CALVARY CHAPEL
MARTIN COUNTY

Praying and Looking for Restoration
The Remnant of Israel Prays at the End of the Age
Psalm 80

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Psalm 80
"For the music director; set to El Shoshannim; Eduth. **A Psalm of Asaph. Listen, Shepherd of Israel, Who leads Joseph like a flock; You who are enthroned above the cherubim, shine forth! Before Ephraim, Benjamin, and Manasseh, awaken Your power, And come to save us! God, restore us And make Your face shine upon us, and we will be saved. LORD God of armies, How long will You be angry with the prayer of Your people? You have fed them with the bread of tears, And You have made them drink tears in large measure. You make us an object of contention to our neighbors, And our enemies laugh among themselves.** God of armies, restore us And make Your face shine upon

us, and we will be saved. **You removed a vine from Egypt; You drove out the nations and planted it. You cleared the ground before it, And it took deep root and filled the land. The mountains were covered with its shadow, And the cedars of God with its branches. It was sending out its branches to the sea And its shoots to the Euphrates River. Why have You broken down its hedges, So that all who pass that way pick its fruit? A boar from the forest eats it away, And whatever moves in the field feeds on it.** God of armies, do turn back; Look down from heaven and see, and take care of this vine, **The shoot which Your right hand has planted, And of the son whom You have strengthened for Yourself. It is burned with fire, it is cut down; They perish from the rebuke of Your face. Let Your hand be upon the man of Your right hand, Upon the son of man whom You made strong for Yourself. Then we will not turn back from You; Revive us, and we will call upon Your name. LORD God of armies, restore us; Make Your face shine upon us, and we will be saved**." (NASB 2020)

Once again, we are in another psalm written by Asaph. The same Asaph who was a worship leader for David. The same Asaph, as we have learned, who is also a prophet and has already given us several prophetic oriented psalms.

Not all commentators see him as prophetic. They come up with different ways to explain away the accuracy of the prophetic that he proclaims in his psalms. The Septuagint version of this psalm labels it the Assyrian which also leads some commentators to take the prophetic away from this psalm. I find myself though more aligned with Dr. McGee. He says "it is definitely a psalm of Asaph, a contemporary of David, we know it was written during the time of the Davidic kingdom. The inscription is "To the chief Musician upon Shoshannim-Eduth," which means "lilies." We have seen before that a beautiful lilies' psalm mentions the Messiah, the Lord Jesus Christ. It is a plea to the Shepherd of Israel to lead them again." (McGee 1997, 801)

This is a psalm reflecting the need for the nation to be restored by their Shepherd. We see the Shepherd, who is indeed Jesus Christ, referenced in verse 1 and then specifically referenced later in the psalm. By divine inspiration, Asaph is speaking prophetically in this psalm reflecting words, once again, of the Jewish remnant during the Great Tribulation. There are three parts to this psalm. Knowing this is a prophetic psalm about the Messiah of Israel, let's begin to unpack it.

In the Great Tribulation, the remnant knows who they need and it is the Shepherd of Israel.

Psalm 80:1
"**Listen, Shepherd of Israel, Who leads Joseph like a flock; You who are enthroned above the cherubim, shine forth!**" (NASB 2020)

It is the glory of God that we see connected with the Ark of the Covenant. The reference here to being enthroned above the cherubim is a reference to the Ark but it is also a reference to theophany, the physical manifestation of God, who was visible and enthroned over the Mercy Seat, which is what is being discussed.

The remnant wants and needs His mercy and guidance just as He provided mercy and guided His people in the wilderness during the days of Moses.

They want and need Him to walk outside of the curtain of the Holy of Holies, like He did for Samuel, and once again provide the guidance and direction needed for the nation.

Several times one evening, Samuel heard his name called. He thought it was Eli the High Priest but no, even Eli was able to discern that it was the Lord speaking to Samuel. Samuel was being called to be a prophet and a judge as the Lord walks outside the curtain to meet with him.

1 Samuel 3:10–11
“Then the LORD came and stood, and called as at the other times: “Samuel! Samuel!” And Samuel said, “Speak, for Your servant is listening.” Then the LORD said to Samuel, “Behold, I am going to do a thing in Israel, and both ears of everyone who hears about it will ring.” (NASB 2020)

The remnant needs a word, they need the Lord to once again speak to them. But they are in a famine here at the midpoint of the Tribulation.

