

PSALM TWENTY-NINE AND THIRTY

to that great far-off event to which the whole creation moves. The God of nature is the God of grace. Jehovah is no tribal God, but the Maker of heaven and earth.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. "Thy will be done on earth *as it is* in heaven" so prayed our Lord. Read verses one and two. Shall we not here also imitate angels? How?
2. What are the "sacred garments" or "the beauty of holiness" with which we are to be dressed before we worship before Him?
3. "This surely is one of the most graphic descriptions of a thunderstorm in all literature." Please work out and discuss the two parts: vs. 3-6 and vs. 7-9.
4. Notice how often God is named or referred to in these eleven verses. God is in the storm. Is God in the storms of our lives today? Discuss.
5. While the storm rages on earth in the temple of Jehovah all the angels are saying—or singing "glory". Discuss the significance. (vs. 9).

PSALM 30

DESCRIPTIVE TITLE

A Song of Joy on Recovery from Sickness.

ANALYSIS

Stanza I., vers. 1-3, Declaration of Praise and its Occasion. Stanza II., vers. 4, 5, Call on Levites to Praise, with Words Supplied. Stanza III., vers. 6, 7, Record of Experience Prior to the Sickness. Stanza IV., vers. 8-10, The Prayer offered During the Sickness. Stanza V., vers. 11, 12, Great Joy Beautifully Expressed.

(Lh.) Psalm—Song of the Dedication of the House¹—By David.

1 I exalt thee Jehovah for thou hast drawn me up,
and hast not gladdened my foes concerning me!

1. Cp. prob. 2 Sam. 5:11, 12.

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- 2 Jehovah my God!
I cried for help unto thee—and thou didst heal me:
- 3 Jehovah!
thou hast brought up out of hades my soul,
hast restored me to life from among them who were going
down to the pit.
- 4 Make melody to Jehovah ye his men of kindness,
and give thanks unto his Holy Memorial:¹
- 5 “Surely a moment² in his anger—
a lifetime³ in his favour;
At eventide there cometh to lodge—Weeping,
but by morning Jubilation!”⁴
- 6 But I had said in my careless ease—
“I shall not be shaken to the ages.”
- 7 Jehovah!
In thy good pleasure thou hadst given stability to mountains
of strength:⁵
thou didst hide thy face—I became dismayed!
- 8 Unto thee Jehovah I continued crying—⁶
yea unto Adonay⁷ making supplication:—
- 9 “What profit in my blood when I descend into the pit?
will dust thank⁸ thee? declare thy truth!
- 10 Hear O Jehovah and be gracious unto me!
Jehovah! become thou a helper to me!”
- 11 Thou hast turned my lamentation into a dance for me,
thou hast loosed my sackcloth and girded me with gladness;
- 12 That my glory¹⁰ may make melody to thee and not be still:
Jehovah my God! to the ages will I thank thee.

(Lm.) To the Chief Musician.

1. “Poet, for ‘name’: cp. Ex. 3:15, Ps. 135:13”—Dr.
2. Cp. Isa. 54:7.
3. Or: “life” (on and on).
4. Or: “a ringing cry.”
5. So *Gt.*—Gn. “Thou hadst established strength for my mountain”—
Dr. But Br. (w. Sep., Syr., Vul.): “thou didst cause mine honour to stand
firm in strength.”
6. “Imperfects referring to past experience, and therefore frequentatives
implying oft-repeated importunate prayer”—Br. Cp. 2 K. 19:14-20.
7. Some cod. (w. 1 ear. pr. edn.): “Jehovah.”
8. Cp. 6:4, n.
9. Cp. Isa. 38:18.
10. So it shd. be (w. Sep., Syr.). Cp. 108:1—Gn. For “glory” in the
like sense, see 16:9, 57:8, 108:1.

PSALM THIRTY
PARAPHRASE

PSALM 30

I will praise You, Lord, for You have saved me from my enemies. You refuse to let them triumph over me.

2 O Lord my God, I pled with You, and You gave me my health again.

3 You brought me back from the brink of the grave, from death itself, and here I am alive!

4 Oh, sing to Him you saints of His; give thanks to His holy name.

5 His anger lasts a moment; His favor lasts for life! Weeping may go on all night, but in the morning there is joy.

6, 7 In my prosperity I said, "This is forever; nothing can stop me now! The Lord has shown me His favor. He has made me steady as a mountain."

Then, Lord, You turned Your face away from me and cut off Your river of blessings.¹ Suddenly my courage was gone; I was terrified and panic-stricken.

