

BUT JOY COMES....

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Scripture: Psalm 30

Psalm 30 has some very, very enduring, encouraging words. Two sentences that caught my attention, and I thought: These are words for our time. "Weeping may endure for the night, but joy comes in the morning," and "He has turned my mourning into dancing, put off my sackcloth and clothed me with gladness." Beautiful words, church, for us today as we meditate on this psalm. And I'd like us to see how we can take it out of its context of antiquity as King David talking about it, to how we can apply it in our own lives and in our own situations. "Weeping may endure for the night, but joy comes in the morning," and "He has turning my mourning into dancing, put off my sackcloth and clothed me with gladness."

Psalm 30

*I will extol You, O Lord, for You have lifted me up,
And have not let my foes rejoice over me.
O Lord my God,
I cried to You for help, and You healed me.
O Lord, You brought up my soul from the grave;
You have kept me alive, that I should not go down to the pit.
Sing praise to the Lord, you saints of His,
And give thanks at the remembrance of His holy name.
For His anger is but for a moment,
His favor is for a lifetime;
Weeping may last for the night,
But joy comes in the morning.
Now in my prosperity I said,
"I shall never be moved."
O Lord, by Your favor You have made my mountain stand strong;
You hid Your face I was troubled.
I cried out to You, O Lord,
And to the Lord I made supplication;
What profit is there in my blood, if I go down to the pit?
Will the dust praise You? Will it declare Your truth?
Hear, O Lord, and have mercy on me;
O Lord, be my helper.
You have turned for me my mourning into dancing;
You have put off my sackcloth and clothed me with gladness,
To the end, hat my glory may sing praise to You and not be silent.
O Lord my God, I will give thanks to You forever.*

O Lord my God, I will give thanks to You forever. I pray church, as we go through this psalm, that that's where we will land at the end, that all of us together, in spite of all that we are going through, will be able to say: O Lord my God, I will give thanks to You forever.

So, let's look at this psalm verse by verse, or a couple of verses at a time, and see first in the context of David. This psalm was written by David, and let's look at it from, and through his eyes.

v 1: *I will extol You, O Lord, for You have lifted me up,*

The first thing that he is doing here is: He's thanking God; thanking God for victory that he has had. Victory over whom or what? Thanking God for victory over his enemies. *And have not let my foes rejoice over me.*

v 2: *I cried out to You for help, and You healed me.*

Then he says, "I thank You for healing."

v 3: *You brought my soul up from the grave and you have kept me alive.*

So, he starts by saying: I will extol You. I will praise You God, for these three things that You have done for me.

- You have saved me from my enemies,
- You have brought healing to my life,
- You have kept me alive.

Then the next thing he does is praise the Lord.

v 4: *Sing praise to the Lord, you saints of His; give thanks at the remembrance of His holy name.*

So, he turns to the people and he says, "All of you," because he's in the congregation right now, "Sing praise to God. Remember His name, the name that we have, the name that we've revered all through our journey. Remember Him and sing praises to Him.

v 5: Why should we praise God? *For His anger is but for a moment, but His favor is for life.* God may be angry with us, but His anger lasts only a moment, but His favor continues on through life. then he says, *Weeping may endure for a night but joy comes in the morning.* in other words, weeping has an end date, and joy follows that end date. There's a time frame for weeping but you can be sure that joy is around the corner.

v 6: Then he moves to a place of reminiscence where he thinks about a place. And he says, *Now in my prosperity, I said I shall never be moved.* And you can see that he's going back to a place almost of pride, of self-dependence, of "I made it" kind of a thing. All that I see around me, all that I've done in my prosperous days, in my prosperity, I shall never be moved. And yet, beloved, how quickly he moves away from that place.

v 7: He says immediately, *Lord, it's by Your favor; You have made my mountain stand strong. You hid Your face and I was troubled.*

Lord, You are the one who has done everything for me. In fact, when there were moments in my life when I couldn't see You, and I couldn't feel Your presence, it troubled me. I couldn't go through life. it created a sense of despair. It troubled me not to have this connection with You. Quickly, from standing on "I'm a self-made man" to saying, "Lord, no, no. everything that I am is because of Your favor. In fact, when Your face was hidden, I was troubled. It was not easy-going for me.

v 8: Then he said, What did I do in that situation? *I cried out to You, O Lord, and to You I made supplication.* I cried out to You and to You I made requests. He says, "My immediate reaction was to pray. I came before You in prayer."

