

Session 7 – Psalm 30: a thanksgiving song

Psalm 30

1 I will exalt you, Lord, for you lifted me out of the depths and did not let my enemies gloat over me.
2 Lord my God, I called to you for help, and you healed me.
3 You, Lord, brought me up from the realm of the dead; you spared me from going down to the pit.
4 Sing the praises of the Lord, you his faithful people; praise his holy name.
5 For his anger lasts only a moment, but his favour lasts a lifetime;
weeping may stay for the night, but rejoicing comes in the morning.
6 When I felt secure, I said, "I will never be shaken."

7 Lord, when you favoured me, you made my royal mountain stand firm;
but when you hid your face, I was dismayed.
8 To you, Lord, I called; to the Lord I cried for mercy:
9 "What is gained if I am silenced, if I go down to the pit? Will the dust praise you? Will it proclaim your faithfulness?
10 Hear, Lord, and be merciful to me; Lord, be my help."
11 You turned my wailing into dancing; you removed my sackcloth and clothed me with joy,
12 that my heart may sing your praises and not be silent.
Lord my God, I will praise you forever.

We started our 'psalmathon' in Psalm 145 – an alphabet of praise, an A-Z headlines declaration of who God is and what He is like. There was not a single cloud in the sky but we made up for that in the following weeks! There was also nothing in terms of personal testimony within it.

Psalm 30 on the other hand is a very personal psalm, full of thanksgiving for what God had done for the psalmist. It is his 'new song' (Ps 40:3) born from deep experience.

'David begins rightly by giving praise to God. He is back on level ground, where praise is the norm and is once more part of his way of life (Ps 145:1-2). This kind of praise has a deeper note to it, however, because it is occasioned by a remarkable deliverance brought about solely by divine intervention.' (Deep calls to Deep, Horsfall, p120).

- **What is the 'new song' that David could sing because of what he had experienced?**
- **How had David's experience changed or deepened?**

David refers to God's anger (v5) and that can be a difficult concept to understand. Thinking of Romans 8:28-29 and how God is working in us to make us more like Jesus, we get another perspective on 'spiritual formation' in Hebrews 12:4-11 where it talks about God disciplining us.

Notice the overtones in Heb 12:10b that link back to Rom 8 and spiritual formation – '... God disciplines us for our **good**, that we may **share in his holiness**', i.e. become more like Jesus.

The discipline is placed firmly in the context of God's love for us – 'the Lord disciplines those He loves' (12:6a). Similarly, the Rom 8 passage is also grounded in God's unshakeable and unchanging love for us in those difficult times of suffering – there is absolutely nothing that can separate us from God's love.

- **How does the Hebrews passage on God disciplining his children help our understanding of what God may be doing in the difficult times we may encounter?**
- **If we view God's actions in Psalm 30 as His discipline, what in David's life appears to be the reason for His actions?**
- **What was the effect of God's actions?**
- **How do you think this would have impacted on David as he continued his spiritual journey?**