

3rd Sunday of Easter Responsorial Psalm

[Ps 30:2, 4, 5-6, 11-12, 13](#)

Responsorial Psalm

R. (2a) **I will praise you, Lord, for you have rescued me.**

or:

R. **Alleluia.**

I will extol you, O LORD, for you drew me clear
and did not let my enemies rejoice over me.

O LORD, you brought me up from the netherworld;
you preserved me from among those going down into the pit.

R. **I will praise you, Lord, for you have rescued me.**

or:

R. **Alleluia.**

Sing praise to the LORD, you his faithful ones,
and give thanks to his holy name.

For his anger lasts but a moment;
a lifetime, his good will.

At nightfall, weeping enters in,
but with the dawn, rejoicing.

R. **I will praise you, Lord, for you have rescued me.**

or:

R. **Alleluia.**

Hear, O LORD, and have pity on me;

O LORD, be my helper.

You changed my mourning into dancing;

O LORD, my God, forever will I give you thanks.

R. **I will praise you, Lord, for you have rescued me.**

or:

R. **Alleluia.**

Jerome Biblical Commentary

30:1–3. I will extol thee, O LORD, a promise of praise. **For thou hast lifted me up.** The image used here is that of a bucket drawing water out of a well. The psalmist views himself as having been pulled from the mire of tribulation. **Thou hast healed me.** The plague that came upon the people of Israel as a result of their king's sin (see II Sam 24 or I Chron 21) brought both mental and physical suffering to the land. David's healing was the removal of that plague. **O LORD, thou hast brought up my soul from the grave.** It was as if David was on the very edge of death itself when the Lord brought him back into a position of favor.

4–5. Sing unto the LORD. In the midst of desolation the psalmist manages a song of praise unto the Lord. **For his anger endureth but a moment; in his favor is life.** The meaning is reinforced by the expression **Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning.** Weeping all night is common for the restless heart. But when we lay those burdens at the feet of Jesus, the Sun of Righteousness, joy comes in the morning to relieve us of that burden (I Pet 5:7; cf. Job 33:26; Isa 26:20; 54:7).

6–7. And in my prosperity I said, I shall never be moved. Prosperity had worked an ill effect on the psalmist and had made him self-confident and proud. But something happened; **thou didst hide thy face, and I was troubled.** When God was displeased, He turned his face from him; and suddenly David realized the folly of his ways (I Chr 21:7–12). A dreadful plague which killed 70,000 men in one day was sent. Feeling the coolness of God's face turned from him, David was indeed troubled.

8–9. I cried to thee, O LORD (cf. II Sam 24:17; I Chr 21:17). David's question to God was a legitimate one: **What profit is there in my blood, when I go down to the pit?** Would there be advantage to God if He killed His servant with the plague? **Shall the dust praise thee?** In death, the mouth of God's servant would be silent, as silent as the dust.

10–12. Hear, O LORD ... be thou my helper. A prayer for God's mercy is quickly uttered (cf. 54:4; Heb 13:6). But the prayer uttered in distress also exhibits a confidence in the result. **Thou hast turned for me my mourning into dancing.** Suddenly, all was changed. God had done a wonderful thing in the life of David His servant; and David could only say **O LORD my God, I will give thanks unto thee for ever.**

KJV Bible commentary. 1997, c1994. Thomas Nelson: Nashville

Haydock's Catholic Commentary

David praiseth God for his deliverance, and his merciful dealings with him.

Ver. 1. Dedication, when David sung after he had (Haydock) built a magnificent palace, 2 Kings v. (Worthington) --- *David's, ledavid,* or "to David," which some rather join with *Psalm,* (Muis) and explain the *house* of the tabernacle or temple; though it seems more probably to relate to the altar, which David erected, after the pestilence (Calmet) had destroyed 70,000, 2 Kings xxiv. 25. There seems to be nothing respecting a dedication in the psalm; whence we may conjecture that the title is not very authentic. The Greeks (Berthier) prefixed "unto the end," in the Roman Septuagint, but not Grabe's, &c. (Haydock) --- The Rabbins inform us that this psalm was used when people brought their first fruits to the temple, and that it will be sung at the dedication of the temple, which they expect the Messiah will erect. (Selden, Syn. iii. 13.) --- The Fathers explain it of Christ's resurrection. (Calmet) --- It may be put in the mouth of a just man leaving this world. (Berthier) --- the title of *Psalm,* most properly belongs to those which were played upon instruments; as a *canticle* refers to vocal music. When the instrument preceded, it was called *A psalm of a canticle;* as *a canticle of a psalm* intimated that man gave out the psalm, and instruments followed. (Worthington) --- These distinctions are given by St. Chrysostom, &c. (Menochius)

