

**Bitter Indeed The Waters Are**  
**Words by John Newton (1725-1807)**  
**Hymn No. 13 in The Olney Hymnal of 1779**  
**Music by Kathleen Shea Vick (1953-)**  
**TUNE: BITTER WATERS 14.14.14.14**

*"And when they came to Marah, they could not drink of the waters of Marah,  
for they were bitter: therefore the name of it was called Marah.  
And the people murmured against Moses, saying, What shall we drink?  
And he cried unto the LORD; and the LORD shewed him a tree,  
which when he had cast into the waters, the waters were made sweet:  
there he made for them a statute and an ordinance, and there he proved them.."  
Exodus 15:23-25*

1. Bitter, indeed, the waters are,  
which from this desert flow.  
Though to the eye they promise fair, they taste of sin and woe.  
Of pleasing drafts I once could dream, but now awake I find,  
that sin has poisoned every stream and left a curse behind.

2. But, there's a wonder-working wood,  
I've heard believers say,  
can make these bitter waters good and take the curse away.  
The virtues of this healing tree are known and prized by few.  
Reveal this secret, LORD, to me that I may prize it, too.

3. The cross on which the Saviour died  
and conquered for His saints:  
this is the tree, by faith applied, which sweetens all complaints.  
Thousands who've found the blest effect, no longer mourn their lot.  
While on His sorrows they reflect, their own are all forgot.

***Irregular Ending:***  
When they by faith (when they by faith)  
behold the cross (behold the cross), though many griefs they meet,  
they draw again from every loss and find the bitter sweet.

# Bitter Indeed The Waters Are

*"And when they came to Marah, they could not drink of the waters of Marah,  
for they were bitter..." Exodus 15:23-25*

♩ = 64

*mf* 1. Bit - ter, in - deed, the wa - ters are, \_\_\_\_\_ which from this des - ert flow. \_\_\_\_\_  
2. But, there's a won - der-work - ing wood, \_\_\_\_\_ I've heard be - liev - ers say, \_\_\_\_\_  
3. The cross on which the Sav - iour died \_\_\_\_\_ and con - quered for His saints: \_\_\_\_\_

Though\_ to the eye they pro - mise fair, \_\_\_\_\_ they taste of\_ sin \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ woe. \_\_\_\_\_  
can\_ make these bit - ter wa - ters good \_\_\_\_\_ and take the\_ curse \_\_\_\_\_ a - way. \_\_\_\_\_  
this\_ is the tree, by faith\_ ap - plied, \_\_\_\_\_ which sweet - ens \_\_\_\_\_ all \_\_\_\_\_ com - plaints. \_\_\_\_\_

Of plea - sing drafts \_\_\_\_\_ I once could dream, \_\_\_\_\_ but now a - wake I \_\_\_\_\_ find, \_\_\_\_\_  
The vir - tues of \_\_\_\_\_ this heal - ing tree \_\_\_\_\_ are known and prized by \_\_\_\_\_ few. \_\_\_\_\_  
Thou - sands who've found \_\_\_\_\_ the blest ef - fect, \_\_\_\_\_ no long - er mourn their \_\_\_\_\_ lot. \_\_\_\_\_

*Go to Irregular Ending after Verse 3*

that sin has poi - soned ev - ery \_\_\_\_\_ stream and left a \_\_\_\_\_ curse \_\_\_\_\_ be - hind. \_\_\_\_\_  
Re - veal this se - cret, LORD, \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_ me that I may \_\_\_\_\_ prize \_\_\_\_\_ it, \_\_\_\_\_ too. \_\_\_\_\_  
While on His sor - rows they \_\_\_\_\_ re - flect, their own are \_\_\_\_\_ all \_\_\_\_\_ for - got. \_\_\_\_\_

*Irregular Ending: With confidence and joy, gradual crescendo to the end*

When they by faith \_\_\_\_\_ be - hold the cross, \_\_\_\_\_

*When they by faith \_\_\_\_\_ be - hold the cross,*

The first system of musical notation for the hymn. It consists of a treble and a bass staff. The treble staff has a key signature of one flat (Bb) and a common time signature (C). The melody begins with a quarter note G4, followed by a quarter note A4, and a quarter note Bb4. The bass staff has a key signature of one flat (Bb) and a common time signature (C). The bass line begins with a whole note chord of G3 and Bb3, followed by a quarter note A3, and a quarter note Bb3. The lyrics are: "When they by faith \_\_\_\_\_ be - hold the cross, \_\_\_\_\_".

though man - y griefs. \_\_\_\_\_ they \_\_\_\_\_ meet; \_\_\_\_\_

The second system of musical notation. The treble staff continues the melody with a quarter note C5, followed by a quarter note D5, and a quarter note E5. The bass staff continues the bass line with a quarter note C4, followed by a quarter note D4, and a quarter note E4. The lyrics are: "though man - y griefs. \_\_\_\_\_ they \_\_\_\_\_ meet; \_\_\_\_\_".

they draw a - gain from ev - ery loss and find the

*rit.*

The third system of musical notation. The treble staff continues the melody with a quarter note F5, followed by a quarter note G5, and a quarter note A5. The bass staff continues the bass line with a quarter note F4, followed by a quarter note G4, and a quarter note A4. The lyrics are: "they draw a - gain from ev - ery loss and find the". The tempo marking "rit." is placed above the treble staff.

bit - - - ter. \_\_\_\_\_ sweet. \_\_\_\_\_

The fourth system of musical notation. The treble staff continues the melody with a quarter note Bb5, followed by a quarter note C6, and a quarter note D6. The bass staff continues the bass line with a quarter note Bb4, followed by a quarter note C5, and a quarter note D5. The lyrics are: "bit - - - ter. \_\_\_\_\_ sweet. \_\_\_\_\_".

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You have my permission to print, copy and sing this music,  
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