

## *Psalm 30*

[A Psalm-Song at the Dedication of the House of David]

**1 I will extol thee, O LORD; for thou hast lifted me up, and hast not made my foes to rejoice over me.**

David did not have the power to extol the Lord, who as the King of kings and the Lord of lords can't be any higher; so to "extol" in this context means to declare him (by word and song) to be what he is; which David clearly intended to do. I will, says David, extol the Lord!

David was dangling and the Lord drew him up, as water is drawn up from a well in a bucket (**drew water enough for us, and watered the flock** – Exodus 2:19). *Thou hast drawn me up, namely, out of the deep pit, or waters, to which great dangers and afflictions are frequently compared.* (Benson). Likely David had recovered from a severe sickness (verse 2), stopping the mouths of his anticipating enemies.

*The verb is used, in its original meaning, to denote the reciprocating motion of the buckets of a well; one descending as the other rises, and vice versa; and it is here applied with admirable propriety to point out the various reciprocations and changes of David's fortunes, as described in this Psalm, as to prosperity and adversity; and particularly that gracious reverse of his afflicted condition, which he now celebrates, God having raised him up to great honour and prosperity: for, having built his palace, he perceived that the Lord had established him king over Israel, and that he had exalted his kingdom, for his people Israel's sake.* (Chandler). That is one heck of a perception, and don't let anybody tell you that the Lord's anointed cannot perceive what is going on from time to time.

**2 O LORD my God, I cried unto thee, and thou hast healed me.**

This is a thanksgiving for a holistic healing of mind and body. David was delivered from fears and troubles of mind and from dangerous diseases and distempers of the body. David says at another place that the Lord **healeth all thy diseases** (Psalm 103:3) and such an all encompassing pronouncement need not be limited to physical maladies. When this Great Savior heals you, no illness remains. The Lord **sent his**

**word, and healed them, and delivered them from their destructions. (Psalm 107:20).**

**<sup>3</sup> O LORD, thou hast brought up my soul from the grave: thou hast kept me alive, that I should not go down to the pit.**

Clear from this language is that David had been in imminent danger of death and had been brought back from the grave's borders. His condition was described in Job 33:22: **Yea, his soul draweth near unto the grave, and his life to the destroyers.**

But: *[M]y deliverance is a kind of resurrection from the grave, upon the very brink whereof I was.* (Poole). The bucket is no longer descending; it's time for a change.

**<sup>4</sup> Sing unto the LORD, O ye saints of his, and give thanks at the remembrance of his holiness.**

Join my song, the Psalmist says, and assist me in expressing my gratitude at this public ceremony-dedication. Singing praises to God is a good thing, any time and any place, but is especially so during the public worship of God. It is a pleasing exercise and a profitable engagement.

Please notice this invitation to song is targeted and limited to God's saints. Reprobates and antichrists are not welcome.

This saint-singing should include giving thanks at the far-reaching remembrance of the Lord's holiness, which, says Dr. Gill, *is essential to him, and in which he is glorious; and which appears in all his ways and works of providence and grace, and both in the redemption and sanctification of his people; and besides this, there is the holiness of Christ, which is imputed to his saints, and the sanctification of the Spirit, which is wrought in them; and at the remembrance of each of these it highly becomes them to give thanks to the Lord, since hereby they are made meet to be partakers of his kingdom and glory.*

**<sup>5</sup> For his anger endureth but a moment; in his favour is life: weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning.**

The duration of God's anger is comparatively short while the effects of his favor are substantial, durable and life-long. *Commonly the afflictions which he sends on his people are of short continuance; and last but a small part of their lives: but he heaps his favours upon them for the greatest part of their present lives, and in the next life which endures for ever.* (Benson). Has that not been our experience?