Ver. 2. Extol. Or publish thy great goodness and power, (Haydock) in the same sense as we say *Hallowed be thy name.* (Berthier) --- Though God can receive no increase of glory, we must shew our gratitude. (Worthington) --- *Me.* Thou hast not suffered my people to be wholly destroyed, nor myself to perish in consequence of my vain curiosity. (Calmet) --- David sings this psalm in thanksgiving for his many deliverances. (Worthington)

Ver. 3. Healed me. I expected to die every moment, and I had made choice of the scourge of pestilence, that I might not be more screened than my subjects, 2 Kings xxiv. 13. (Calmet)

Ver. 4. Hell. Preserving me from great dangers of sinning, (Worthington) or from death. --- *Saved.* Hebrew, "granted me life." This may all be explained of Christ's resurrection. (Calmet)

Ver. 5. Saints. Hebrew, "who have obtained mercy." Priests and faithful people come to return thanks, because God has turned away the scourge. (Calmet) --- *Memory*, or name, Exodus iii. 15. (Calmet) --- It is from God, and not from ourselves, that holiness comes. (Worthington)

Ver. 6. Wrath, which is a short fury. (Menochius) (Isaias liv. 7.) --- Hebrew, "momentary is his indignation;" or rather, "from his indignation comes destruction," *roga*, as the Septuagint constantly (Haydock) agree, Job xx. 5., and Isaias xxviii. 12., &c. (Calmet) --- "The miseries which are inflicted, are in consequence of his indignation." (Prin. dis. Berthier)--- We are not miserable unless we have deserved it. (St. Augustine) --- Even in chastising, God considers our welfare. (Worthington) --- He takes no pleasure in our torments, but delights to crown us with life and happiness. (Haydock) --- Eternal joys are the fruits of the short sorrows of this world, (Berthier) which is represented as one night or *evening*. (Haydock) --- A few moments ago Jerusalem expected nothing but destruction. Thus the apostles grieved till Christ rose again; (Calmet) and the life of the just is a constant vicissitude of sorrow and of comfort. (Worthington)

Ver. 7. Moved. David thought himself invincible; and, out of vanity, ordered his subjects to be numbered. God shewed his displeasure only for three days, and all was in confusion, ver. 8. (Calmet) --- Though we may imagine that we are firmly established, we must acknowledge that all our strength is derived from God, who sometimes leaves us to experience our own weakness. (Worthington)

Ver. 8. Beauty. So Septuagint and Syriac have read *ledre*, (Calmet) instead of *leharri*, "my mountain," Sion, which David had taken from the Jebusites. The sense is much the same, though the reading of the Septuagint seem more natural. Symmachus has followed another copy. (Berthier) --- "Thou hast given strength to my first father." (Calmet) --- The present Hebrew is rejected by Houbigant, (Berthier) though it be conformable to Aquila, St. Jerome, &c. How necessary is it for us to be convinced, that all we have is the gift of God! (Haydock) --- In prosperity man is too apt to give way to presumption. (Berthier) --- David had yielded to this temptation, not being sufficiently aware how jealous God is of his rights. (Calmet) --- He confesses this mistake. Hebrew, "I was terrified." (Menochius)

Ver. 9. Will I. We must not cease to pray, (Worthington) as we are always beset with enemies. (Haydock) --- This text may be explained, "I prayed," that I might suffer instead of my people, 4 Kings xxiv. 17. (Calmet) --- But here the prophet seems rather to beg that he may not die, in order that he may publish God's praises. (Haydock)

Ver. 10. Profit. The wicked on his death bed, cannot pray thus, as the justice of God is interested to punish his crimes, and to prevent their continuance. After death there is no merit; so that we ought to make good use of our time. (Berthier) --- *Corruption.* The Fathers explain this of Jesus Christ. What good will my death procure, if I do not rise again? (Origen; St. Jerome) --- *Truth.* See Psalm lxxxvii. 11., and Baruch ii. 17. (Calmet) --- The dead cannot make their voice heard in this world, though they may praise God in the other. (Menochius)

