

Psalms 90:15

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Make us glad according to the days wherein thou hast afflicted us, and the years wherein we have seen evil.

Analysis

Make us glad according to the days wherein thou hast afflicted us, and the years wherein we have seen evil. This verse requests that joy match previous suffering in both intensity and duration. Moses doesn't ask God to erase memory of affliction but to provide corresponding gladness that balances previous sorrow. The petition reflects biblical principle that suffering's depth can become joy's height when God redeems it—the greater the trial, the greater the potential for subsequent rejoicing in God's deliverance.

"Make us glad" (שָׂמַח/שָׂמַח/samechenu) uses the same root samach from verse 14 but as causative imperative—cause us to rejoice, produce gladness in us. This acknowledges that joy isn't self-generated but divinely given. After prolonged suffering, people cannot simply decide to be happy—God must cause joy, producing gladness through His intervention and blessing. The request is for divine action to transform sorrow into celebration.

"According to the days wherein thou hast afflicted us" (כִּימוֹת עָנִיתָנוּ/kimot innitanu) uses anah (to afflict, oppress, humble). Ke (according to, as, like) suggests proportionality—make gladness correspond to affliction's measure. If suffering lasted days, let joy last days; if suffering was intense, let joy be equally intense. Yom (day) measures affliction's duration—whether literal days or longer periods, the point is that joy should match trial's extent.

"And the years wherein we have seen evil" (שָׁנוֹת רָאִינוּ רָעָה/shenot rainu raah)

parallels and extends the first clause. Shanah (year) suggests prolonged suffering beyond mere days—years of hardship, extended trials, lengthy difficulties. Raah (evil, calamity, distress, adversity) encompasses all forms of trouble: physical suffering, relational conflict, material loss, spiritual darkness. Raah saw—witnessed, experienced, lived through—indicates firsthand suffering, not abstract awareness of evil but personal encounter with adversity.

The theology underlying this petition affirms that God can redeem suffering, transforming trial into testimony, pain into praise, sorrow into joy. This doesn't negate suffering's reality or minimize its pain but recognizes that divine redemption can bring forth good from evil. Joseph declared to his brothers: "Ye thought evil against me; but God meant it unto good" (Genesis 50:20). Romans 8:28 promises: "All things work together for good to them that love God."

Historical Context

Moses prayed this having led Israel through forty years of wilderness affliction. The generation that left Egypt experienced prolonged suffering: slavery's oppression, wilderness deprivation, repeated judgments for rebellion, watching family and friends die under God's sentence. Entire adult generation perished except Joshua and Caleb. Four decades of hardship, loss, and divine discipline.

Moses requests that the next generation—those about to enter Canaan—experience gladness proportionate to previous affliction. The years of evil should be balanced by years of blessing in the Promised Land. This pattern appears throughout Israel's history: Egyptian slavery followed by Exodus deliverance, Babylonian exile followed by restoration, oppression followed by liberation. Each affliction became occasion for subsequent greater rejoicing in God's redemptive intervention.

Jesus taught similar principle: "Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted" (Matthew 5:4). Those who weep now will laugh later (Luke 6:21). Present suffering prepares for future glory. Romans 8:18 declares: "For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us." 2 Corinthians 4:17: "For our light affliction,

which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory."

Related Passages

Psalms 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Study Questions

1. How does requesting joy proportionate to previous suffering differ from demanding God make up for past pain?
2. What does it mean that God must 'make us glad'—that joy is His gift rather than our achievement?
3. How have you seen God bring gladness from affliction in ways that redeem the suffering rather than merely erase it?

Interlinear Text

שֵׁ מְחִינוּ	כִּי מֵיוֹם	עַנִּיתָנוּ	שָׁנוּ וְשָׁנִים
Make us glad	according to the days	wherein thou hast afflicted	us and the years
H8055	H3117	H6031	H8141
כִּי רָאִינוּ	רָעָה:		
wherein we have seen	evil		
H7200	H7451		

Additional Cross-References

Psalms 30:5 (Parallel theme): For his anger endureth but a moment; in his favour is life: weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning.

John 16:20 (Parallel theme): Verily, verily, I say unto you, That ye shall weep and lament, but the world shall rejoice: and ye shall be sorrowful, but your sorrow shall be turned into joy.

Isaiah 12:1 (Parallel theme): And in that day thou shalt say, O LORD, I will praise thee: though thou wast angry with me, thine anger is turned away, and thou comfortedst me.

Isaiah 61:3 (Parallel theme): To appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the LORD, that he might be glorified.

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