Amos 8:11
“Behold, days are coming,” declares the Lord GOD, “When I will send a famine on the land, Not a famine of bread or a thirst for water, But rather for hearing the words of the LORD.” (NASB 2020)

The people want to see once again, what they experienced thousands of years ago in the wilderness. The reference by Asaph here in verse 1 indeed points to the even we read of in Exodus.

Exodus 40:34–38
“Then the cloud covered the tent of meeting, and the glory of the LORD filled the tabernacle. And Moses was not able to enter the tent of meeting because the cloud had settled on it, and the glory of the LORD filled the tabernacle. Throughout their journeys, whenever the cloud was taken up from over the tabernacle, the sons of Israel would set out; but if the cloud was not taken up, then they did not set out until the day when it was taken up. For throughout their journeys, the cloud of the LORD was on the tabernacle by day, and there was fire in it by night, in the sight of all the house of Israel.” (NASB 2020)

Numbers 7:89
“Now when Moses entered the tent of meeting to speak with Him, he heard the voice speaking to him from above the atoning cover that was on the ark of the testimony, from between the two cherubim; so He spoke to him.” (NASB 2020)

Later, in the New Testament, we get a more complete picture of the Mercy seat and who it was who would come there to meet with Moses, Samuel, and others.

We see it in the book of John in more than one location. First is the incarnation.

John 1:14
“And **the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father**, full of grace and truth.” (ESV)

This is hinting strongly to us that Jesus was the one who was the glory, the visible manifestation of God’s glory as was also the Holy Spirit. But the strongest pointer is later in John when Mary has returned to the tomb and finds it empty.

John 20:11–12
“But Mary stood weeping outside the tomb, and as she wept she stooped to look into the tomb. And **she saw two angels in white, sitting where the body of Jesus had lain, one at the head and one at the feet.**” (ESV)

In the Holy of Holies was placed the ark of the Covenant and on top of the Ark was the Mercy Seat. There were two cherubim made for it, one on each end looking down to the seat and where the blood would be applied on the Day of Atonement.

When Mary entered the tomb, that picture was provided for her, an angel at the head and the foot and there, in between them, was where the blood had been applied to the sin of mankind. Jesus Christ

becoming the ultimate expression of the mercy of God as He provided for the atonement for all of our sins with His own blood

It is that location that Asaph is pointing too as well as the one who was the physical manifestation of God , the preincarnate Jesus Christ. He is the one who is the Shepherd of Israel who indeed led the entire nation.

But there is also a memory there as well when He told them about consequences for their disobedience.

Judges 2:1–5
“Now the angel of the LORD went up from Gilgal to Bochim. And he said, “I brought you up from Egypt and brought you into the land that I swore to give to your fathers. I said, ‘I will never break my covenant with you, and you shall make no covenant with the inhabitants of this land; you shall break down their altars.’ But you have not obeyed my voice. What is this you have done? So now I say, I will not drive them out before you, but they shall become thorns in your sides, and their gods shall be a snare to you.” As soon as the angel of the LORD spoke these words to all the people of Israel, the people lifted up their voices and wept. And they called the name of that place Bochim. And they sacrificed there to the LORD.” (ESV)

Bochim means weepers. It is reflective of the sorrow for their sin, but not for the repentance of their sin.

Here in Psalm 80, the remnant is asking Him to listen to their prayer. Now there is an understanding of whom they are addressing and whom they truly are to be serving and they are in the process of beginning to see their need for the Messiah to come and save them. Thy will be asking Him to once again show up for His people and lead and guide as He did in the wilderness. And the reference to Joseph gives us a pointer to the marching formation followed by the nation in the wilderness.

Roy Gingrich tells us “The remnant will pray that God, who of old dwelled in Israel’s midst above the cherubim on the ark of the covenant, shine forth in all of His power and glory.” (Gingrich 1995, 18-19)

Psalm 80:2–3
“**Before Ephraim, Benjamin, and Manasseh, awaken Your power, And come to save us! God, restore us And make Your face shine upon us, and we will be saved.**” (NASB 2020)

The Ark marched before the three tribes who were children of Rachael. Many times, referred to as the tribes of Joseph (Ephraim and Manasseh) and Benjamin. We see that order in Numbers.