Ver. 11. The Lord. Hebrew points determine, "Lord, hear," &c. But the Greek interpreters agree with the Vulgate, which seems better. (Berthier) --- St. Jerome, however, make this a prayer. "Hear," &c. (Haydock)

Ver. 12. Joy. When thou orderest the angel, 2 Kings xxiv. 16. (Calmet) --- *Sackcloth*, of human nature, which was *cut*, and the price of our redemption came forth. (St. Augustine; St. Jerome) --- Thou hast changed my mourning weeds for robes of joy. (Du Hamel)

Ver. 13. Regret. Or be filled with grief, *compungar*. (Haydock) --- Hebrew, "that glory may sing

thee, (or thy praise) and may not be silent." (St. Jerome; Symmachus) (Haydock) --- Glory often signifies the tongue. (Du Hamel) --- *My* is added, to shew that this was David's glory, (Haydock) who considered God in all events. (Berthier) --- Protestants supply the word *my*. (Haydock) --- Chaldean, "that the great ones of the world may praise thee incessantly." --- *Ever*. In this my happy change. (Worthington) --- Those who suppose that David sung this, when he purified his house from the abominations of Absalom, explain his illness (ver. 2.) to mean the anxiety caused by that revolt, 2 Kings xvi. 21. (Bossuet) (Calmet) --- He gives thanks for the favour which God had shown him on that, or on any other occasion. (Haydock) --- He might consider this purifying as a sort of dedication, as it was customary to dedicate even private houses, Deuteronomy xx. 5. (Calmet)

Daily Bible Study Series (non-Catholic)

FROM SORROW TO JOY

Psalm 30:1–12

A Psalm of David.

A song at the dedication of the temple.

¹I will extol thee, O Lord, for thou has drawn me up,
and hast not let my foes rejoice over me.

²O Lord my God, I cried to thee for help,
and thou hast healed me.

³O Lord, thou hast brought up my soul from Sheol,
restored me to life from among those gone down to the Pit.

⁴Sing praises to the Lord, O you his saints,
and give thanks to his holy name.

⁵For his anger is but for a moment,
and his favour is for a lifetime.

Weeping may tarry for the night,
but joy comes with the morning.

⁶As for me, I said in my prosperity,
"I shall never be moved."

⁷By thy favour, O Lord,
thou hadst established me as a strong mountain;
thou didst hide thy face,
I was dismayed.

⁸To thee, O Lord, I cried;
and to the Lord I made supplication:

⁹“What profit is there in my death,
if I go down to the Pit?

Will the dust praise thee?

Will it tell of thy faithfulness?

¹⁰Hear, O Lord, and be gracious to me!
O Lord, be thou my helper!”

¹¹Thou hast turned for me my mourning into dancing;
thou has loosed my sackcloth
and girded me with gladness,

¹²that my soul may praise thee and not be silent.

O Lord my God, I will give thanks to thee for ever.

Which dedication of which temple is referred to here we cannot say, whether it is David’s choice of a particular rock to site an altar to the Lord (1 Chron. 21:18–26), or Solomon’s dedication of his temple (1 Kings 8), or the dedication of the Second Temple in 515 B.C. (Ezra 6:16), or even the re-dedication of that temple by Judas Maccabaeus in 164 B.C. after its desecration by the Seleucid king of Syria and his general Lysias (1 Maccabees 4:36–59). So it could apply even to the dedication of our own local church building at the street corner! But whichever was the event, the act of dedication certainly led—or leads today—from sorrow to joy.

Knowing God from worship has done a great thing for me, says our psalmist, for *thou hast drawn me up*. We human beings like to think in terms of up-and-down. At one moment we are down in the depths, at the next we are up in the clouds. Down marks sorrow; up marks joy. Perhaps that is why all peoples put heaven “up there”, and hell “down below”, even when they know that the earth rotates. God has pulled me up, then, says our poet, out of misery into joy. In saying so he does not necessarily imply that his misery was like that of Jeremiah when he was literally down below ground in a dungeon. For Jeremiah could also say metaphorically “My enemies have dug a pit to take me” (Jer. 18:22). Nor does he suggest that he has recovered from a severe illness from which God had “raised him up”. But he does say that, whatever he was rescued from, God’s act was one of *healing*. Clearly there is no line (as Jesus shows us at Mark 2:10–11) between sickness of the body and sickness of the soul or psyche. God is the *great* Physician of all ills. Ambroise Paré, the father of modern French surgery, once said: “*Je le pansais, Dieu le guérit.*”—“I dressed his wounds, God healed him.”

