

"I Will Extol Thee, O LORD"

Psalm 30

There is a unique pattern to this psalm that doesn't present the way most of the poetic structures of the psalms do, and the pattern is repeated twice. The pattern goes from desperation in the voice and cry of David to one of wondrous delight in, as he calls Him, "the LORD my God."

The first statement of the first verse of this psalm shows that we are to "extol" the Lord - in the good things and those challenging times, even the ones we bring on ourselves, we are to lift Him up and make much of who He is.

This Psalm was most likely written when David dedicated his personal house (or palace). It was a look forward in faith towards the temple, but it was a dedication of God's great goodness in giving him the kingdom, and the ability to build this house. Although the Bible doesn't state directly that David dedicated his home, or palace, to the Lord (outside of the introduction to Psalm 30), it does state that it should be done, and we can cross reference that text with the record of David's house being built and understand that he would have done so. Some scholars believe he would have re-dedicated it after it was defiled by Absalom when David returned to the palace as well.

Deuteronomy 20:5

⁵ And the officers shall speak unto the people, saying, What man is there that hath built a new house, and hath not dedicated it? let him go and return to his house, lest he die in the battle, and another man dedicate it.

2 Samuel 5:11-12

¹¹ And Hiram king of Tyre sent messengers to David, and cedar trees, and carpenters, and masons: and they built David an

house.

¹² And David perceived that the LORD had established him king over Israel, and that he had exalted his kingdom for his people Israel's sake.

I. DESPAIR - VS. 1-2A, 6-10

Despair is defined, in a general sense, as the complete loss or absence of hope. In the context of Psalm 30, despair can be understood as the deep sense of anguish and hopelessness that the psalmist experiences when facing significant distress, such as illness or threats from enemies.

It is unclear what caused the illness spoken of in the first three verses, but it could be a chastening of the Lord, based upon what is said in verse five. Whether or not it is, verse five clearly demonstrates chastening, only not to show despair but with the purpose of showing deliverance.

A. Vs. 1-2a - the first reference to the despair that David found himself in is seen in the phrase, "for thou hast lifted me up," as well as in the first line of verse two - "O LORD my God, I cried unto thee."

1. The phrase "lifted me up" is one that has in view a bucket attached to a rope that is let down into a well to draw water out. This view is seen in the term "the pit" in verse three to some degree.

David is praising God for delivering him from this "pit of despair," perhaps caused by some egregious sin, perhaps the sin in numbering the people that cost the lives of 70,000 men before the plague was stayed.

2 Samuel 24:15-17

¹⁵ So the LORD sent a pestilence upon Israel from the morning even to the time appointed: and there died of the people from Dan even to Beersheba seventy thousand men.

¹⁶ And when the angel stretched out his hand upon Jerusalem to destroy it, the LORD repented him of the evil, and said to the angel that destroyed the people, It is enough: stay now thine hand. And the angel of the LORD was by the threshingplace of Araunah the Jebusite.

¹⁷ And David spake unto the LORD when he saw the angel that smote the people, and said, Lo, I have sinned, and I have done wickedly: but these sheep, what have they done? let thine hand, I pray thee, be against me, and against my father's house.

2. The phrase in verse two that points to this despair is, "I cried unto thee." We've seen this term before, and it is one that means crying out for help. It indicates a cry for help out of despair – in this case, despair out of fear of death.

I believe that this nearness of death from illness was the chastening of the Lord, and we will see that this chastening had its desired effect on David – he repented, and his relationship was restored with the Lord.

Let me say here that I'm not saying that every illness or disease is an act of the chastening of the Lord. Job is an illustration of that not being the case.

- B. The second time despair is seen is in verses 6-10 where a further explanation of what caused the despair found in verses one and two is given.**

1. Pride got the best of David as recorded here and he felt himself invulnerable to anything or anyone that could come against him – vs. 6-7.

He recognized that God had blessed him with favor, but he used that favor in a prideful way. Similarly, today, we need to be careful that we don't look on the blessings that God has bestowed upon us and feel that we "have arrived," or that somehow, we are better than others because we're more blessed than they are.

2. The despair he felt is seen in the second line of verse seven – "thou didst hide thy face, and I was troubled."

- a) "Thou didst hide thy face" – David recognized from the chastening of the Lord that God's favor and help had been turned away from him. The very thing that he was prideful for was now turned into "mourning" (vs. 11).