Numbers 2:17–24
“Then the tent of meeting shall set out, with the camp of the Levites in the midst of the camps; as they camp, so shall they set out, each in position, standard by standard. “On the west side shall be the standard of the camp of Ephraim by their companies, the chief of the people of Ephraim being Elishama the son of Ammihud, his company as listed being 40,500. And next to him shall be the tribe of Manasseh, the chief of the people of Manasseh being Gamaliel the son of Pedahzur, his company as listed being 32,200. Then the tribe of Benjamin, the chief of the people of Benjamin being Abidan the son of Gideoni, his company as listed being 35,400. All those listed of the camp of Ephraim, by their companies, were 108,100. They shall set out third on the march.” (ESV)

It was those three tribes who camped behind the Tabernacle, as the entrance was facing east, they were on the west guarding the rear. And when the camp set out, the Ark of the Covenant would march before these three tribes. A constant physical and spiritual presence set before them.

Verse three will be repeated two more times before the psalm is concluded. For those who are singers, it would be considered a chorus between each verse.

Here the call of the chorus is for the Lord to turn back towards His people. During the Great Tribulation, as they are being supernaturally protected by the Lord, they will indeed pray this.

Now comes the complaint.

Psalm 80:4–7
"**LORD God of armies, How long will You be angry with the prayer of Your people?** You have fed them with the bread of tears, And You have made them drink tears in large measure. You make us an object of contention to our neighbors, And our enemies laugh among themselves. God of armies, restore us And make Your face shine upon us, and we will be saved." (NASB 2020)

We've heard this from Asaph before. He is looking on at the vision the Lord is giving him and wondering, even expressing in writing, what happened to create this impression in his mind that God is angry with His people.

This is not all that unusual to encounter even in our walk with Jesus. We are walking with Him, and the fellowship is sweet and there is no unconfessed sin then bang, we find ourselves in a trial. For those of us who grew up in homes where we were always having to perform in order to get affirmation or love, this is a tough event.

We know, based on the scriptures, that for those of us who love the Lord, that He will never leave us or betray us. But when suddenly the trial hits, there are those past memories that the Lord is still working with us on. My first thought, "what have I done?"

I tend to go right to Psalm 139.

Psalm 139:23–24
"**Search me, God, and know my heart; Put me to the test and know my anxious thoughts; And see if there is any hurtful way in me**, And lead me in the everlasting way." (NASB 2020)

Psalm 27:9–10
"**Do not hide Your face from me, Do not turn Your servant away in anger; You have been my help; Do not abandon me nor forsake me, God of my salvation!** For my father and my mother have forsaken me, But the LORD will take me up." (NASB 2020)

The initial shock sends us into reflection and introspection. Is there anything I have done, is there some sin I do not know about, that has this as a result?

Once we pray and sort through all of that and begin to realize that this is a growth opportunity from the Lord, then we begin to remember His promises and truly realize that He has not left us at all.

By the way, if what is happening is indeed the result of discipline due to sin, He still has not left us.

Hebrews 12:7
"It is for discipline that you have to endure. **God is treating you as sons.** For what son is there whom his father does not discipline?" (ESV)

Don't ever forget Christian that the Lord loves you and me and when we stray, He will indeed bring us back.

John 14:16–17
““I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Helper, so that **He may be with you forever; the Helper is the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it does not see Him or know Him; but you know Him because He remains with you and will be in you.**” (NASB 2020)

That is key, the Holy Spirit has not left, He is still there and still working. Whether we are being disciplined, or this is a trial intended to help us grow and become more like Jesus, we are not alone.

John 16:33
“These things I have spoken to you so that in Me you may have peace. **In the world you have tribulation, but take courage; I have overcome the world.**”” (NASB 2020)

We are indeed in Christ and can rest in the fact He has already won it all.

Romans 8:28
“And we know that **God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose.**” (NASB 2020)

But things are still not right and for Asaph he makes clear the situation is dire because he is addressing the Lord as the military commander of heaven. At the end of the age, that will indeed be prayed. What is happening? Hear us and we need help with every resource and army you have at your fingertips Lord. Why are you silent and apparently not answering prayer right now? Gregory goes further.

“If God accepted Christmas presents—and who knows, maybe he does—I would give him a bullhorn. And a microphone. And the most expensive, top-of-the-line Bose sound system with surround sound and award-winning Jewel Cube speakers. I’d give him a gift basket of everything related to sound so that maybe he would get the picture that I can’t hear him and he needs to speak up. Now, I’m not a big fan of blaming God for stuff, so maybe the problem is me. Maybe I need to buy myself a holy hearing aid or something. But the fact of the matter remains that I’ve encountered enough bouts of silence from him in my life to come to the conclusion that he is, at times, silent.” (Gregory 2009)

Meaning, we must be listening for Him. Elijah learned that lesson after running from Jezebel.