When, at verse 4, he says *You are his saints*, he is using a word built from the noun *hesed* we have encountered so often. The latter means “loyal-love” and much more, the covenant term we have examined. God’s *saints* are thus the members of the Covenant People of God, the people who walk in God’s loving care and who seek to pass his love on to others as a result.

His holy *name*. What is his name? It is *the Lord*. In English that word covers the name

Yahweh which God used to reveal himself to Moses (Exod. 6:2–8). “The name”, we recall, was intended to be an exact description of its owner. But this time the Hebrew is not *shem* (name) but *zecher*, “the means by which one remembers him, the description through which one calls him to mind”. But that is the same thing as his name! (1 Cor. 11:25 follows this usage.) Note, then, how in this passage the essentials of the divine Name are revealed by recalling that:

- (1) God had already made promises to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.
- (2) He had made covenant with them.
- (3) He had promised them a land.
- (4) He had redeemed Israel from slavery in Egypt.
- (5) He is the God who *keeps on remembering* his covenant.
- (6) Who takes Israel as his people.
- (7) Who promises to be Israel’s God.
- (8) In such a manner that “They shall *know* who I am”.
- (9) And now he has revealed himself as my Doctor!

So the name *Lord* means all these things, and more. Thus when we, his *saints*, give thanks in our newly-dedicated local church we give thanks to *his holy name*, we give thanks that he is actually like all that we have tried to list. But there is more to add. There is a *flash in his anger*, we find, and to that we add, *there is life in his acceptance* (of us), to translate the two phrases literally. The effect of this upon us is to give us assurance that our weeping is only for a *night*, but *joy comes with the morning*. It cannot be otherwise, for God is there himself in the morning. Consequently, says the psalmist, *As for me, I said in my quiet* (of heart), the moments of weeping don’t count; because the God I worship is the Rock. This God has made covenant with me; and so in consequence, *I shall never be moved*. Moreover, by accepting me (the word we have just used above) he has actually imputed his own rock-like quality to me!

It seems that the Lord tested our psalmist again (verse 7b), just at the moment when the latter had discovered that he himself was now meant to act like a rock to others. Would he be able to remain firm? He complains: In that little *flash of anger* in which *You hid your face, I was dismayed*. I wasn’t ready to try out my new self-awareness as a rock to others. (Surely that is what public worship helps me to do—as we saw at verse 1.) I was very forthright in the way I dared speak to God—“Lord, what use am I to You if You let me slip down into the Pit? How can I sing Your praises if I am dead? So listen to me, Lord, and help me!”

Perhaps, by verse 11, he had told the whole story of his doubts and described his theological difficulties to the temple minister. The latter has evidently now helped him to recover his assurance (his rock-likeness) that, despite all appearances, he *is* still rock (verse 7)! So now he gratefully exclaims that God has heard his cry, and has turned his mourning into dancing (literally, the “twist”—this sounds very modern!). A professor of anthropology has said: “The Pacific Islanders are the happiest people on this earth. They love to sing, they love to play, they love to dance. This is because they begin the day with prayer and they end the day with prayer.”

Then the poet says a truly biblical thing. With the help of the Greek text (see [RSV ftn.](#)) we see that he exclaims: “*In order that my glory may hymn You, and I may never be silent.*” A

man has of course no glory of his own. "To God alone be glory," we say. But just as God imputed his own rock-like nature to a mere human being (verse 7) so, by grace, he imputes his own glory to mankind too. You can see it in a person's change of character. As Psalm 8 says, "*O Lord my God, I will praise You for all eternity*, for it will be Your own eternal glory which will be speaking through my lips." At last, then, the psalmist has learned the truth. When he cries "Lord, help me!" (as at verse 10), the Lord has in fact all the time been present *in* his very cry to the Lord!

[RSV](#) Revised Standard Version of the Bible.

[ftn.](#) Footnote to a verse in the RSV.

Knight, G. A. F. 2001, c1982. *Psalms : Volume 1*. The Daily study Bible series. Westminster John Knox Press: Louisville