

## Psalm 80

Introduction: The Psalms are divided into five books. We are in Book 3 which is from Psalm 73 to Psalm 89 and encompasses intense despair and deep distress. It is mostly a book of laments which we see the merciful Hand of GOD delivering His people. There should be a connection between GOD's people and the Psalms and this is why your elders have decided to go further with our reading and singing the Psalm. Keep in mind there is no pretense in the Psalms and that teaches us that we should approach our LORD in honesty. The Psalms are a great treasure given by our LORD which are a help, comfort, and a challenge and so the Psalter should be a part of our lives and our study. Let us keep the following in mind regarding the Word of GOD as a whole and particularly the Psalms.

[1 Peter 1:10-12 NASB] **10 As to this salvation, the prophets who prophesied of the grace that would come to you made careful searches and inquiries, 11 seeking to know what person or time the Spirit of Christ within them was indicating as He predicted the sufferings of Christ and the glories to follow. 12 It was revealed to them that they were not serving themselves, but you, in these things which now have been announced to you through those who preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven-- things into which angels long to look.**

[Luke 24:44 NASB] **44 Now He said to them, "These are My words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that all things which are written about Me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled."**

Shoshannim means lilies or possibly a six-stringed instrument shaped like a lily. Eduth signifies "testimony". This could indicate that this Psalm was to be sung in the melody of "lilies, a testimony" or it could be that this Psalm is a testimony of the Church as a lily among thorns. John Gill states that this could be rendered "concerning the lilies" and so may denote the subject matter of the Psalm, or in respect to the people of God, comparable to lilies for their beauty, purity, and holiness in Christ, Song of Solomon 6:2, and to lilies among thorns, Song of Solomon 2:2. Dr. Gill studied the Hebrew language throughout his life and often references some of the ancient rabbis regarding the language and culture.

[Song of Songs 6:2 NASB] **2 "My beloved has gone down to his garden, To the beds of balsam, To pasture his flock in the gardens And gather lilies.**

[Song of Songs 2:2 NASB] **2 "Like a lily among the thorns, So is my darling among the maidens."**

A latter Asaph we should suppose, who had the unhappiness to live in evil times. If by the Asaph of David's day, this Psalm was written in the spirit of prophecy, for it sings of times unknown to David.

In this Psalm we once again see a prayer imploring GOD to rescue His people. It is often that we need to be rescued as we walk in this world and struggle to be holy - as we are being sanctified.

The Psalm appears to have 4 divisions. First the psalmist pleads for God's mercy and restoration by seeking His presence which is verses 1 - 3. Secondly, in verses 4 – 7 he complains of the present rebukes they were under. This is a people despairing due to GOD's anger which is a judgement against their sins. The third division is seen in verses 8 – 16 which is the description of GOD's Vine. We have set before us the present desolations of Israel which had flourished, but now has desperate need of the Great Shepherd to restore His people and strengthen them. There is application for the Church by the comparison of a vine planted and cared for by the Vinedresser. Lastly, in verses 17 – 19, he concludes with prayer to God for restoration. This is the third time the psalmist pleads with the LORD to "cause Your face to shine upon us, and we will be saved".

Read the Psalm.

**Verses 1 - 3:** The Psalm begins by hallowing the Name of GOD just as Jesus taught the disciples to pray. The plea of the saint is to the LORD GOD and His merciful name. How tender is the name "Shepherd of Israel"? There are many times that our LORD is referred to as our Shepherd in the Word. Some that we are probably most familiar with is the 23<sup>rd</sup> Psalm as King David declares "The LORD is my Shepherd" and our Savior is the Good Shepherd as we see in the Gospel of John.

When our LORD expressed pity for His people He likened them to sheep without a shepherd. This was said when there was a famine for Truth and the people were being led astray by men called to lead who were not leading and loving as commanded by the LORD GOD.

When the Scripture uses shepherd in the verb form, He commands His prophets, priests, judges, kings, elders and apostles to shepherd His people. In the Acts of the Apostles we see the overseers or elders are commanded to shepherd His Church which He purchased with His own blood. There are many "woes" pronounced upon worthless shepherds that devour the flock instead of caring for them. On the other hand, there are times when the people would not heed the instruction and yield to the care of men sent by GOD because they were in rebellion and desired the world and flesh more than the LORD GOD.

In studying the Psalms more deeply, I wonder, as we see in verse 2, why at times are specific names of tribes mentioned? I believe these tribes design all of Israel, just as when we hear "Church" that includes you and I as believers. Also, these three tribes, Ephraim, Benjamin, and Manasseh, marched immediately after the Kohathites, who carried the Ark on their shoulders in the journey. Also, I want us to see it is wise to mention

the names of the Lord's people when we pray, for they are precious to Him. Just as the mention of the names of his children has power with a father, so it is with the LORD.

**Verses 4 – 7:** These verses set before us display the great agony and despair that grievous sin causes GOD's righteous anger to be kindled. We must be warned against such. GOD's wrath is revealed by His anger at their prayers. This is a frightening thought that should grab our attention and cause us to plead with GOD for His mercy as well as pray that this is never a description used for us. The sins of this people were idolatry in that they mixed the ways of the pagans; including false gods in their vain attempt to worship the True and Living GOD as they saw fit and not as He commanded.

**Verses 8 – 16:** We as those whom Christ has saved are the branches of the Vine and He is the Root. The Church is a Vine needing the Provision and Grace of the Vinedresser so that His glory is emanated and that the Vine spreads and is fruitful. How mighty is the Church of Jesus Christ when we walk as called and empowered? When we depart from His Way, we sinfully are not bearing the fruit of Righteousness. If a vine does not produce fruit, the tree is useless. How we should yearn and strive for the Church to have Its place of eminence in glorifying the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit; to be restored from the indifference and the lack of concern for being biblical, and that GOD's people awakened to His holiness, sovereignty, His power, majesty, and authority, His justice, His mercy and kindness. That His glory and strength might would be seen by all far and near. That we the Church would be pleasing to our LORD and her influence would be immense. When the LORD leaves her she becomes worthless, useless, and despised as an untended vine. Oh LORD make Your face to shine upon us!

**Verses 17 – 19:** Here we have the son of man as a reference to Israel. Keep in mind the NT is the best interpreter of the OT so the greater sense of "Son of man" is properly intended to be our Lord Jesus Christ. He is at the right hand of the Father and He is strong as He is the cause of our salvation and perseverance. It is by grace that we are quickened and empowered to not turn back as we are given the faith to call upon His name. The Psalm ends with the final plea for our LORD to cause His face to shine upon us that we be saved. Let us ever plead the name of Jesus, who is our true Mercy Seat, to Whom we may come boldly, and through Whom we may look for a display of the glory of the LORD on our behalf.

Amen