1 Kings 19:11–13
“And he said, “Go out and stand on the mount before the LORD.” **And behold, the LORD passed by, and a great and strong wind tore the mountains and broke in pieces the rocks before the LORD, but the LORD was not in the wind. And after the wind an earthquake, but the LORD was not in the earthquake. And after the earthquake a fire, but the LORD was not in the fire. And after the fire the sound of a low whisper. And when Elijah heard it, he wrapped his face in his cloak and went out and stood at the entrance of the cave. And behold, there came a voice to him and said, “What are you doing here, Elijah?**”” (ESV)

Are we listening for Him in the noise of the world? Have we removed all the things of the world where we can indeed hear Him? Are we all too busy acting like Martha instead of being like Mary, just sitting at the feet of Jesus and listening?

I know that is a problem for me. I am a type A personality and as a result I tend to want to help God out. I must be busy. Waiting on the Lord is, for me, hard to do.

Now comes a hard truth, but it is a reality. No nation has suffered as the nation of Israel has and survived. That is reflected in what Asaph says next.

Psalm 80:5
“You have fed them with the bread of tears, And You have made them drink tears in large measure.” (NASB 2020)

Why has the nation gone through all of this? Something about having a relationship with the God of the universe and taking it all for granted. And when He sent His own Son, the Shepherd of Israel to His people as their Messiah, they rejected Him and then joined forces with the fallen ones and gentile powers to have Him murdered. But He walked out of that grave three days later.

Jesus, though, knew what the rejection was buying for the nation.

Luke 19:41–46
“And when he drew near and saw the city, he wept over it, saying, **“Would that you, even you, had known on this day the things that make for peace! But now they are hidden from your eyes. For the days will come upon you, when your enemies will set up a barricade around you and surround you and hem you in on every side and tear you down to the ground, you and your children within you. And they will not leave one stone upon another in you, because you did not know the time of your visitation.”** And he entered the temple and began to drive out those who sold, saying to them, “It is written, ‘My house shall be a house of prayer,’ but you have made it a den of robbers.”” (ESV)

That was Jesus, telling the why for the future and the why the nation were fed the bread of tears and had to drink tears. And here he is seeing and praying along with the remnant at the midpoint of the Great Tribulation.

Psalm 80:6
“**You make us an object of contention to our neighbors, And our enemies laugh among themselves.**” (NASB 2020)

Here we are, prior to the pretribulation rapture of the church, and we already see nations around the globe doing things to stop Israel from even conducting basic business.

Why would a nation, such as the Netherlands, decide to make it illegal to do business with people who want to live in Judea and Samaria? But that is what they have done. And that is now.

What Asaph is seeing by the midpoint of the Tribulation is that there are nations vying with each other as who can take even more draconian measures against Israel.

We see some of that even today, first France says something, then Spain, followed by the UK and a me too from Germany or some other country. There seems to be a contest to see who will get cursed first from Genesis 12:3.

We look at what Jesus says about the sheep and goats judgment taking place at the end of the Tribulation and suddenly we see the impact of this as it becomes a determiner of living in the Kingdom, or eternal punishment in hell.

Matthew 25:31–40
“But when the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit upon his glorious throne. All the nations will be gathered in his presence, and he will separate the people as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. He will place the sheep at his right hand and the goats at his left. **Then the King will say to those on his right, ‘Come, you who are blessed by my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the creation of the world. For I was hungry, and you fed me. I was thirsty, and you gave me a drink. I was a stranger, and you invited me into your home. I was**

naked, and you gave me clothing. I was sick, and you cared for me. I was in prison, and you visited me.' "Then these righteous ones will reply, 'Lord, when did we ever see you hungry and feed you? Or thirsty and give you something to drink? Or a stranger and show you hospitality? Or naked and give you clothing? When did we ever see you sick or in prison and visit you?' "And the King will say, 'I tell you the truth, when you did it to one of the least of these my brothers and sisters, you were doing it to me!'" (NLT)

Jesus then goes into the other side, the story of those who did nothing for His people because it was politically inconvenient, or it was more fashionable to discriminate, and on and on. And their result is judgment for believing and doing the lies and making Israel an object of contention and the butt of jokes. Eternity is a long time to consider why did you ever do that.

Asaph apparently sees and hears enough of his vision of the future to understand the ridicule that is taking place at Israel's expense. We see that on some television programs as well as in some motion pictures. Lies being propagated as truth, and this has been the case for centuries. The term is blood libel.

"Widespread since the Middle Ages, the blood libel alleging that Jews murder non-Jews (especially Christian children) to use their blood for religious rituals (such as making matzah for Passover) has resulted in the murder of thousands of Jews and the persecution of countless Jewish communities. Its enduring nature is all the more shocking because its premise—that Jews consume blood—clearly contradicts a prohibition in the parashah." (Levy and Levy 2017, 94) That would be Leviticus 17:12.

Leviticus 17:12
"This is why I told the people of Isra'el, 'None of you is to eat blood, nor is any foreigner living with you to eat blood.'" (CJB)

For those who have perpetrated this libel over the centuries, facts are not important. They are doing nothing more than listening to Satan and practicing antisemitism and in many cases, murder.
As Asaph looks on, he is seeing a seriously desperate situation and since he began this section appealing to the Lord God of armies, he closes it out with a similar appeal.

Psalm 80:7
"God of armies, restore us **And make Your face shine upon us, and we will be saved.**" (NASB 2020)

The idea is the Lord is King and He is also a warrior. And the face to shine on them would be the face of their Messiah. The desire is for restoration, safety and deliverance. This brings us to part three of the psalm where God discusses His own investment in this people.

And here the picture drawn for us is that of a vine. A wild and rapidly growing luxuriant vine that must constantly tended to and taken care of in order to ensure fruit. This means pruning and removing those shoots which do not produce fruit and burning them.

Asaph who is praying knows that the remnant needs God to do something. So, let's remember a bit of history.

Psalm 80:8–13
"You removed a vine from Egypt; You drove out the nations and planted it. You cleared the ground before it, And it took deep root and filled the land. The mountains were covered with its shadow, And the cedars of God with its branches. It was sending out its branches to the sea And its shoots to the Euphrates River. Why have You broken down its hedges, So that all who pass that way pick its fruit? A boar from the forest eats it away, And whatever moves in the field feeds on it." (NASB 2020)

There was indeed once a time where God was redeeming His people from Egypt.

The nation was in Egypt and God was the one who removed them from there, but even from the very beginning, there were those who did not buy into what God was to do.

Exodus 6:6–9
"Therefore, tell the Israelites, **'I am the LORD. I will bring you out from your enslavement to the Egyptians, I will rescue you from the hard labor they impose, and I will redeem you with an outstretched arm and with great judgments. I will take you to myself for a people, and I will be your God.** Then you will know that I am the LORD your God, who brought you out from your enslavement to the Egyptians. I will bring you to the land I swore to give to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob—and I will give it to you as a possession. I am the LORD.' " **Moses told this to the Israelites, but they did not listen to him because of their discouragement and hard labor.**" (NET 2nd ed.)

God then took the people, caring for them as a Shepherd and also pruning them to make them more fruitful for Him to drive others out of Canaan and settle the land which God gave to them.

The picture provided is this vine spreading out across the land spreading out from the original settlements to eventually have branches towards the Mediterranean and shoots towards the Euphrates River.

As Asaph is writing this, that has already taken place. Under David, the nation began to send out shoots towards the Euphrates (2 Samuel 8:3-4).

Normally, to protect the vineyard, there would be hedges set up to keep wild animals and vermin out of the vineyard. As the vine becomes more fruitful, it is attractive to others who would take the fruit for themselves. The Lord is the one who protected it.

The remnant had experienced the return in unbelief and seen the land become fruitful again but then after a shock invasion they begin to rely on someone else for protection.

In essence, they brought down the hedges themselves through their own unbelief. And now, the land is being used by whoever is in it.

In the past of Asaph, God had indeed protected and then removed the hedges as He pruned His people. David was the one who began the process, late, but he did indeed begin the building up and protection of the land. And it would remain that way until first broken down by internal forces as the Kingdom would split in two, but ultimately, all the hedges are removed as is the vine.

As Asaph is looking into the future, he sees the remnant as a shoot that remains.

Psalm 80:14–15
"**God of armies, do turn back; Look down from heaven and see, and take care of this vine**, The shoot which Your right hand has planted, And of the son whom You have strengthened for Yourself." (NASB 2020)

The request is for God to look at the vine He has planted. He is the one who has nourished it over the centuries and kept it usable and able to once again produce fruit.

In the last days, this vine has once again been planted in the land. The shoot which your right hand planted. But this shoot is not just the nation. Isaiah talks about this specific shoot, the son He has strengthened.