Weeping and sadness may endure for a short night, like that of a guest who lodges overnight and then is gone come morning. Joy comes speedily that next morning. Barnes seems to capture the meaning of this interesting verse:

*Weeping may endure for a night - Margin: "in the evening." So the Hebrew. The word here rendered "endure" means properly "to lodge, to sojourn," as one does for a little time. The idea is, that weeping is like a stranger - a wayfaring person - who lodges for a night only. In other words, sorrow will soon pass away to be succeeded by joy.*

*But joy cometh in the morning - Margin: "singing." The margin expresses the force of the original word. There will be singing, shouting, exultation. That is, if we have the friendship of God, sorrow will always be temporary, and will always be followed by joy. The morning will come; a morning without clouds; a morning when the sources of sorrow will disappear.*

Please consider James 1:12 in this context: **Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him.**

**<sup>6</sup>And in my prosperity I said, I shall never be moved.**

Oops! The writer exposes overconfidence, which is deadly. He thought himself past all danger and threats and had entered into an era of peace and tranquility, arising from what he perceived to be an affluent and prosperous condition/situation. Now that David was settled on the throne (likely the reference "prosperity") he believed his troubles were over and he would experience uninterrupted happiness. The word

“moved” suggests the Psalmist considered himself to presently be in an inaccessible mountain, not likely to be removed out of its place.

What David failed to take into account was his own frailty and the uncertainty and vanity of worldly things. In Chapter 29 of Job, he describes in great color his gravy days before tragedy struck. Here is a sample of his comments that are remarkably comparable to what David here is feeling: **Then I said, I shall die in my nest, and I shall multiply my days as the sand. My root was spread out by the waters, and the dew lay all night upon my branch. My glory was fresh in me, and my bow was renewed in my hand. Unto me men gave ear, and waited, and kept silence at my counsel. \* \* \* I chose out their way, and sat chief, and dwelt as a king in the army, as one that comforteth the mourners.** (Job 29:18-21, 25). But what immediately followed? He was held in derision by the younger generation, **whose fathers I would have disdained to have set with the dogs of my flock.** (Job 30:1). Overconfidence is fatal!

**<sup>7</sup>LORD, by thy favour thou hast made my mountain to stand strong: thou didst hide thy face, and I was troubled.**

Backing away just a smidge from the overconfidence, David now credits the Lord for his safe “mountain” (Zion?), likely referring to his kingdom, as that term often suggests in Scripture. For example: **And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the Lord’s house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it.** (Isaiah 2:2).

But now a crack in the protective wall appears. God hid his face, which is to say he withdrew his favor and help, whereupon David was *quickly brought into such distresses of body, and anxiety of mind, that [he] saw the vanity of all [his] carnal confidences.* (Poole).

**<sup>8</sup>I cried to thee, O LORD; and unto the LORD I made supplication.**

When reverses came, this Psalmist did – and all of God’s people should – give an earnest cry unto the Lord for aid. Here, the prayer uttered by David is summarized in following verses. We often speak of

prayer in this place; the following compendium from the Treasury of David is well done:

*Prayer is the unfailing resource of God's people. If they are driven to their wits' end, they may still go to the mercy-seat. When an earthquake makes our mountain tremble, the throne of grace still stands firm, and we may come to it. Let us never forget to pray, and let us never doubt the success of prayer. The hand which wounds can heal: let us turn to him who smites us, and he will be entreated of us.*

We now turn to the specifics of this particular prayer.

**<sup>9</sup>What profit is there in my blood, when I go down to the pit? Shall the dust praise thee? shall it declare thy truth?**

David asks what would be the good of his violent, bloody death at such a relatively young age; how would that help the cause of his people or mankind in general? *The argument which the psalmist urges is that he could better serve God by his life than by his death; that his death, by removing him from the earth, would prevent his rendering the service which he might by his life.* (Barnes).

Hezekiah made comparable statements when the Lord had added 15 years unto his days. Specifically, said Hezekiah: **For the grave cannot praise thee, death cannot celebrate thee: they that go down into the pit cannot hope for thy truth. The living, the living, he shall praise thee, as I do this day: the father to the children shall make known thy truth.** (Isaiah 38:18, 19).

**<sup>10</sup>Hear, O LORD, and have mercy upon me: LORD, be thou my helper.**

This is a good prayer for all times and places. Truth be told, this short petition well summarizes the essence of every prayer ever expressed by a child of God. Two parts: have mercy; help me!

To put just a bit of meat on those bones, consider Gill's remarks:

*Hear, O Lord, and have mercy upon me,... By lifting up the light of his countenance again upon him; by manifesting and applying his pardoning grace to him, and by delivering him out of all his afflictions;*

*Lord, be thou my helper; in this time of trouble; for he knew that vain was the help of man; and he was entirely in the right to betake himself to the Lord, who was able to help him, when none else could.*

**<sup>11</sup> Thou hast turned for me my mourning into dancing: thou hast put off my sackcloth, and girded me with gladness;**

The ongoing prayer is over and we now see a refreshing and uplifting sudden change of things. This cycle is familiar to us.