8 I cried to You, O Lord; oh, how I pled:

9 "What will You gain, O Lord, from killing me? How can I praise You then to all my friends?² How can my dust in the grave speak out and tell the world about Your faithfulness?"

10 Hear me, Lord; oh, have pity and help me."

11 Then He turned my sorrow into joy! He took away my clothes of mourning and gave me gay and festive garments to rejoice in

12 So that I might sing glad praises to the Lord instead of lying in silence in the grave. O Lord my God, I will keep on thanking You forever!

EXPOSITION

This psalm appears to be so full of Hezekiah, that the wonder is, where David can be found. And yet there is but little unsuited to David's time, if we had but the biographical details to identify one or two more incidents of his life which seem to be here memorialised. Perowne's suggestion is good, that the *dedication* alluded to in the inscription, was perhaps the dedication of his own house, "the building of which he seems to have

1. Implied.

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regarded as a pledge of the security and prosperity of his kingdom" (2 Sam. 5:11, 12). "We must however still suppose that he had suffered just before from a sickness, about which the history is silent." There is nothing surprising in such silence, and we must not be unreasonably exacting in seeking for the historical occasions giving birth to individual psalms. (Yet see, *post*, on Pss. 38 and 41.) We may at least feel satisfied that we are within the charmed circle of psalm-production. For when, in the case of this psalm, we do advert to the co-authorship of King Hezekiah,—we discover Hezekian incidents starting out of every stanza. By the help of the references any reader can verify this for himself. Briggs makes an apt reference from the "moment" of this psalm to the "small moment" of Isa. 54:7. Nevertheless, we must regard as futile the attempt to establish the position that the seeming *individual* whose deliverance is here celebrated was the nation of Israel. Far rather, may we reverse the process—especially when the so-called "Second" Isaiah is discovered to be the well-known Isaiah himself—by permitting the King here in the psalm to celebrate the almost momentary brevity of his own trial; and then find, in its most fitting place, the great prophecy itself, the Prophet's improvement of the royal incident, with which we know he was perfectly familiar: "Like as the hiding of Jehovah's face from our beloved King was but as for a moment; so, O Israel, when the long vista of future blessedness opens before thee, shall all the grief of thy long forlorn condition appear to thee in retrospect as having been but for 'a small moment.'" In deference to Dr. Thirtle, we may imagine Isaiah to have added: "Even as the weary months of the Assyrian invasion shall appear to the nation to have been but 'for a moment,' when the glorious fifteen years of assured prosperity have well set in."

Perhaps the one reflection most apt to arise in the devout mind on the reading of this psalm will be, the grateful recognition of the selective power with which the human mind is endowed, whereby it can suffer long months or years of suffering to contract themselves into practically a short compass, comparatively a "moment," while the mercies of the past can be counted lingeringly one by one, and allowed to extend into a long line of blessings. *At eventide cometh to lodge Weeping—in the morning, Jubilation.*

PSALM THIRTY AND THIRTY-ONE

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. All of us can remember the exhilaration we felt when once the fever of flu left us, or the nausea; we awoke one morning and we were no longer sick. This seems to be the background of this Psalm. Perhaps the sickness was more serious than flu. Perhaps we have been healed from another sickness. Discuss.
2. "At eventide there cometh to lodge, Weeping, but by morning, Jubilation." There are other translations of verse 5, discuss them.
3. There are some beautiful contrasts; discuss these: anger and favour, a moment and a lifetime, evening and morning, weeping and joy, mourning and dancing, sackcloth and festive attire.
4. Verse nine seems to suggest that man has one primary task on earth—what is it? How do we fulfill it?
5. This is a song of dedication of the House—why isn't it used at a church dedication? Discuss.

PSALM 31

DESCRIPTIVE TITLE

Fellowship in Suffering and Salvation.

ANALYSIS

Stanzas I. and II., vers. 1-4, and 5-8, Suffering, caused chiefly by enemies, some of them Idolatrous, Overcome by Steadfast Faith. Stanza III., vers. 9-12, The Lament of a Leper. Stanza IV., vers. 13-16, A complaint of conspiracy, concluded with confidence of Salvation. Stanza V., vers. 17, 18, Prayer for Vindication from the Lawless. Stanza VI., vers. 19, 20, Jehovah's Goodness Admired. Stanza VII., vers. 21, 22, Praise for a Special Deliverance from an Alarming Danger. Stanza VIII., vers. 23, 24, Closing Exhortation to Love, Confidence and Courage.

(Lm.) Psalm—By David.

- 1 In thee Jehovah have I taken refuge—
oh shame me not to the ages deliver me: