

Psalm 80

Prayer for Israel's Restoration

To the leader: on Lilies, a Covenant. Of Asaph. A Psalm.

- 1 Give ear, O Shepherd of Israel,
you who lead Joseph like a flock!
You who are enthroned upon the cherubim, shine forth
- 2 before Ephraim and Benjamin and Manasseh.
Stir up your might,
and come to save us!
- 3 Restore us, O God;
let your face shine, that we may be saved.
- 4 O Lord God of hosts,
how long will you be angry with your people's prayers?
- 5 You have fed them with the bread of tears,
and given them tears to drink in full measure.
- 6 You make us the scorn[a] of our neighbors;
our enemies laugh among themselves.
- 7 Restore us, O God of hosts;
let your face shine, that we may be saved.
- 8 You brought a vine out of Egypt;
you drove out the nations and planted it.
- 9 You cleared the ground for it;
it took deep root and filled the land.
- 10 The mountains were covered with its shade,
the mighty cedars with its branches;
- 11 it sent out its branches to the sea,
and its shoots to the River.
- 12 Why then have you broken down its walls,
so that all who pass along the way pluck its fruit?
- 13 The boar from the forest ravages it,
and all that move in the field feed on it.
- 14 Turn again, O God of hosts;
look down from heaven, and see;
have regard for this vine,
- 15 the stock that your right hand planted.[b]
- 16 They have burned it with fire, they have cut it down;[c]
may they perish at the rebuke of your countenance.
- 17 But let your hand be upon the one at your right hand,
the one whom you made strong for yourself.
- 18 Then we will never turn back from you;
give us life, and we will call on your name.
- 19 Restore us, O Lord God of hosts;
let your face shine, that we may be saved.

Amy's Email Epistle – Thursday, February 8, 2018

"Sign, sign everywhere a sign...." remember that song? "Do this don't do that, can't you read the sign" One of my favorite songs as a kid. Five Man Electrical Band. Here is a YouTube link for those who aren't familiar, for those who are a blast of nostalgia.

www.youtube.com/watch?v=qLm3HMG8lhM

I've been humming the song in my head lately as I walk around town. Yesterday while walking the neighborhood there was a flock of Robins flitting around in the naked trees. "A good sign!" I thought. Spring is near. At closer look I noticed the buds beginning to form on the naked branches of the trees. "another good sign!" I thought. Spring is sure to come early. Walking up the ramp to the church early this morning I noticed the little hyacinths pushing up through the soil. "A great sign!" I thought. Spring is well on its way!

Then my mind turned south. "What if it's all too soon? What if it's a trick? Don't get your hopes up too high. Winter could still send its blast and the birds will be left singing their spring songs without hope of a nest, the fragile new flowers will die, the trees will remain naked and a barren."

Wow! What an extreme 360. In the middle of experiencing great Joy. Paying attention to signs of hope, joy and renewal - Resurrection. I stopped myself and allowed the negative to seep in.

Do you ever do that? Do you protect yourself from disappointment by not allowing yourself to experience the full joy and excitement of hopeful and joy filled signs?

As we enter into this Holy season of Lent....undertaking this most sacred journey alone, and together, may we all be willing to delight and relish every good sign with out casting shadow and negativity.

Life is too precious, too beautiful, too fragile, and God is too wonderful to cast doubts.

Journey well....

Amy