

Worship on the Journey

{the songs of ascent}

The Journey and Joy

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 they said among the nations, "The LORD has done great things for them."
- 3 The LORD has done great things for us; we are glad.
- 4 Restore our fortunes, O LORD, like streams in the Negeb!
- 5 Those who sow in tears shall reap with shouts of joy!
- 6 He who goes out weeping, bearing the seed for sowing, shall come home with shouts of joy, bringing his sheaves with him.

Overview

Psalm 126 is a psalm about God's care and restoration that leads us to joy. Throughout history, God has again and again intervened and delivered his people. Life is full of challenges and hardships. Therefore, the people of God are to (1) remember God's past works of deliverance, (2) ask for present deliverance, and (3) anticipate that deliverance based on his sure promises. True and lasting joy comes out of this pathway.

Introduction

In culture, we remember and memorialize many historical events. National holidays, anniversaries, birthdays, and accomplishments fill our calendars. We love to celebrate and remember. It is no different in our spiritual journey. As God's people, we remember his works throughout history. Such remembrance propels us into present and future hope and joy.

1. Remember [verses 1-3]

Recall God's historical acts of deliverance. He has a perfect track record of delivering his people and of delivering you personally. What we ask of him and how we trust him begins with the discipline of remembering his work.

2. Ask [verse 4]

After remembering and celebrating, the psalmist asks again for deliverance and restoration in his present situation. He knows God is faithful to care for his people. History confirms it. So, he asks again for help.

3. Anticipate [verses 5-6]

The psalmist not only depends on history but also on the promises of God. He hopes. He anticipates. He knows God turns sorrow and tears into joy, shouts of joy. He promises, again and again, to do so. When hurting, the people of God can anticipate future restoration because God has promised such.

1. Share an event from Scripture that shows God's deliverance of his people. Next, share a meaningful testimony in your own personal life of a time that God intervened and delivered/restored you in some way.
2. How have the testimonies from the first questions encouraged you in your current circumstances?
3. What situation(s) are you currently in that you are asking God for help in? What specifically are you asking of him?
4. How do God's promises help you anticipate something good on the other end of it?
5. How have you seen joy come out of sorrow in your own life? What brings us joy even in the midst of hardship?
6. How can the pathway of "Remember → Ask → Anticipate" impact how you navigate life over the next few weeks?