

## Psalm 85

LORD, you were favorable to your land; you restored the fortunes of Jacob. You forgave the iniquity of your people; you pardoned all their sin. You withdrew all your wrath; you turned from your hot anger.

Restore us again, O God of our salvation, and put away your indignation toward us. Will you be angry with us forever? Will you prolong your anger to all generations? Will you not revive us again, so that your people may rejoice in you? Show us your steadfast love, O LORD and grant us your salvation.

Let me hear what God the LORD will speak, for he will speak peace to his people, to his faithful, to those who turn to him in their hearts. Surely his salvation is at hand for those who fear him, that his glory may dwell in our land.

Steadfast love and faithfulness will meet; righteousness and peace will kiss each other. Faithfulness will spring up from the ground, and righteousness will look down from the sky. The LORD will give what is good, and our land will yield its increase. Righteousness will go before him, and will make a path for his steps.

There's been a lot of talk about change recently. Politicians proclaim it; advertisers' gleefully tell us their product is NEW and IMPROVED. Change is good! But I think what most people are looking for is a return to a simpler time, when life was much easier than it is today. The way things used to be, carefully shaped and softened by our memories; it is what we like to refer to as "the good old days."

Change requires us to move forward, not backward. But true change means stepping outside our comfort zone, replacing the familiar with something not so familiar, or perhaps looking at the familiar in a new light. Change can be very uncomfortable.

For many, our present days appear very dim, and the promise of hope a distant memory. I recall a September morning not too long ago when darkness covered the sky, or more recently watching our financial markets collapse. We look overseas at senseless acts of violence filled with hatred. Sometimes you wonder what this world is coming to as we cry for restoration. But as dark as the day may seem, eventually morning comes. Monday is replaced by Tuesday and the promise of a better day.

Sometimes it is only through the darkness that we can truly see God's light. It is the steadfast love of our LORD, our salvation through Jesus Christ and the promise of The Holy Spirit guiding our steps through the darkness. There is no darkness that can conceal God's light.

The Psalmist reminds us that true restoration begins first with a change of heart.

As the promise of spring lies beneath this blanket of snow, God's assurance of restoration is at hand.

In this season of Advent, Expect the Unexpected. Many years ago our people cried for a savior and God responded in a most unexpected way. All the knowledge and wisdom of the universe safely harbored within an infant child--the promise of hope, the assurance of salvation.

Beyond the tinsel and the holiday lights let us look above with wonder. Christ the Lord has come. Christ, the King will come again.

Let's Pray,

Heavenly Father, we thank you for we know your Word is faithful and true. Above the cosmos, beyond the outer limits of our imagination, you sit enthroned between the Cherubim—the creator of all things, whose love for us is so great that you gave us the promise of hope and restoration through Jesus Christ.

Teach us, O' Lord, to walk in your ways. Give us hearts without boundaries; selflessness instead of self-righteousness. Darkness is waning; a new day is on the horizon, in Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen