

## A Prayer to the Shepherd of Humanity<sup>i</sup>

1. Listen, O shepherd of humanity, leading your people like a flock, let your splendor come flashing forth, and shine in beauty from the throne that rides the wings of cherubim.
2. Rise up, come strong among our tribes and clans, and with your overflowing love,
8. You cut us from the finest vines of Egypt, God you made a space for us and planted us with care.
9. Your watchful eye looked ever after us, and we took root and quickly filled the land.
10. Our leaves brought shade to mountains bare. Our tendrils grew to touch the tops of cedar trees.
11. Our branches stretched and met the oceans' shores. Our roots drew water from great rivers wide and deep.
12. But now the walls around your vines are broken down, and anyone can steal the fruit away.
13. Wild boars have torn apart the tenderest roots, and beasts lurk watching for a chance to pray.
14. Lord God of all look down as master gardener once again, and tend the vines you planted long ago.
15. And those who seek to burn your vineyards out with fire, from your bright countenance let them catch aflame.
16. Reach out your hand to us again and make us strong, so we may be as we once were.
17. Breath into us and we will call upon your name, and never ever turn away from you again.
18. Recall us back to life, O God of all, so we may see the shining brilliance of your face. Yes, that will be enough for us, for we will be restored to you again.

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### <sup>i</sup> NOTE:

There is a sense that human society comes apart in forms of chaos deliberately wrecked upon human society by humans themselves. The state of the nation can be undone in this way as well as the state of the world.

### MEDITATION:

There is sense expressed in this Psalm that a loss of the contemplative vision of God's face allows life to be torn apart. Searching for the divine face is a theme which will be expressed over and over throughout the stream of Semitic spirituality, in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. The search is important for healing. Something about search for and seeing the face of God heals our brokenness.

#### Food for thought:

How have you searched such a seeing?  
Where is that visage reflected in you?

The iconography of eastern Christianity expresses the belief that God's face and beauty are reflected out and through such images. Sit before an iconic image for a period of reflection and meditation.

What do you begin to experience as a result?

This translation, this note and this meditation were all taken from "*Ancient Songs Sung Anew: The Psalms As Poetry*" by Lynn Bauman