

“Turn us again to yourself, O Lord God of Heaven’s Armies. Make your face shine down upon us. Only then will we be saved.” Psalms 80:19 NLT

lectio // Psalm 80

Asaph, one of the psalmists writes this song, with a repeated chorus. The song is to the tune, “Lillies of the Covenant.” And the main chorus is this verse - it shows up three times in the song. I don’t think the melody survived, but the words did. It was most likely in the minor key because the song is in angst and suspension until the messiah comes. The psalmist begs, BEGS God to remember and restore his beloved son, his flock, his people to favor once again. At one point the psalmist promises they will never abandon him again! I feel the longing, the desire to be back in, “good” with God. I also feel the shame of the once mighty, fruitful, glory of a country, a people who now are the mockery of the ancient world. The psalmist leads the weary remnants of a tattered flock in this lament. It is only God’s full face of acceptance that will truly restore them, save them. Our lives, our faith, our relationship with a Holy God is so different today. The messiah fulfilled all the requirements, the gaps, the distance created by sin. Now God’s face IS towards us and we are in his favor because of Jesus. Yet our lament continues. Maybe not for ourselves only, but for the completion, the returning, the “parousia” bringing finality to human struggle. Much of humanity isn’t exactly looking for God or certainly not at God. Yet, his Kingdom is coming and soon.

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Dad,

Oh, what sorrow and sadness I see in these songs of lament. I feel badly for the condition of your chosen people and the wait anxiously, on their behalf, to a day when they realize your face of favor is towards them, and has been towards them for quite a long time since this song was penned. And now, for the church, the body of Christ in present times, can be so glorious and can fully reflect your face so that people will see you and be saved! Oh, to be that reflection of Jesus to this world.

contemplatio

rest in the presence of God, allowing the words revealed to take root