

Sing Praises!

Psalm 30

Let me tell you about this psalm and this psalmist, as we continue to celebrate and thank God for what has been done for us in Easter – this season of forgiveness, thanksgiving and new life! Our scripture is a psalm of David. Although he did not live to see the dedication of the temple, nor even the building of the temple, he wrote this song in faith that these events would take place. So he saw and wrote in faith this song of people coming from all over the nation to gather and worship God at the temple. David wrote words of instruction to be used in teachable moments on the journey to the temple to help his people learn about his faith and how God had been faithful in David's life.

David sang about how God did not let his enemies or foes rejoice over him in victory. He explained that God had been his helper and healed him. Even when David thought he was going to die, God restored him to life. Not only did David praise God, but he instructed all the people to give thanks for God holy name. He wanted all to know that God will be angry with us for a moment when we are disobedient, but God's favor, God's mercy, God's love is "for a lifetime." We weep for a night, but God gives us joy in the morning. David thought when things were good that he would "never be moved." At those times David felt like a "strong mountain" in his faith. However, there came a time when David felt that God hid God's face from him; so all his confidence disappeared and he felt dismay. It was at that point David prayed and tried to bargain with God. He thought he was going to die; so he asked God three questions:

"What profit is there in my death, if I go down to the Pit?

Will the dust praise you?

Will it tell of your faithfulness?

It was not because of David's persuasive prayer, but because God was gracious that David was healed and understood that God had helped him. David rejoiced and witnessed that God turned his "mourning into dancing," and exchanged his sackcloth, which were clothing of grief and fear, into joy! David testified that he would praise God and promised never to be silent about what God had done in his life. He promised to give God thanks!

My former pastor liked to sing a song by Rev. Paul Jones. The words are:

I had some good days
And I had some hills to climb
I've had some weary days
And some sleepless nights
But when I look around
And I think things over
All of my good days
Out-weigh my bad days
I won't complain

<http://www.lyrics.com/i-wont-complain-lyrics-rev-paul-jones.html#Rh3ziXjyuEe55lsG.99>

This always reminds me of my friend Kathy Jeffries, who was a vice president of the International Christian Women's Fellowship. She was a woman of great faith. She was one who saw my skills and abilities when I could not see them in myself. She was the one who suggested that a group invite me to do a women's retreat before I believed I possessed that ability. She was a great encourager and role-model for me. After Kathy had traveled the world doing women's retreats she became ill with cancer. Although she went into remission, she was never cured and died a few years ago. But Kathy had a theme song that she loved to sing. In fact there was never a women's meeting where she did not insist that we sing her

song. She had learned it at a Church Women United meeting with a group of Jamaican sisters. The words were:

We have so much...so much...so much to thank God for.

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When I learned how ill Kathy was I called her to give her words of encouragement, but it was she who gave me comfort, assuring me that we always had reasons for giving thanks to God. Whether life was long or short, whether we were rich or poor, whether we were healthy or sick... We have so much...so much...so much to thank God for.

God's invincible grace is what underlies the glad testimony of the psalmist. Whether in the life of the individual, the church, or the world, God's way of being God, set forth in the Bible and supremely in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ, enables us to lift our voices and offer our lives in the joyful worship and grateful service that constitute the chief end of human life in this world (cf. John 21:1-19; Acts 9:1-20) and the next (cf. Rev. 5:11-14). **John B. Rogers**

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