- b) "I was troubled" – the result was confusion and a helpless feeling that one has when a position of terror. This is a very strong word showing the despair and anguish of God's favor being withheld.

3. David then makes a plea for God's help and an argument for his deliverance from death – vs. 8-10.

This, in part, shows a measure of honesty in prayer. Throughout Scripture, we find saints of God making their case, so to speak, to the Lord for their prayer, or in their prayer. In this case, David is saying God's people would be much

better off if he would live rather than die, and then he pleads for the LORD to hear him and show mercy on him so he could better serve. For this, he pleads for help, as we all should.

II. DELIVERANCE - VS. 2B-3, 5, 11

- A. The deliverance is seen in words like, "healed me," "kept me alive," "turned...my mourning into dancing," "put off my sackcloth," etc.**
- B. The purpose of chastening, as seen in these verses (specifically 5 and 11) is not to inflict pain or misery or despair, but it is to restore fellowship and a right relationship with the Father. Deliverance will come if we understand the chastening, repent of the sin and turn back to walking with the Lord.**
- C. There is a clear parallelism in verse five - this one is a contrasting or comparative parallelism rather than a synonymous one that is so common in the Psalms.**

- 1. Anger contrasted with favor
- 2. Moment with life (or in this case, lifetime)

His anger endures for a moment, but His favor endures for a lifetime (and for eternity).

- 3. Weeping with joy (literally, a joyful shout)
- 4. Night with morning

There will be weeping, but it only lasts a short time and then comes the joy and brightness and light to chase away the darkness. That's

what Jesus did for us eternally, and what He provides for us while here on earth.

D. A very similar parallelism is found in verse 11.

1. Mourning into dancing
2. Sackcloth (the mourner's apparel) with gladness

Notice the way this is put: the psalmist is saying that the LORD did the "turning," the LORD "put off" the mourner's cloth and He "girded" with "gladness."

As He brings the chastening, He will also bring the deliverance.

Hebrews 12:11

¹¹ Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby.

Job 5:17-18

¹⁷ Behold, happy is the man whom God correcteth: therefore despise not thou the chastening of the Almighty:

¹⁸ For he maketh sore, and bindeth up: he woundeth, and his hands make whole.

III. DELIGHT - vs. 4, 12

"Sing" and "give thanks" are mentioned in both of these verses.

A. "Sing"

1. The term for "sing" in both verses is one that

means to sing with musical accompaniment. It literally means to play an instrument.

2. In verse four, that call is for those assembled at the dedication to sing together with him as they all, as a congregation, are to remember the holiness of God. It is because of His holiness that we can partake of His mercy and grace (and all the other attributes that make Him who He is).
3. In verse twelve, it is David recognizing the goal of the chastening he has endured - "to the end that my glory may sing praise to thee." After the mourning was turned to gladness, the end result of the chastening as it brought him back to a right relationship with the Lord, was for David to give all the glory that he had to God - as he states it, "the LORD my God."

B. "Give thanks" - this is a parallelism of "sing."

Our singing, both congregationally and individually, is to give glory, praise, and thanks to the Lord.

Conclusion: "I will extol Thee, O LORD" - can we say that, especially going through the trials, even those that are brought on by the chastening of the Lord?

Is God's face hidden from us so that we are troubled, or have we made things right with Him?

Pastor James Moore of Houston Texas tells a story about a young man whose wife had died, leaving him with a small son. Back home from the cemetery, they went to bed early because there was nothing else he could bear to do.

As he lay there in the darkness — grief-stricken and heartbroken, the little boy broke the stillness from his little bed with a disturbing question, "Daddy, where is mommy?"

The father got up and brought the little boy to bed with him, but the child was still disturbed and restless, occasionally asking questions like "Why isn't she here?" and, "When is she coming back?"

Finally the little boy said, "Daddy, if your face is toward me, I think I can go to sleep now." And in a little while he was quiet.

The father lay there in the darkness, and then in childlike faith, prayed this prayer: "O God, I don't see how I can survive this. The future looks so miserable. But if your face is toward me, somehow I think I can make it."

God wants us to trust Him, He wants to help us (Ps. 28), He wants to turn our mourning and weeping into joy and gladness, but sometimes there is the need for chastening to restore that relationship - to have His face toward us again.