



LENTEN DEVOTIONAL MARCH 16, 2023

SCRIPTURE

PSALM 126

1 When the Lord restored the fortunes of Zion,
we were like those who dream.

2 Then our mouth was filled with laughter
and our tongue with shouts of joy;
then it was said among the nations,
“The Lord has done great things for them.”

3 The Lord has done great things for us,
and we rejoiced.

4 Restore our fortunes, O Lord,
like the watercourses in the Negeb.

5 May those who sow in tears

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

DEVOTIONAL

Katelyn Fisher '22, Administrative Assistant for the Center for Adaptive and Innovative Ministry

In February, among the drib and drab of Pittsburgh's darkest days, I set in motion the early processes of my summer garden. In the darkness of my chilly basement, a hopeful stirring begins as I delicately fold tiny snapdragon seeds into soil and set them under a grow light, awaiting the glory of their beauty that will appear after the passing of many days.

Just as my summer seeds are grown in the darkness of winter, our psalmist is intimately aware of a hope that persists amongst difficult circumstances. At one time the Israelites rejoiced, but now there is only sorrow. She recalls the days the Lord "restored the fortunes of Zion" (v. 1) as a way of remembering the goodness of what once was and declaring the possibility of what will be again.

So many of the stories we most cherish speak of triumph and overcoming, but here the psalmist is offering the gift of what it means to endure. We know God's promise of restoration is coming, but in the interim, it's good and right to weep over all that is broken. It is our tears that go on to water the soil from which all future abundance will grow. In the midst of our suffering, sometimes the only thing we have to cling to is a dream; a vision of the Kingdom as it will be. It is in our dreaming, however, that God gives us the courage to continue; enduring each day and sowing seeds that paint a picture of all that is possible in the Kingdom of God.

PRAYER

As we await the future restoration of all things, give us the patience to endure, and the courage to sow seeds even when the climate seems inhospitable. Comfort us in our mourning and allow our tears to knit us closer to you and to the world; for the glory of your name and to the restoration of shalom. Amen.

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