

What Died Didn't Stay Dead

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[0 : 00] Psalm number 30. Psalm number 30.

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[3 : 14] Psalm number 30. Psalm number 30. Psalm number 30. Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, we ask all of these things, giving you thanks.

And Father, we pray this in our Savior, the Lord Jesus' name, and for his glory. Amen. Let me ask you a few questions.

What is better than oatmeal raisin cookies? Everything. That is a good answer.

I'm working on a bit of a progression here. So if you have oatmeal raisin cookies, now I don't mean to offend you. If those are your favorite, that's okay. That's okay. They can be your favorite.

I think better than oatmeal raisin cookies are monster cookies. Do you know why? Because you replace the raisins with M&Ms.; That to me feels like an upgrade to the oatmeal raisin cookie.

[4 : 14] What is better than a monster cookie? Chocolate chip cookies. Thank you. Very good.

What is better than chocolate chip cookie?

Chitter cookies. Really? Okay. Well, you are entitled to your opinion. We can all have our opinions. I'm not sure. Like, I think chocolate chip is like the top one.

That's just me, right? The top one. Let's try this again. What is better than a hot dog on the grill?

Well, sure, but you jumped a little bit too far.

A burger is better, right? Even a brat probably is better. You could have a bun length, all beef, hot dog. That would be better. You're kind of seeing a progression here.

What's better than a burger? Steak is better. What's better than steak? Filet mignon. Filet mignon. Right? What's better than filet mignon?

[5 : 16] Could be lobster, I suppose. I don't know. Put that on the grill. Maybe. I don't know. I wouldn't. But that's just me. What is better than being sick?

Being healthy is better than being sick, isn't it? What is better? Dying from your sickness?

I know this took a dark turn here. What is better? Dying from your sickness or getting better?

Getting better.

Okay. So let me ask you this then. What is better than getting better? Nothing is better than getting better, right?

I mean, I suppose you could die and you could be like Lazarus raised from the dead. And that, in a sense, would be better.

[6 : 13] What would be better than being raised from the dead? Well, now we are at a bit of a question, aren't we? What could be better than being raised from the dead?

Hebrews chapter 11. This will be on the screen if you're not there. Hebrews chapter 11. I wonder if you remember this verse. Women.

This is verse 35. Women received their dead, raised to life again. What is this?

Somebody died. What was better than dying? Being raised from the dead. But, second half of the verse, other people were tortured.

Not accepting release. So that they might gain a better resurrection.

[7 : 13] Some died and they were raised back to life. That's a resurrection. And some died refusing to recant their faith. Refusing to compromise.

Refusing to deny Jesus Christ is Lord. And they died in hope of what? A better resurrection.

So, put a pin in this. There is a resurrection. And there is a better resurrection.
Put a pin in that. In August of 2022, Counselor Jim invited me to find a text of scripture that I could meditate on and memorize and pray.

Jim knew that I needed scripture because I was in a season of disorienting circumstances and dissolving relationships.

[8 : 24] Divisive behaviors. I was uncertain about the present. And I was also insecure about the future. If you asked me, where did you find yourself today?

Where do you find yourself today? Back in August 2022, I would have told you that doubt was spreading like spilt milk. And discouragement was increasing. I felt lonely. I felt ashamed. I felt overwhelmed. I felt restless. I felt hopeless. And some days, I still feel all of those emotions.

What about you? Where do you find yourself today? In Psalm number 30, our gracious God extends to us an invitation to be joyful.

And I hope that the Holy Spirit produces joy in your heart today as a result of being gathered with God's people and hearing God's word and celebrating the Lord's Supper.

[9 : 41] I hope the Holy Spirit produces joy in your heart today. But I hope it is the kind of joy that continues to be refilled as we go back out into the world and we experience all kinds of circumstances that are disorienting and difficult and discouraging.

I want us to revel in resurrection joy that fuels hope-filled endurance.

Psalm 30 begins on a note of praise for God. And given that this is a psalm, it's not surprising that it starts with a note of praise, worship, so on. But I want you to notice why David worships.

Psalm 30, verse number one. A psalm, a dedication song for the house of David. I will exalt you, Lord, because you have lifted me up and have not allowed my enemies to triumph over me.

Why does David worship? Well, the first answer, he says, is because I was like a bucket tied to a rope, dropped down into the water, and you, God, raised me up.

[11 : 06] I worship you for raising me up. He also worships because you have not allowed my enemies to triumph over me.

Now, we don't know exactly what this refers to in the life of David, but we do know that David had enemies. He had people who were out to get him.

