

Psalm 30 ... The journey out of sorrow into joy

Psalm 30 ... Translated with notes and meditations by Lynn C. Bauman and published in "Ancient Songs Sung Anew: the psalms as poetry"ⁱ

1. It is you I praise, my God, you took me by the hand to lift me high up off the ground. You did not let my adversaries trample over me God, when I called out to you, you heard my cry for help and nursed me back to health again
2. I was dying and you revived me. It is you who saved my life when I was spiraling down.
3. Let everyone who serves you praise the sacred name we know and now confess.
4. If indeed you are ever angry, God, it flashes out for one brief moment and then is gone, But your kindness never fades even for an instant. It is life itself.
5. Tears may wash me through the night, but when the morning breaks your joy awaits.
6. Once in great prosperity, with grace abounding, foolishly I said, "I will never be disturbed. I am as strong and sure as any mountain.
7. But suddenly, it was as if you were not there. It was as though your face had turned away. I found myself in deep despair.
8. I called, I cried, I begged for pity, Lord.
9. I argued with you. "God," I said, "What good would it do you if I vanished into death?"
10. "And would the dust that's left when I am gone keep promise or speak your praise?"
11. "Lord, listen, hear and help me now," I pled and prayed.
12. Then suddenly, you turned my morning into dancing, you stripped the rags of grief away and wrapped me round with your astounding joy.

13. Now from my heart there pours unceasing song, a voice with music and praise, that will sing on to you forever.

ⁱ **Note:** This is a Psalm of deep personal experience and insight into the inner nature of God, and the difference that exist between our human view points and sentiments and the divine response. The psalmist struggles with life and the sense of grief, but out of that experience comes insight into the nature of God and how to evaluate and understand God's nature.

Meditations:

1. As you meditate upon this psalm, plot or chart the course of the psalmist's relationship to God. It unfolds over time and through hard-won experiences. Have you ever had similar experiences?
2. Verses 7-14 express one particular experience of God. The impression is that it takes place perhaps in a youthful mode of deep confidence. What would be the purpose of such sudden shifts in the sense of the divine Presence? Is it the psalmist, or is there some teaching taking place here that we each will learn or need to learn? What might that teaching be?
3. The contrast between depression and despair and joy are great in this Psalm. What is the experience of joy? Is it simply that the problem of life are resolved in your favor, or is there something more and deeper than this?