

Remember, Ask, Watch, and Hope

By Rev. Jill Jackson-Sears

On this Holy Saturday, we find ourselves in this strange ground between the crucifixion and the resurrection. We are standing near the tomb and looking forward to the sunrise. What are we to do in this “in-between” time?

The author of Psalm 85 inspires us to **remember, ask, watch, and hope**. The first three verses of the psalm are filled with words of communal thanksgiving as the psalmist remembers what God has done for them in the past.

*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.*

On this Holy Saturday, begin by **remembering** the ways that God has been faithful to you in the past, the blessings that you have received from God, and the grace of Jesus Christ that has sustained you throughout the years.

The psalmist continues by lifting up a communal petition for national restoration. In verses 4-7, we hear urgent pleas to God for help, revival, and salvation.

*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.*

While the assistance that the psalmist wants from God is not clear, we can relate to the feelings of desperation, especially during this time of crisis. Let us **ask** God for deliverance and help for us individually, for the church, and for the world.

As the psalm continues, great expectation is evident in verses 8-9 as the psalmist looks forward to God’s promises being fulfilled.

*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.*

Let us **watch** for the ways that God's love is evident to us through the gift of God's Word, relationships, the beauty of this world, and the simple blessings of life. Let us pray for God's glory to be revealed to all people.

Finally, the psalm concludes with the promise of deliverance in verses 10-13.

*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.*

The psalmist paints a beautiful picture of love, faithfulness, righteousness, and peace coming together. Imagine what God has in store of us as we anticipate the coming of Jesus. Lift up prayers of **hopeful** anticipation for what God will do and how we can be a part of what is doing.