What a good place for us to stop and think about our own selves and where we are today, in our lives! Are we standing on a place of pride? Are we looking at the things that we have, or the positions we have attained? Or even the resources, the money that we have, and saying, "I'm the man or woman. I got it through my own hard work." Maybe like David, we quickly need to move away from that position and say, "O no Lord! everything that I have is because of You, Your favor

resting upon me. In fact, that place should trouble us as it did David. Because when pride comes, then God is obscured from our lives. Then he says, "My response at this point is to just go to You in prayer. I prayed and I brought my supplication before You."

v 9: It's interesting, as we look at this passage, we see that he brings a kind of rationale before God. *What profit is there in my blood when I go down to the pit? Can the dust praise You?* In other words, how will it help? What profit is there even to You if I am dust? If I am dead, can I praise You? Can I declare truth if I am dead?

v 10: "*Hear O Lord, and have mercy on me, be my helper*" he prays.

He kind of gives God a rationale. He says, "Lord, my life is worth preserving because if I have breath, I can praise You. Somebody without breath cannot praise You. So keep me alive and have mercy on me.

v 11: *You have turned for me my mourning into dancing; You have put off my sackcloth and clothed me with gladness.*

You've turned my mourning into dancing; You've taken off my sackcloth, my sorrow that I've covered myself with, my ashes; and instead, You've given me a robe of gladness. This is what he says God has done, where he turned back to God. We don't know exactly what he was thinking about? What was he mourning? Why was he in sackcloth and ashes at this point? What was he thinking about? He says, "At that point, You turned my mourning into dancing, You turned my sadness into gladness.

v 12: He ends the psalm with his response to what God has done – to praise God and to glorify Him. To the end God has done all this.

My glory may sing praise to You and not be silent. O Lord my God, I will give thanks to You forever.

Weeping may endure for the night, but joy comes in the morning.

He has turned my mourning into dancing, put off my sackcloth and clothed me with gladness.

Beloved, these are extremely difficult days for you and me as well. We are losing too many loved ones. It seems like days of mourning are just being prolonged, and there's more sadness than gladness. We look desperately for the silver lining in these dark clouds. And yet, as we look at this psalm, we see that David has gone through a whole gamut of experiences. And through it all, he gives us these two wonderful things: that mourning can change, and sadness can change. And that God can make that difference in our lives.

So, let's see how we can appropriate this. Let's move away from David and ask few questions of this particular psalm.

What has God done for you?

David says, "I will praise Him." Maybe you are saying that praise doesn't come easy these days. "I will extol You." I'm finding that difficult. Look at the things that David was praising God for. He praised God for what God had done.

So, what has God done for you, beloved? Has He lifted you up in front of people opposed to you? Have you seen Him bring you into a place of honor? Have you seen Him help you from a place of desperation to a place of hope? Have you seen Him prepare a table for you in the presence of your enemies, as another psalm would remind us? And if He hasn't, it's good to know that He will do that. That could be around the corner, that we continue to trust Him.

Has He healed you? I know when I look at my life – the many, many times when God has touched me and brought healing supernaturally, and even through doctors and medicine. But we've gone to Him and said, "Lord, this is what I'm suffering from. Will You bring healing to my frame?" And He has. I'm sure that He has for you too. I'm sure there are many testimonies today that can come from every place where you all are.

