

## PSALM 30

## A DEDICATION PSALM

The title of this composition reads, “A Psalm and song at the dedication of the house of David.” It is possible that this Psalm was intended to be sung at the building of that house of cedar which David constructed for himself when he had become a great king, and when he no longer had to hide himself from Saul in the cave of Adullam. In this light, we may observe that it is right for the believer – when moving – to dedicate his new home to the Lord. We should call together our Christian friends, and show them that wherever we dwell, God dwells; and wherever we have a tent, the Lord has an altar.

But we believe that this Psalm is chiefly referring to David’s dedication of the plot of ground where he intended the Temple to be built. Hence it was a song of faith, since David never lived to actually see this house of Jehovah being built. And it was also a Psalm of praise; for a sore judgment had just been stopped, and a great sin on David’s part had been forgiven. He had ordered a census to be taken for prideful and vain-glorious purposes (2 Sam. 24); and as a punishment, the Lord sent a destroying pestilence throughout the land. But when the Lord, in mercy, told the avenging angel to cease the slaughter of the people; David purchased the threshing-floor of Ornan, offered sacrifices to the Lord, and then dedicated that spot as the place where his son Solomon was to construct the Temple.

So we see that David had been greatly afflicted, both personally and nationally, after presumptuously imagining himself to be secure. When God’s children prosper in one way, they are generally tried in another; for there are very few of us who can bear prosperity unmingled with adversity. Even the joys of hope need to be mixed with the pains of experience – especially when comfort breeds carnal security and self-confidence in us. Nevertheless, as we see in the historical narrative (2 Sam. 24) that corresponds with this Psalm, pardon speedily followed David’s repentance, and God’s mercy was glorified! Hence this composition is a song, and not a complaint.

**Overview of the Psalm, adapted from Charles Spurgeon:**

*Let this Psalm be read in the light of the last days of David, when he had numbered the people and God had chastened him, and then – in mercy – had bidden the angel of vengeance to sheathe his sword. On the floor of Ornan, the poet-king received the inspiration which glows in this delightful ode. It is the Psalm of David’s commemoration of the cessation of the plague, by dedicating the site of Ornan’s threshing-floor to be the place where the Temple was later to be built.*

*In verses 1-3, David extols the Lord for delivering him; in verses 4 and 5, he invites the saints to unite with him in celebrating Divine compassion; in verses 6 and 7, he confesses the fault for which he was chastened; verse 8 repeats the supplication which he offered; and verses 9-12 conclude the Psalm by commemorating his deliverance and vowing everlasting praise.*

In the first five verses, we are taught that the great things which the Lord has done for us – both by His Providence and by His grace – bind us in gratitude to do all that we can to advance His Kingdom among the human race, although the most that we can do may only be a little. God’s saints in heaven sing to Him and openly proclaim His praises; why should not His people on earth do the same? There is not one of all His perfections that strikes more terror in the hearts of the wicked, or ministers more comfort to the hearts of the Godly, than His holiness; and it is a good sign that we are at least striving to be imitators of that holiness if we can heartily rejoice at the remembrance of it (verse 4). If we have the enjoyment of the Lord’s favor, we have enough. “His anger endureth but a moment; in his favor is life: weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning!” (verse 5)

In the remaining verses (6-12) of this Psalm, we learn how prone we are – when things are well with us – to imagine that that they will always be so. When we realize this mistake, it is fitting for us to think with shame upon our foolish carnal security, as David did. If the Lord hides His face, a person who is truly His child will be very greatly trou-



bled; and with the Holy Spirit’s influence, this will be enough to make him or her seek Him again, and relinquish any trust that they may be placing in the things of this world. It would be even greater folly to turn away from Him even further in such a case! Let us pray to Him for grace to learn how to cry out to Him and seek His face, even when we find ourselves in the dark. The sanctified heart, which returns to God, shall praise Him; and it shall continue to praise Him. The services of the Lord’s house cannot be performed by the dust; the grave is the land of silence; and so we do right to ask the Lord for life, so that we may live to praise and thank His name. In due time, He will deliver us out of all our troubles and turn our mourning into happiness, just as He did in the Psalmist’s case. Therefore, it is only fitting that our tongues should be employed in giving glory to His name – persevering in praise until the end of our days, when we shall enter that world where praise shall be our everlasting work and joy!

*Lord Jesus, we repent of times when we have become guilty of indulging in carnal security and boasting that we shall never be moved. But we also give You thanks that You do not leave us in our state of carnal security; for although You seem to turn away Your face from us, it is only for a moment so that we may come to ourselves, relinquish our trust in the things of this world, and seek You again! Amen.*