

Psalm 30:1

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

I will extol thee, O LORD; for thou hast lifted me up, and hast not made my foes to rejoice over me.

Analysis

I will extol thee, O LORD; for thou hast lifted me up, and hast not made my foes to rejoice over me. Psalm 30's superscription identifies it as "A Psalm and Song at the dedication of the house of David," linking it to dedication of David's palace (2 Samuel 5:11) or possibly temple dedication (though temple was built by Solomon). Regardless of historical specifics, the psalm celebrates deliverance from near-death crisis, making it appropriate for joyful occasions.

"I will extol thee" (ארומך/aromimkha) opens with volitional commitment to praise. Rum means to be high, exalted, lifted up. The Polel form romem means to exalt, lift high, extol. David commits to lifting God high in praise—recognizing His exalted position and declaring His greatness. This isn't passive appreciation but active, vocal exaltation. The imperfect tense indicates ongoing intention: "I will continually extol." True deliverance produces perpetual gratitude.

"O LORD" (יהה/Yahweh) uses God's covenant name, emphasizing personal relationship. This is Israel's covenant-keeping God who has bound Himself in faithful love to His people. The personal pronoun "thee" (kha) intensifies intimacy—"I will extol YOU." Praise is directed personally to God, not merely discussing Him abstractly.

"For thou hast lifted me up" (כי דליכני/ki dillitani) provides the reason for praise. Dalah means to draw up, pull up, deliver. The verb suggests drawing water from deep well or pulling someone from pit. Psalm 40:2 uses similar imagery: "He

brought me up also out of an horrible pit." David experienced desperate situation—sickness (v.2-3), near-death (v.3, 9), divine anger (v.5, 7)—from which God rescued him. Being lifted up implies descending into deep place first. Deliverance is meaningful because danger was real.

"And hast not made my foes to rejoice over me" (וְלֹא־שָׁמַחַת אֹבֵד לִי) /velo-simachta ovayai li) expresses gratitude for vindication. Oyev means enemy, adversary, foe. Samach means to rejoice, be glad. David's enemies waited for his downfall, hoping to celebrate his defeat. Proverbs 24:17 warns: "Rejoice not when thine enemy falleth." Yet enemies often do rejoice over others' misfortune. God prevented David's enemies from experiencing that satisfaction. This isn't merely about David's comfort but God's reputation—if David had died in disgrace, enemies would have mocked God's inability or unwillingness to save His anointed.

The verse's structure—commitment to praise (v.1a) grounded in two reasons (v.1b-c)—models thanksgiving. Genuine praise articulates specific reasons for gratitude, recounting God's acts. Generic praise lacks the specificity that deepens appreciation and strengthens faith.

Historical Context

The superscription associates the psalm with dedicating David's house. After becoming king over united Israel, David captured Jerusalem and established his capital there. Hiram king of Tyre sent materials and craftsmen: "Hiram king of Tyre sent messengers to David, and cedar trees, and carpenters, and masons: and they built David an house" (2 Samuel 5:11). Dedicating this royal residence would have been significant occasion, appropriate for celebratory psalm.

However, some scholars suggest the superscription may reflect later liturgical use rather than original composition. If Solomon added the superscription, it might reference temple dedication. Jewish tradition associated the psalm with Hanukkah (Feast of Dedication) commemorating temple rededication after Maccabean revolt (164 BCE). The psalm's themes—deliverance from death, transformation from mourning to joy—fit multiple dedication contexts.

Ancient Near Eastern kings commonly composed hymns celebrating military victories, building projects, and divine deliverance. Archaeological discoveries include victory stelae, temple inscriptions, and royal annals describing kings' accomplishments and thanking patron deities. Biblical psalms share this genre but with crucial difference: credit goes entirely to Yahweh, not human achievement. David doesn't praise himself for building his house but praises God for lifting him up.

The tension between David's deliverance and his enemies' potential rejoicing reflects ancient honor-shame culture. Losing to enemies brought not merely military/political consequences but profound shame. Victory brought honor; defeat brought shame affecting one's reputation, standing, and perceived divine favor. When God delivered David, this vindicated both David and Yahweh—demonstrating God's power and faithfulness while preventing enemies from mocking.

New Testament applies deliverance themes christologically. Jesus experienced ultimate descent—incarnation, humiliation, death. Yet God "highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name" (Philippians 2:9). Resurrection lifted Jesus from death's depths. His enemies (death, sin, Satan) don't ultimately rejoice. Christian worship celebrates this greatest deliverance.

Related Passages

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Study Questions

1. What does it mean to 'extol' (lift high in praise) the LORD, and how does this differ from casual acknowledgment or mild appreciation?
2. How does the metaphor of being 'lifted up' from deep place shape our understanding of deliverance, suggesting we must first be 'down' before being lifted?
3. Why does David express gratitude that enemies didn't rejoice over him, and what does this teach about God's concern for His people's vindication?

4. How does dedicating a house (whether David's palace or temple) appropriately connect to themes of personal deliverance from death?
5. In what ways does Jesus's resurrection fulfill this psalm's themes of being lifted up and preventing enemies from ultimate triumph?

Interlinear Text

אָרֹם מִמְךָ I will extol H7311	וְהִוא thee O LORD H3068	כִּי H3588	דָּלִיכְתִּי for thou hast lifted me up H1802	שְׁמָךְ חָתָת וְלֹא to rejoice H8055
		אִיבָּר : and hast not made my foes H341	לִי : H0	

Additional Cross-References

Psalms 25:2 (Parallel theme): O my God, I trust in thee: let me not be ashamed, let not mine enemies triumph over me.

Psalms 35:19 (Parallel theme): Let not them that are mine enemies wrongfully rejoice over me: neither let them wink with the eye that hate me without a cause.

Daniel 4:37 (Parallel theme): Now I Nebuchadnezzar praise and extol and honour the King of heaven, all whose works are truth, and his ways judgment: and those that walk in pride he is able to abase.

Psalms 13:4 (Parallel theme): Lest mine enemy say, I have prevailed against him; and those that trouble me rejoice when I am moved.

Psalms 140:8 (References Lord): Grant not, O LORD, the desires of the wicked: further not his wicked device; lest they exalt themselves. Selah.

2 Samuel 5:11 (Parallel theme): And Hiram king of Tyre sent messengers to David, and cedar trees, and carpenters, and masons: and they built David an house.

Psalms 27:6 (References Lord): And now shall mine head be lifted up above mine enemies round about me: therefore will I offer in his tabernacle sacrifices of joy; I will sing, yea, I will sing praises unto the LORD.

Psalms 28:9 (Parallel theme): Save thy people, and bless thine inheritance: feed them also, and lift them up for ever.

Psalms 41:11 (Parallel theme): By this I know that thou favourest me, because mine enemy doth not triumph over me.

Psalms 79:10 (Parallel theme): Wherefore should the heathen say, Where is their God? let him be known among the heathen in our sight by the revenging of the blood of thy servants which is shed.

From KJV Study • kjvstudy.org