

LENT DEVOTIONAL

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LENTEN DEVOTIONAL MARCH 24, 2022

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

Sometimes during Lent, we feel as if we are in a place of exile, away from the joy and comfort of all that is familiar. Sometimes in the midst of the stress of life and the challenges of the situations around us, we also feel that way. That was where the children of Israel were for many years. But today's psalm is the promise of the end of that exile for the children of Israel and for us.

The hopeful expectation is that God will bring us back to a home base. And we, like the children of Israel, move as in a dream. That is the state of delight that seems too good to be true. To once again be surrounded by all that is comforting, that is filled with good memories that have sustained us during times of trouble and exile. You know those times, in the midst of difficulties, when you remember the goodness of a place or event. But God returns us, not to memory, but to the reality of that place that feels like home. That is what God has for us at the end of the struggles and isolation that we face. That is the focus of the first three verses of this psalm: the delight of being restored to our home place.

The joy is that the Lord has done great things for us. We see them more clearly when we have come through the times of exile, the times of struggle and alienation. But there is more to the psalm. It is a prayer that God will restore all that we have lost, that our sorrow and tears will be turned to joy and plenty. This is a prayer that the restoration will be complete.

Where are you at this point in Lent? Maybe still feeling exiled, away from all that you love, as you experience the discipline and direction of God? Perhaps recovering from tears of sorrow and loss? Or maybe ready to enter again into God's joy for you? Wherever you are on your journey, may you be able to say with the psalmist, "The Lord had done great things for us."

PRAYER

God, we thank you that you bring us back to a home base. You sustain us with comfort, memories, and goodness in the midst of our difficulties. And we look forward to when memories will no longer be needed, because we will enter the reality of home. Amen.

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