

Psalm 126

30th Sunday Year B
2nd Sunday of Advent Year C; 5th Sunday of Lent Year C
Evening Prayer Wednesday Week 3
Complementary Psalms Afternoon
Evening Prayer II Common of Apostles

As with all the psalms from 120 to 134, the title reads: ‘A Song of Ascents.’ It is a hymn of joy at the wonder of the return from Exile, when YHWH carried out his promise to restore the fortunes of his chosen people – a promise to which the following texts witness:

I will restore the fortunes of my people Israel, and they shall rebuild the ruined cities and inhabit them; they shall plant vineyards and drink their wine, and they shall make gardens and eat their fruit.

– Amos 9:14

At that time I will bring you home, at the time when I gather you; for I will make you renowned and praised among all the peoples of the earth, when I restore your fortunes before your eyes, says YHWH.

– Zephaniah 3:20

YHWH your God will restore your fortunes and have compassion on you, gathering you again from all the peoples among whom YHWH your God has scattered you.

– Deuteronomy 30:3

I will let you find me, says YHWH, and I will restore your fortunes and gather you from all the nations and all the places where I have driven you, says YHWH, and I will bring you back to the place from which I sent you into exile.

– Jeremiah 29:14

For the days are surely coming, says YHWH, when I will restore the fortunes of my people, Israel and Judah, says YHWH, and I will bring them back to the land that I gave to their ancestors and they shall take possession of it.

– Jeremiah 30:3

Thus says YHWH: I am going to restore the fortunes of the tents of Jacob, and have compassion on his dwellings; the city shall be rebuilt upon its mound, and the citadel set on its rightful site.

– Jeremiah 30:18

Thus says YHWH of hosts, the God of Israel: Once more they shall use these words in the land of Judah and in its towns when I restore their fortunes: ‘YHWH bless you, O abode of righteousness, O holy hill!’

– Jeremiah 31:23

Fields shall be bought for money, and deeds shall be signed and sealed and witnessed, in the land of Benjamin, in the places around Jerusalem, and in the cities of Judah, of the hill country, of the Shephelah, and of the Negeb; for I will restore their fortunes, says YHWH.

– Jeremiah 32:44

I will restore the fortunes of Judah and the fortunes of Israel, and rebuild them as they were at first.

– Jeremiah 33:7

The voice of mirth and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom and the voice of the bride, the voices of those who sing, as they bring thank offerings to the house of YHWH: 'Give thanks to YHWH of hosts, for YHWH is good, for his steadfast love endures forever!' For I will restore the fortunes of the land as at first, says YHWH.

– Jeremiah 33:11

Would I reject the offspring of Jacob and of my servant David and not choose any of his descendants as rulers over the offspring of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. For I will restore their fortunes, and will have mercy upon them.

– Jeremiah 33:26

Thus says the Lord YHWH: Now I will restore the fortunes of Jacob, and have mercy on the whole house of Israel; and I will be jealous for my holy name.

– Ezekiel 39:25

It was too good to be true!

Why do you say, O Jacob, and speak, O Israel, 'My way is hidden from YHWH, and my right is disregarded by my God?'

– Isaiah 40:27

Then you will say in your heart, 'Who has borne me these? I was bereaved and barren, exiled and put away – so who has reared these? I was left all alone – where then have these come from?'

– Isaiah 49:21

Why was no one there when I came? Why did no one answer when I called? Is my hand shortened, that it cannot redeem? Or have I no power to deliver?

– Isaiah 50:2

He shall startle many nations; kings shall shut their mouths because of him; for that which had not been told them they shall see, and that which they had not heard they shall contemplate. Who has believed what we have heard?

– Isaiah 52:15 - 53:1

Compare the response to the resurrection of Jesus

They left the tomb quickly with fear and great joy.

– Matthew 28:8

They went out and fled from the tomb, for terror and amazement had seized them; and they said nothing to anyone, for they were afraid.

– Mark 16:8

These words seemed to them an idle tale, and they did not believe them.