Has He kept you alive? Has there been a point in your life when you were almost at death's door, and you thought that this was the end? And yet, He brought you back from the brink? That's a place and a time that you will never forget.

Has God done that for you? And if He has, if He's lifted you up and healed you, and kept you alive, if you have breath today – that is enough reason to praise and extol Him. That's all David is saying: This is what God has done for me, and this is what I am going to do. I'm going to praise Him.

Why should we praise Him?

We praise Him because God is a god who doesn't keep anger for long. His anger will not last, but His favor is what lasts. Then he says that God is one who can turn the weeping, one who can wipe away those tears.

Maybe that's the position that you are in today. Maybe you've lost a loved one. maybe you're finding it difficult each day that you look around and see things or hear things in your head, a voice that you love that you won't hear this side of eternity, and without your knowledge tears come. maybe you're finding it difficult to meet each day. Beloved, God has got you – that's what this psalm is saying: that weeping will have an end. Weeping may last for the night but joy will come. I wonder whether you need to hold on to that promise as you look at your own life and what's going on. You say that it's a long time since I've had joy. Then to be able to look up and say: Lord, I want that joy. We praise Him because His anger with us is fleeting; weeping will come to an end and joy will come.

What should we be careful about?

But then David also reminds himself and us that we should be very careful. We need to be careful about pride and self-dependence. We need to be careful that we are not looking at the things around us and think: Because I am good, I have done this. But we must be able to pray for mercy and say, "Lord, please don't ever let me get to that position where I think that I did this without You. You are the one who has helped me all along. Pray for mercy.

What does God do?

What can He do? He can turn things around. He can help us shift the focus. He can make you glad. The Psalmist again says: This is the day that the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it. Even this day that you and I are able to experience is a gift from God, and we are encouraged to praise Him for it, to thank Him for it. He can turn things around. You have turned for me my mourning into dancing; You have put off my sackcloth and clothed me with gladness.

What must we do?

We must praise Him; praise Him in the sanctuary, praise Him in moments like this when we get together. Lift His name up on high. Praise is upwards, towards Him. But then, to also glorify Him. Praise Him and then glorify Him. How do we do that? We do that in the world, in the situations and circumstances we find ourselves in. Jesus reminded us: Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works and glorify My Father who is in heaven. So, we glorify God through our behavior, through letting our lives shine and reflect God. He turns our mourning into dancing, sadness into gladness, and our response is to be able to praise Him, and then bring glory to Him.

Weeping may endure for the night, but joy comes in the morning.
He has turned my mourning into dancing, put off my sackcloth and clothed me with gladness.

We've lost loved ones. Even today, I heard the news that a dear servant of God has gone home. It is almost unrelenting! The news each day of loved ones going home. Or maybe these days are just difficult days at the office – you're finding it difficult to put in all that is expected in the time frames that you have. Or maybe online school and college isn't fun. It isn't fair. You're not getting the results for what you've put in, or you're not able to do it as well as some others. And this is a challenge. Maybe you're doing a lot of work at home without help; you're finding it difficult. Or maybe you're just worried about aged parents, or children, or loved ones who are sick.

These are difficult times, beloved. These are challenging times. And yet, how do we look for the silver linings? How do we get to the joy, to the gladness that David is talking about? He says, "I remember, and in remembering I will praise. I remember all that God has done. I remember not to get to a place where I think that I am self-sufficient. I remember that in the midst of these desperate situations, God can bring light. He can give me joy and gladness, and to that we need to hold on to. Therein is our hope, that God can and will bring a change into our lives, our situations and our circumstances.

I love the closing hymn. One of the verses says this:

To this I hold, my Shepherd will defend me,
Through the deepest valley, He will lead.
O the night has been won, and I shall overcome,
Yet not I, but through Christ in me.

Yes, Christ in you, the hope of glory. Through Him I can do all things, and through Him we can experience gladness and joy even in these trying times.

Amen.