

PSALM 80

The former exaltation of Israel in contrast to their state of depression at the time this psalm was written are beautifully described under the figure of a vine. The vine is a plant needing support; and when it is supported, it is luxuriant and spreads itself wide. When nurtured, it is capable of producing the most delicious fruit; but when untended, it is most unprofitable. Asaph's urgent plea is for God to restore Israel, to shine his face upon them, and to save them.

For the choir director; set to El Shoshannim; Eduth. A Psalm of Asaph.

- 1 Oh, give ear, Shepherd of Israel, You who lead Joseph like a flock;
You who are enthroned *above* the cherubim, shine forth!
- 2 Before Ephraim and Benjamin and Manasseh, stir up Your power and come to save us!
- 3 O God, restore us and cause Your face to shine *upon us*, and we will be saved.

- 4 O YAHWEH God of hosts, how long will You be angry with the prayer of Your people?
- 5 You have fed them with the bread of tears,
and You have made them to drink tears in large measure.
- 6 You make us an object of contention to our neighbors,
and our enemies laugh among themselves.
- 7 O God of hosts, restore us and cause Your face to shine *upon us*, and we will be saved.

- 8 You removed a vine from Egypt; You drove out the nations and planted it.
- 9 You cleared *the ground* before it, and it took deep root and filled the land.
- 10 The mountains were covered with its shadow, and the cedars of God with its boughs.
- 11 It was sending out its branches to the sea and its shoots to the River.
- 12 Why have You broken down its hedges, so that all who pass *that way* pick its *fruit*?
- 13 A boar from the forest eats it away and whatever moves in the field feeds on it.

- 14 O God of hosts, turn again now, we beseech You;
look down from heaven and see, and take care of this vine,
- 15 even the shoot which Your right hand has planted,
and on the son whom You have strengthened for Yourself.
- 16 It is burned with fire, it is cut down; they perish at the rebuke of Your countenance.
- 17 Let Your hand be upon the man of Your right hand,
upon the son of man whom You made strong for Yourself.
- 18 Then we shall not turn back from You; revive us, and we will call upon Your name.
- 19 O YAHWEH God of hosts, restore us; cause Your face to shine *upon us*, and we will be saved.

PRAYER

Almighty God, you are the shepherd of Israel, keeping watch over them as the apple of your eye. In mercy turn their eyes to Jesus, their Messiah, and save them from their sins. And let us, your disciples, be zealous in sowing the seed of salvation before them, praying earnestly for the Lord of the harvest to prosper it, that it might bear much fruit. We look forward to that day when Jesus shall come again, this time in power and great glory. It will usher in that time when Jews and Gentiles will live together praising Jesus throughout eternity, their Messiah who washed them from their sins in his own blood. Hear us now for his sake. Amen.