

PSALM 80

God Implored to Rescue His People from Their Calamities.

INTRODUCTION.

- A. To the Chief Musician. Set to "The Lilies." A Testimony of Asaph. A Psalm.
- B. "The Anguished Cry of a Desolate Nation"
- C. This psalm is similar to Psa. 74,79 as it pictures a period of hardship and disaster for the entire nation. It describes the situation of despair as they feel the rejection by God. It is difficult for man to realize how his sins deserve the punishment that God often gives.
- D. There are two divisions of the Psalm:
 - I. A Prayer for Restoration (80:1-7).
 - II. The Metaphor of the Vine (80:8-19).

THE TEXT.

- 80:1** 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 LORD 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 LORD God of hosts, restore us;
Cause Your face to shine upon us, and we will be saved.

COMMENTS.

A. A Prayer for Restoration (80:1-7).

[v1,2] "...Shepherd of Israel, You who lead Joseph...Ephraim, Benjamin, and Manasseh..." Two of these terms refer to tribes that were in the northern kingdom of Israel, Ephraim, and Manasseh, the sons of Joseph. Benjamin was the other son of Rachel. Barnes explains this as God being pictured as the Shepherd of ALL ISRAEL whom Joseph had saved in Egypt. Benjamin was his brother, and they comprised the most cherished part of the nation to their father Israel. Coffman suggests that Ephraim and Manasseh represent the northern kingdom and Benjamin represents the southern kingdom.

[v3,7] "...cause Your face to shine..." seems to be a reference to the Aaronic blessings. See Num. 6:24-26.

[v5] "You have fed them w/ the bread of tears..." God had given them extreme sorrow, disappointment and suffering when this written.

B. The Metaphor of the Vine (80:8-19).

[v8] "You have brought a vine out of Egypt...and planted it." It was not an Egyptian vine, but Israel who was in slavery there.

[v9] "You prepared room for it..." God had cleared the ground by driving out the people in Canaan to settle His people there. But Israel did not completely destroy those nations as God commanded and empowered them to do.

"...and caused it to take deep root, and it filled the land." They settled the land and prospered.

[v11] "She sent out her boughs to the Sea, and her branches to the river." This describes her expansion from the Mediterranean Sea to the Euphrates River. These were the boundaries under the expansion of David and of the tribute received by Solomon.

[v12,13] "Why have You broken down her hedges..." A hedge of thorns or stone wall would be around a vineyard to protect it. God had removed Israel's defenses and allowed other nations to plunder her.

"...so that all who pass by the way pluck her fruit, the boar... the wild beast..." This may refer to Assyria and Babylon.

[v14] "Return...and visit this vine..." This prayer for restoration acknowledges God as able to bless them again.

[v15] "...the vineyard...the branch..." This seems to be a synonymous parallelism where these terms are identical, but Coffman capitalizes the word branch to make it refer to Christ. It seems to me that the "branch which you made strong for Yourself" was the "vineyard" that God had made to "send out her boughs to the Sea, and her branches to the River" (80:11).

[v16] "It (the branch) is burned w/ fire, it is cut down..." This seems to confirm that "the branch" is Israel, the vine that God brought out of Egypt and planted in Canaan.

[v17] "Let Your hand be upon the man of Your right hand, upon the son of man whom You made strong for Yourself." It seems to me that this may be referring to the Assyrians and Babylonians whom God used to punish His people, but Coffman again capitalizes "son of man" and makes it refer to the Christ.

[v18,19] "...revive us...restore us...cause your face to shine, and we shall be saved." The psalmist here points to the real need, for the people themselves to repent that God may restore the nation.