

Psalms 80:18

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

So will not we go back from thee: quicken us, and we will call upon thy name.

Analysis

So will not we go back from thee: quicken us, and we will call upon thy name. This verse concludes the psalm with covenant recommitment. "So will not we go back from thee" (ve'lo-nasug mimekha, וְלֹא־נָסוּג מִמֶּכָּה) uses sug (סוּג), meaning to turn back, retreat, apostatize. The people pledge: grant restoration and we will not repeat the apostasy that brought judgment. This conditional commitment acknowledges that past covenant violations caused current devastation, and pledges renewed faithfulness if God renews blessing. The negative formulation—"will not go back"—emphasizes determined resistance to future unfaithfulness.

"Quicken us" (techayyenu, תַּחַיֵּנוּ) uses chayah (חַיָּה), meaning to live, revive, restore to life. The people recognize they're effectively dead—burned vineyard, cut-down branch, devastated nation. Only divine quickening can restore vitality. This anticipates New Testament theology of spiritual death requiring divine regeneration (Ephesians 2:1-5; Colossians 2:13). The causative form—"cause us to live"—emphasizes God must act; human effort cannot produce resurrection.

"And we will call upon thy name" (uveshimkha niqra, וּבִשְׁמֶךָ נִקְרָא) pledges renewed worship and covenant loyalty. Qara beshem (קָרָא בְשֵׁם) means to call on the name—invoke in prayer, worship exclusively, identify with publicly. The phrase appears in Abrahamic narratives (Genesis 12:8, 13:4, 21:33) describing altar-building and worship. The people promise: revive us, and we will worship You exclusively, publicly identifying as Your people. The pledge closes the psalm hopefully: though burned and cut down, the vine can sprout again if God grants quickening grace.

Historical Context

This covenant recommitment echoes renewal themes throughout Israel's history—after golden calf apostasy (Exodus 32-34), after exile (Ezra 9-10; Nehemiah 8-10), and eschatologically (Hosea 3:5, 14:1-4; Zechariah 12:10-13:1). The pledge "we will not go back" recalls Israel's repeated cycle: blessing, apostasy, judgment, repentance, restoration. Prophets promised ultimate restoration when God would write law on hearts (Jeremiah 31:31-34) and give new hearts and spirits (Ezekiel 36:26-27), enabling permanent faithfulness. The pledge's ultimate fulfillment awaits Christ's work enabling genuine transformation, not merely behavioral recommitment.

Related Passages

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

1 John 4:8 — God is love

Study Questions

1. How should Christians understand the relationship between divine quickening (God's sovereign act) and human commitment (pledging faithfulness)?
2. What dangers exist in pledging 'we will not go back' based on future resolve rather than past performance?
3. How does the request to be 'quickened' (made alive) inform understanding of spiritual revival in individuals, churches, and nations?

Interlinear Text

וְלֹא	נָס וְגָ	מִמֶּךָ	תְּחַיֵּנוּ	וּבְשִׁמְךָ
H3808	So will not we go back	H4480	from thee quicken	upon thy name
	H5472		H2421	H8034
נִקְרָא:				
us and we will call				
H7121				

Additional Cross-References

Song of Solomon 1:4: Draw me, we will run after thee: the king hath brought me into his chambers: we will be glad and rejoice in thee, we will remember thy love more than wine: the upright love thee.

Psalms 119:154 (Parallel theme): Plead my cause, and deliver me: quicken me according to thy word.

Psalms 79:13 (Parallel theme): So we thy people and sheep of thy pasture will give thee thanks for ever: we will shew forth thy praise to all generations.

Psalms 119:40 (Parallel theme): Behold, I have longed after thy precepts: quicken me in thy righteousness.

Psalms 119:25 (Parallel theme): My soul cleaveth unto the dust: quicken thou me according to thy word.

Psalms 119:107 (Parallel theme): I am afflicted very much: quicken me, O LORD, according unto thy word.