Isaiah 11:1–5
“A shoot will grow out of Jesse’s root stock, a bud will sprout from his roots. The LORD’s Spirit will rest on him— a Spirit that gives extraordinary wisdom, a Spirit that provides the ability to execute plans, a Spirit that produces absolute loyalty to the LORD. He will take delight in obeying the LORD. He will not judge by mere appearances, or make decisions on the basis of hearsay. He will treat the poor fairly and make right decisions for the downtrodden of the earth. He will strike the earth with the rod of his mouth, and order the wicked to be executed. Justice will be like a belt around his waist, integrity will be like a belt around his hips.” (NET 2nd ed.)

And here is the thing, that shoot, is seated at the right hand of the Father at this very moment making intercession for those who follow Him. He is indeed that same one Isaiah talked of.

Asaph tells us the condition of His people and the land as this prayer is taking place.

Psalm 80:16
“It is burned with fire, it is cut down; They perish from the rebuke of Your face.” (NASB 2020)

It is possible Asaph is talking about the condition of the Temple as a result of Babylon or Rome, but in the context of the prayer, he is focusing on the Temple where the abomination that makes desolate is still operating.

What we see is the condition of the land prior to the second coming of Jesus. The beast has already gone into the Temple and asserted his alleged divinity. Jerusalem is debris at this point as well as those who are there, hiding out. The remnant is to the south and east in a place protected by the Lord and preserved by Him as well.

They know that the shoot is who they need and the y need Him right now. But at this point, the displeasure of God to the nation is obvious.

Psalm 80:17
“**Let Your hand be upon the man of Your right hand, Upon the son of man whom You made strong for Yourself.**” (NASB 2020)

Asaph is calling for Messiah to come. It may be this is a pointer to the moment that the remnant calls for Him to come and redeem them from the Beast. Doctor McGee continues.

At God’s right hand is the place of power. Who is at God’s right hand? It is Israel’s Messiah. David wrote, “The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool” (Ps. 110:1). The Lord Jesus applied this to Himself when His enemies challenged His messianic claim (Matt. 22:44).” (McGee 1997, 802)

Psalm 80:17–19
“Let Your hand be upon the man of Your right hand, Upon the son of man whom You made strong for Yourself. Then we will not turn back from You; Revive us, and we will call upon Your name. LORD God of armies, restore us; Make Your face shine upon us, and we will be saved.” (NASB 2020)

Adding verse 17 and 18 together, we get the entire call to God being made in this prayer. In fact, as you read it, it seems almost to be the case that is being made that if you save us, we will follow you forever. I tend to think that is not the case here since there was the realization earlier that this cannot be done by the nation on their own. This is why they are indeed praying to the Lord God of Armies.

We get the call for restoration here in verse 18.

There is a realization here that the prayer is corporate, not individual. It is the nation coming together and asking this of the Lord and doing so three separate times. This psalm, as Tanner wraps it up for us, “does approach God in a spirit of brokenness that requires God’s face to shine for salvation. Here salvation is seen as restored relationship where God tends the vine (Israel) and it grows strong. The psalm teaches it is not simply individuals, but also the whole people of God that must honestly repent and seek God’s face. Sometimes we might even have to plead and beg God to return to us. We know the truth. Churches and nations and any group of people can and do sin together, sometimes even when we are trying to do the right thing. We often call on individuals to apologize and set the relationship right, but it seems as if we do not hold the same accountability for groups. This psalm tells us clearly that we too need to repent together of our sins and our mistakes and seek reconciliation with God. (Tanner 2014, 635)

We are seeing the remnant, as pictured for us by Asaph, confessing their sin corporately, making petitions of the Lord corporately and seeking Him as a body.

This is no different than how we as the church should operate. Many times we think we can only sin individually, but we can also sin corporately as a business, a church, as a nation. We can pray individually as well as corporately too. The Got Questions staff continues.

Corporate confession is what happens when a specific community comes together to confess before God a collective sin. (Got Questions Ministries 2014-2021)

Examples of corporate confession exist in the scriptures. The city of Nineveh upon hearing the word preached from Jonah would be an example.

For us today, it would be the confession of the sins of our nation. The sins of abortion, oppression, murder, and unbelief; just to name a few.

As we come together as His church, do we see the real need of our community for salvation or do we continue to walk in blindness as well.

Let’s pray, and ask the Lord to search us and know us to see if there is any wicked way in us, and then act on what He shows us.

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