

PSALM 80 vs 1

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This is the 9th of the 12 Psalms ascribed to Asaph, bearing this seer's name. In 2 Chronicles 29:30, Hezekiah ordered the Levites "to sing the words of David and of Asaph the seer" ... evidence the Spirit of God continues inspiring others to consider the ways of the Lord.

Divisions: A Psalm possibly composed by a later Asaph who had the unhappy reality to live like the last minstrel in evil times; or if by Asaph of David's days, this Psalm was written in the spirit of prophecy. The Psalm divides itself naturally at three refrains which occurs three times: "Turn us again O God"; an opening address to the Lord (1-3); a lament over the national woe (4-7); the same complaint is repeated (8-19):— Charles Spurgeon.



For the Choir director, set to El Shoshannim; Eduth

A Psalm of Asaph

¹ O Shepherd of Israel, listen; You who leads Joseph like a flock; You who dwells between the cherubim, shine forth. / those of Joseph are 2 sons Ephraim, Manasseh, and Benjamin his brother.

² Before Ephraim, Benjamin and Manasseh stir up Your strength, and come and save us.

³ O God, return us, and cause Your face to shine; and we will be saved. / were they willing to return to Him, or are they just telling God what to do? Hear the bleating of Your suffering flock. The people are called here by the name of that renowned son who was a second father to the tribes, and kept them alive in Egypt; they were known to the Egyptians under the name of "the family of Joseph." Or it refers to those Ephraim led: -- Charles Spurgeon.

But when was this psalm written? History tells us, those arrogant leaders started to work their deceptive alliances against one another 2700 years ago; starting with Ephraim and Manasseh against Judah. Those 3 arrogant groups of hardheaded jackasses are still in the news today as they deviously compete: against each other... if the truth be known. Ephraim the great commonwealth of nations; Manasseh, the great nation, and Judah through whom came the Messiah... these three were to be the leaders of the people of God, carrying His great Name to the ends of the earth... instead of embezzling their chosen status for personal gain. Zechariah tells us about these foolish, faithless 3 in the last days of the time of the Gentiles; and for most of them, it doesn't bode well. Somehow, this Psalm speaks to these people today, who presume they are still blessed by God, when in fact they are under His judgment like the rest of the world: Lord's indictment: what is to die, let it die; what is to be annihilated, let it be annihilated Zechariah 11.

⁴ O LORD God of hosts, how long will You be angry with the prayer of Your people?

⁵ You feed them the bread of tears; and give them tears to drink in great measure.

⁶ You make us quarrel with our neighbors: and our enemies laugh among themselves. / lots of telling God what to do, when he already spoke through Moses and warned them.

7 O God of hosts, restore us, and cause Your face to shine; and we will be saved. /

Hear the bleating of Your suffering flock. Charles Spurgeon wrote: Always jealous and malicious, Edom and Moab exulted over Israel's troubles, and then fell to dispute their share of the spoil. A neighbor's jeer is most cutting, especially if a man has been superior to them, and claimed to possess more grace. None are so unfriendly as an envious neighbor: Charles Spurgeon.

So for starters cross off the two names ~~Edom~~ and ~~Moab~~; from the day **Ephraim** the younger brother and **Manasseh** the older brother received their blessings from Grandfather Israel, they in envy have been at each other's necks; and add **Judah** and his blessing of the Messiah, and you have the finest confusion God could have created to see who would rise to His high calling: **1**. Love for God; and **2**. Love for one another. He gave them doable earthly promises, and in their arrogance, and wounded egos, they all failed.

Charles Spurgeon did not adequately deal with this 6th verse. "You make us quarrel with our neighbors" when things aren't going their way, people always start to bad-mouth God; blaming Him for their miseries.

8 A vine from Egypt You uprooted: You threw out the nations, and planted it.

9 You cleared a place for it; and it took deep root, and filled the land.

10 The mountains were covered with its shadow, and the mighty cedars with its branches.

11 It sent out boughs to the sea, and to the River its branches.

12 Why have You broken down its walls, so all who pass by pick its fruit?

13 The boar from the forest tears it, and the wild beast of the field devours it.

14 O God of hosts, return: we pray look from heaven, and behold, and visit this vine;

So it truly sounds like our Father in heaven has been busy, doesn't it? With all that uprooting, planting and increasing; I hope some will come along and help keep the vineyard well-watered and growing don't you? / Hear the bleating of Your suffering flock. Yet they keep singing the same old phrase; I bet they already started to yawn. O God, You haven't done enough for us; Do something more... blah, blah, blah. I thought the prophet speaking for the Lord, already said: **Return to Me, and I will return to you.** – **Zechariah 1** but remember the Lord was dealing with the proud drunks of Ephraim; and He knows: things don't change much.

15 And the vine Your right hand planted, and the branch that You made strong for Yourself;

16 it is burned with fire, cut down: at the rebuke of Your face they vanish.

17 Let Your hand be with the man at Your right hand, with the Son of man You made strong for Yourself.

18 So we will not turn away from You: enliven us, and we will call on Your name.

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19 O LORD God of hosts, restore us, and cause Your face to shine; and we will be saved.

/ Hear the bleating of Your suffering flock. These kinds of verses have been kept in the Bible for our example; **but it isn't an example of how to irritate our Father in heaven**; by perpetuating jackass holiness. Moses said it clearly: as the children of Israel prepared to enter the land promised to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, like a loving father concerned about the children, since he was not permitted to enter, having offended God, and because God knows the bigger picture, He sent us Moses to remind us: we are each given life either to become a blessing for others; or a miserly curse for our self. Moses said: **because you did not serve the Lord with joyfulness and gladness of heart**, for the abundance of all things; so you will serve your enemies whom the Lord will send against you, in hunger, thirst, exposure -- in the lack of all things; and He will put an iron yoke on your neck until He has destroyed you. – Deut. 28.

And that man at the Lord God's right hand already came once and told us: **My sheep hear My voice and they follow Me** – John 10. So instead of telling God what to do; how about doing what He already said? Return to Him.

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