

Lesson Four – June 21

THE HEART OF PROTECTION

PSALM 30

Overview: Psalm 30 is titled “A Song for the Dedication of the Temple”, but as you begin to read the Psalms you begin to realize that the Song is more about God’s rescuing David from a sickness as reflected in verse 3: “You, Lord, brought me up from the realm of the dead, you spared me from going down to the pit.” No one can actually explain why the difference between the title and the subject of the praise song, but when you read the Psalm in its entirety you begin to see that David had gone through a period of prosperity where he felt secure and safe. (verses 6-7) But his security led to arrogance. David had forgotten that it was God who made his royal mountain stand firm, and at the height of his prideful and imperious state, God brought him back to reality as God became silent and David became ill. In the midst of this near-death experience, David cried out for God to deliver him from his pain. God heard his call and lifted him out of the depths so that his enemies would not gloat. Rather than a praise song for the dedication of the Temple, David sings his praises to God dancing with joy for what God had done for him.

What is the central focus of this Psalm? What is David telling us?

David found himself in an unusual predicament as he had experience prosperous times that gave him a false sense of security. When he should have been experiencing peace and comfort, he encountered an undisclosed difficulty that took him to the precipice of death. But instead of surrendering to the intense emotional pain, he deliberately chose to exalt the Lord. (verse 1). That purposeful shift in focus helped David to experience God’s presence with him in his circumstances and to rest in the surety of the Lord’s control and protection. David is telling us that even in the most difficult and trying situations we should stay faithful to God.

Progression or Steps that lead to a deeper relationship with God

The progression is easy to follow because it is one that we tend to get caught up in even when we know better. Just like David, we follow God demonstrating our faithfulness and then we begin to get settled in and comfortable in our surroundings. Prosperity comes our way and we become arrogant and prideful

about our success. Overconfident, we become presumptuous, confident, and bold. Before we know it, however, we get caught in a situation that we did not anticipate as the pain and agony set in. Then when we are broken and near the bottom of the pit, we cry out to God who comes to rescue us. It is in the midst of this when we find joy and peace as we feel the presence of God lift us out of the depths. Then with joy, we sing songs of praise rejoicing in what God has done for us. The steps that lead to a deeper relationship with God take us on a path of prosperity, overconfidence, pain, and praise. God is there for us but when we develop a sense of arrogance and overconfidence, we will find that God is silent and as the difficult times come our way, we come to our senses crying out to God for His help. This progression is evident in our own lives today to the same extent that it was evident in David's life.

How does this impact your walk with God?

Jesus demonstrated this principle to his disciples in a tangible way as they struggled mightily through a fierce storm as their boat was battered by unrelenting wind and waves, and Jesus was asleep in the stern. As the storm raged and anxiety and fear seemed to be winning, the disciples woke Jesus. He calmed the wind and the waves and then asked the disciples, "Why are you so afraid? Do you still have no faith? (Mark 4:40). Instead of simply removing his followers from the raging gale, Christ was with the disciples in the midst of the storm, teaching the disciples a deeper truth than they were expecting; that he is Lord over all things. As his resurrection from the dead later proved, not even death could overpower him (1 Co 15:55-57) Through his sacrifice and triumph over sin, he imparts to believers the certain hope of resurrection and eternal life.

Though this life may be filled with pain of loss, the confusion of disappointment and the sting of rejection, we can be assured that through faith in Jesus, God is always present with us even in our most difficult trials. He will protect us and help us through our storms. But more importantly, we can faithfully trust in the certainty of our eternal destination, knowing that "weeping may stay for the night, but rejoicing comes in the morning." (Psalm 30:5) Can you recall a time when you tried to go through a difficult situation without turning to Jesus for protection? How difficult has it been for you to turn your struggles over to Jesus?