

Scripture

Psalm 126

¹ When the LORD restored the fortunes of Zion,
we were like those who dream.

² Then our mouth was filled with laughter,
and our tongue with shouts of joy;
then it was said among the nations,
“The LORD has done great things for them.”

³ The LORD has done great things for us,
and we rejoiced.

⁴ Restore our fortunes, O LORD,
like the watercourses in the Negeb.

⁵ May those who sow in tears
reap with shouts of joy.

⁶ Those who go out weeping,
bearing the seed for sowing,
shall come home with shouts of joy,
carrying their sheaves.

Devotional

Psalm 126 is one of the Psalms of Ascents (Psalms 120 through 134). It is often thought that the Psalms of Ascents were sung by the Israelites as they were on pilgrimage to Jerusalem, as they were “going up,” as they were “ascending,” the hill of Zion to worship at the Temple.

The season of Lent is a pilgrimage, a spiritual journey to Jerusalem, a journey to the Cross of Christ. Psalm 126 invites us to think about joy during our Lenten pilgrimage. Verses 1-3 speak of the joy that the people of God have because of what God has already done. Verses 4-6 anticipate the joy that the people of God will have because of what God will do in the future.

On our Lenten journey, we rejoice when we think about what God has already done for us. And we look forward to the ways in which God is going to continue to work in our lives. We see the darkness of Good Friday. But beyond Good Friday is Easter, when the tears of mourning of which the Psalmist speaks will become a harvest of joy.

Prayer

LORD, we rejoice in the great things you have done for us. And we rejoice when we think about all the things that you are going to do for us in the future. Be with us during these solemn days of Lenten pilgrimage. May our tears of mourning become a harvest of joy. Amen.