

Psalm 30

Introduction – The title of this Psalm points us to another time of deliverance for David and the dedication of his house. Ever since the revolt of the Maccabees around 165BC this has been one of the Psalms sung during the Feast of the Dedication (Hanukkah, see John 10:22), which means that Jesus would have sung this Psalm during that celebration. But Jesus is Himself the Greater David and the greater and resurrected Temple (Psalm 30:3, John 2:19), and so once again, Christ should be seen as the fulfillment of this Psalm-singer's victory song.

It is also a wonderful Psalm that teaches us how to pray when our own carelessness and sin has distanced us from our merciful God. Whether we find ourselves in trouble because of persecution for the sake of righteousness, or because of our own stupidity and rebellion, we learn to call upon the God Who Forgives.

The Song – The Psalm-singer is overwhelmed with praise to God because he has been lifted up and delivered from his enemies (v1). He cried out to God in a death or death-like situation and was delivered (vv2-3). The Psalm-singer is not satisfied with his own voice, but calls upon all delivered saints to join with him in song (v4). When the chastisements of the Lord are received, His favor and the joy bestowed far outlasts and outweighs His anger or our weeping (v5).

What Happened? – The circumstances by which the Psalm-singer needed deliverance came from his own self-arrogance and complacency (v6). Safety and prosperity had only come because of the Lord's favor, and the moment the Lord turned His face, he found himself in desperate trouble (v7). In the trouble of his own making, he cried out to God (v8), and argued before the Lord that it would be better if he were delivered (v9), acknowledging he needed God's merciful help (v10).

Chorus Restored – God answered far beyond what the Psalm-singer could imagine and he is filled with joy that again must be expressed (v11). The end result is that he would give thanks to God forever (v12).

The Problem of Personal Presumption in Prosperity – Modern America and modern Americans breathe this air: carnal security. We are wealthy, healthy, powerful, and live in luxury. As Christians, we understand that we have been forgiven and that in Christ, we can stand on the promises of the Word of God, but we can fall into the temptations of Romans 6, "*should we sin that grace may abound?*" Therefore, we should study this carefully.

Having seen his kingdom established, David fell to the temptation that later kings like Hezekiah and Nebuchadnezzar also succumbed. "*By this we are taught to be on our guard when in prosperity, that Satan may not bewitch us with his flatteries*" – Calvin. When we live in good times we begin to think that good times are our natural born rights. We begin to think too highly of ourselves and fail to remember the mercy of God which brought us into our inheritance, our prosperity, and granted us life and liberty. This was God's warning to Israel as He brought them into the Promised Land (Deut 8:7-14) and it is Paul's warning to the rich (1 Tim 6:17). Personally, we each must heed this warning. Nationally, we must heed this warning. All that has to happen is for God to turn His face away.

Arguing With God – In vv8-10 we learn first of all that even though we brought about our own troubles in our forgetful arrogance, we can and must turn to the God Who Forgives. Second, we learn from the Psalm-singer how to argue with God. "If You do not deliver me, who will praise Your name?" This kind of arguing cuts with the grain of God's character, who has brought salvation to the world "*to the praise of the glory of His grace*" (Eph 1:6, 12, 14). We see this in the life of Moses arguing with God when He declares He will destroy Israel in the wilderness (Num 14:11ff). Do you argue with God for deliverance from your temptations? Do you argue with God for your children's salvation/sanctification? Do you argue with God for your unbelieving friend? This is how we learn to grow up into maturity to become counselors to God and reign with Him in prayer.

Gladness Before God and God-Centered Presumption – Let us return, as in vv11-12, to understand what it means to rejoice and give thanks to the Lord in everything. This begins by seeing Christ as the Psalm-singer, who took our sin upon Himself, Who died for us, and Who was raised for us. This continues as we live in celebration and anticipate more and more celebration, "*to the end that my glory may sing praise to You and not be silent. O LORD my God, I will give thanks to You forever.*" If we are prodigals and have returned to our Father, He is not putting us in our room to think about how bad we have been. He intends to rejoice over us with singing and He ushers us into that dance-hall with Him. Thanksgiving and remembrance – these are the tools that protect us from self-centered presumption, apathy, and complacency. If there is mourning and repentance that needs to occur (and there is), then fine and good. But remember, "*His anger is but for a moment, His favor is for life; Weeping may endure for a night, but joy comes in the morning.*"