Before: Mourning and sackcloth. Mordecai, upon perceiving the plot afoot to destroy and kill all the Jews, **put on sackcloth with ashes, and went out into the midst of the city, and cried with a loud and a bitter cry.** (Esther 4:1). The word of the Lord that came to Joel: **Lament like a virgin girded with sackcloth for the husband of her youth and [g]ird yourselves, and lament, ye priests: howl, ye ministers of the altar: come, like all night in sackcloth, ye ministers of my God.** (Joel 1:8, 13). Sackcloth symbolizes a time of great sadness and mourning.

After: Dancing and gladness. Dancing is not referring to doing the twist or Charleston, necessarily, but generally a reference to physical representation of praising God because of great joy and excitement. **Let them praise his name in the dance[.]** (Psalm 149:3). **Praise him with the timbrel and dance[.]** (Psalm 150:4).

Isaiah 61:3 gives us a good idea of the type of gladness referred to here: **To appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that he might be glorified.** Stated otherwise, the Lord's people in Zion (his church) occasionally mourn and are in heaviness. But those conditions are generally short-lived and are quickly supplanted by joy and praise. This

repetitive process, again very familiar to each of us, results in his people being like solid trees planted by the Lord for his glory.

**12 To the end that my glory may sing praise to thee, and not be silent. O LORD my God, I will give thanks unto thee for ever.**

The interesting phrase “my glory” – the nub of this verse -- is a reference to my heart, soul and tongue (the organ of praise).

Consider Benson: *To the end that my glory -- My soul, or rather, my tongue; for to the tongue both singing and silence most properly belong; may sing praise to thee — May bear testimony to thy truth and faithfulness, manifested in fulfilling thy promises, and may ascribe to thee the glory and praise due to thy infinite perfections.*

**Therefore did my heart rejoice, and my tongue was glad; moreover also my flesh shall rest in hope. (Acts 2:26). Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoiceth: my flesh also shall rest in hope. (Psalm 16:9).**

Accord Gill: *Meaning either his soul, the more noble and glorious part of him; or the members of his body, his tongue, which is the glory of it, and with which he glorified God[.]*

## **SCHISM**

**That there should be no schism in the body; but that the members should have the same care one for another.**  
(1 Corinthians 12:25).

“Schism” appears once in the Bible; only in the verse just presented. The same Greek word, literally, "a split," is translated "rent" in Matthew 9:16 and Mark 2:21 (**No man also seweth a piece of new cloth on an old garment: else the new piece that filled it up taketh away from the old, and the rent is made worse**) and "division" in John 7:43, 9:16 and 10:19 (**There was a division therefore again among the Jews for these sayings**). It designates "a separation," not from, but within,

the church, interfering with the harmonious coordination and cooperation of the members as discussed in previous verses of 1 Corinthians 12.

Schisms within the church can be deadly. They need to be vigorously avoided; every member needs to work at avoiding schisms. Listen to this description of a schism that occurred back during the Civil War in a rural Texas “church”, taken from Chrisman, *The Ladder of Rivers*, p. 55.

*Frederick S. Wade . . . had presided over the Lawrence Chapel Sunday School during the great schism within its membership over the matter of interpretation of the Bible.*

*Half-Baptist and half-Methodist at that time, the congregation divided over the diet of John the Baptist, a diet reported to have been locusts and wild honey. All knew what wild honey was, for it was commonplace to their tables. The split came over the definition of ‘locusts,’ with some, the Baptists, affirming it was grasshoppers, meant by the Good Book. The Methodists thought as surely it meant locust beans[.]*

*Fred Wade distinguished himself as a church leader by pacifying both sides, awaiting the arrival of the old circuit rider, a Methodist, who stated most positively that the Scriptures meant locust beans. But when the Baptist preacher filed his appointment some weeks later and firmly asserted it was grasshoppers the Scripture meant, then the war was on again! Wade was happy to escape to the Confederate service, thereby eluding the wrath of all the congregation.*

Like today, Texans in those days of cattle drives and homesteading were famous for their rebellion and revolutionary personas. Avoid that approach! See this is just a sample of how church harmony can be crushed, even over minor things.