I know thy rebellion, and thy stiff neck: behold, while I am yet alive with you this day, ye have been rebellious against the LORD; and how much more after my death?

Ezekiel 20:18 (Parallel theme): But I said unto their children in the wilderness, Walk ye not in the statutes of your fathers, neither observe their judgments, nor defile yourselves with their idols:

Acts 7:51 (Spirit): Ye stiffnecked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost: as your fathers did, so do ye.

Exodus 33:3 (Parallel theme): Unto a land flowing with milk and honey: for I will not go up in the midst of thee; for thou art a stiffnecked people: lest I consume thee in the way.

2 Kings 17:14 (References God): Notwithstanding they would not hear, but hardened their necks, like to the neck of their fathers, that did not believe in the LORD their God.

2 Chronicles 30:7 (References God): And be not ye like your fathers, and like your brethren, which trespassed against the LORD God of their fathers, who therefore gave them up to desolation, as ye see.