– Luke 24:11 (see 24:37-41)

¹When YHWH* restored the fortunes of Zion, it seemed like a dream.

Restored to life

**²Then our mouth
was filled with
laughter, and our
tongue uttered
shouts of joy.**

The ransomed of YHWH shall return, and come to Zion with singing; everlasting joy shall be upon their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

– Isaiah 35:10

With joy they celebrated the festival of unleavened bread seven days; for YHWH had made them joyful, and had turned the heart of the king of Assyria to them, so that he aided them in the work on the house of God, the God of Israel.

– Ezra 6:22

**Then it was said
among the nations,
'YHWH has done
great things for
them.'**

Do not fear, O soil; be glad and rejoice, for YHWH has done great things!

– Joel 2:21

**³YHWH has done
great things for us,
and we are celebrat-
ing.**

Who has cut a channel for the torrents of rain, and a way for the thunderbolt, to bring rain on a land where no one lives, on the desert, which is empty of human life, to satisfy the waste and desolate land, and to make the ground put forth grass?

– Job 38:25-27

**⁴Restore our for-
tunes, YHWH, like
the watercourses in
the Negeb.**

The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad, the desert shall rejoice and blossom; like the crocus it shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice with joy and singing ... Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf unstopped; then the lame shall leap like a deer, and the tongue of the speechless sing for joy. For waters shall break forth in the wilderness, and streams in the desert; the burning sand shall become a pool, and the thirsty ground springs of water.

– Isaiah 35:1-7

I will open rivers on the bare heights, and fountains in the midst of the valleys; I will make the wilderness a pool of water, and the dry land springs of water.

– Isaiah 41:18

I am about to do a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it? I will make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert. The wild animals will honour me, the jackals and the ostriches; for I give water in the wilderness, rivers in the desert, to give drink to my chosen people.

– Isaiah 43:19-20

They did not thirst when he led them through the deserts; he made water flow for them from the rock; he split open the rock and the water gushed out.

– Isaiah 48:21

The spirit of the Lord [^ʿadonay] YHWH is upon me, because YHWH has anointed me; he has sent me to bring good news to the oppressed, to bind up the broken hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and release to the prisoners; to proclaim the year of YHWH's favour, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all who mourn; to provide for those who mourn in Zion – to give them a garland instead of ashes, the oil of gladness instead of mourning, the mantle of praise instead of a faint spirit. They will be called oaks of righteousness, the planting of YHWH, to display his glory.

– Isaiah 61:1-3

Weeping may linger for the night, but joy comes with the morning.

– Psalm 30:5

The reaper is already receiving wages and is gathering fruit for eternal life, so that sower and reaper may rejoice together.

– John 4:36

The days are surely coming, says YHWH, when I will sow the house of Israel and the house of Judah with the seed of humans and the seed of animals.

– Jeremiah 31:27

I will sow him for myself in the land. And I will have pity on Lo-ruhamah, and I will say to Lo-ammi, 'You are my people'; and he shall say, 'You are my God.'

– Hosea 2:23

I will bring forth descendants from Jacob, and from Judah inheritors of my mountains; my chosen shall inherit it, and my servants shall settle there.

– Isaiah 65:9

Arise, O Jerusalem, stand upon the height; look toward the east, and see your children gathered from west and east at the word of the Holy One, rejoicing that God has remembered them. For they went out from you on foot, led away by their enemies; but God will bring them back to you, carried in glory as on a royal throne. For God has ordered that every high mountain and the everlasting hills be made low and the valleys filled up to make level ground so that Israel may walk safely in the glory of God. The woods and every fragrant tree have shaded Israel at God's command. For God will lead Israel with joy, in the light of his glory, with the mercy and righteousness which come from him.

– Baruch 5:5-9

**⁵May those who sow
in tears reap with
shouts of joy.**

**⁶Those who go out
weeping, bearing seed
for sowing, will come
home with shouts
of joy, carrying their
sheaves.**