And so David worships God not only for raising him up, but for also delivering him from these enemies, these adversaries who were out to get him.

Verse two, David continues. Lord, my God, I cried to you for help and you healed me. David worships God for healing him and for hearing him.

This all seems very straightforward, doesn't it? Like you might read this in any number of Psalms and not at all be surprised. But then notice verse number three.

[12 : 07] Lord, you brought me up from Sheol. You spared me from among those going down to the pit.

Sheol is the place of the dead. It's where the dead people go. You might think of it a little bit as like how we consider a graveyard.

That's not exactly accurate. It's not exactly precise, but it kind of helps us to get into the mind frame of what he's saying. Notice that again.

You brought me up from the place of the dead. What is happening here?

The place of the dead and this idea of pit, it's a synonym for the place of the dead. What is happening? Whatever David is going through, it feels like death.

[13 : 09] We don't know exactly what it is. Or maybe David is saying something like, I was doomed to die. I was on the path that was leading straight to death.

Things looked utterly hopeless, but you, Lord, spared me and raised me up. And now that we know why David is worshipping, he invites us to join him.

Verse number four. Sing to the Lord, you his faithful ones, and praise his holy name. For his anger lasts only a moment, but his favor, a lifetime.

Weeping, weeping may stay overnight, but there is joy in the morning. Are you familiar with the phrase same song, second verse?

Right? Same song, second verse. David does something like that as he continues here in verse number six. He goes back and he talks again about this resurrection language, about being raised up and spared from the pit from Sheol.

[14 : 20] Notice, same song, second verse, number six. When I was secure, I said, I will never be shaken.

Lord, when you showed your favor, you made me stand like a strong mountain. But, when you hid your face, I was terrified.

And this terror of the loss of God's presence leads David to pray. That's a good idea. Verse eight. Lord, I called to you. I sought favor from my Lord. What gain is there in my death? If I go down to the pit, will the dust praise you?

Will it proclaim your truth? Lord, listen and be gracious to me. Lord, be my helper. Do you sense David's desperation here in verse number 10?

[15 : 29] Either God delivers him or he is going to die and go down to the pit. But then notice this surprising turn that happens between verse 10 and verse 11.

Verse 11. You turned my lament into dancing. You removed my sackcloth and clothed me with gladness so that I can sing to you and not be silent.

Lord, my God, I will praise you forever. Sackcloth.

What is this idea of sackcloth? You see that there in verse number 11? You removed my sackcloth. This is an itchy, uncomfortable piece of clothing that they would wear at this time when they were mourning.

You might read that elsewhere in scripture. It's poetic language, right? I'm putting on sackcloth. It means I am mourning. I want people to know that I am mourning and I don't want to be comforted.

[16 : 39] I'm going to take this itchy clothing that's not comfortable and not nice. I'm going to wear it because I am mourning.

Think about how if you go on a hayride and you get some of that hay down in your shirt or maybe inside of your shoe or think about having a t-shirt that's made out of sandpaper.

That'd be really uncomfortable, wouldn't it? The imagery is so interesting here. It's like God is getting David dressed.

Do you see that? Right in the middle of verse 11? It's like God is saying put up your arms and let me help you get out of that stiff shirt and tie that you wore to the funeral.

Let me help you get out of that and let me help you slip into some sweatpants and a hoodie. And that sweatpants and hoodie is gladness.

[17 : 43] What a reversal. Lament, sadness, grief has been turned into dancing and celebration and joy. And now, clothed with gladness, David goes back to this theme of resurrection in verse number 12.

I can sing to you and not be silent like if I was dead. If I was dead, I would be silent, unable to sing to you. But because you have raised me up, because you've pulled me up like a bucket out of water, I can sing to you and praise you forever.

And so we see David reveling in resurrection joy. Do you remember that pin that we put in a few minutes ago?

I'll remind you. There is a resurrection and there is a better resurrection. Which resurrection is David talking about here?

We know that David knew the threat of death. I saw nods when I mentioned that a few moments ago.

[19 : 02] We know that David had enemies. We know that he was threatened with death. We know that David had people who wanted to kill him, especially his father-in-law Saul.

We know that David experienced excruciating emotional pain that you could poetically describe as death. death. But the scripture does not record David dying and being resurrected.

In other words, whatever these experiences are that David is writing about may have been near death, but they were not actual death.

death. This is like Miracle Max in The Princess Bride, when he says that Wesley is only mostly dead.

That would be David's experience of death so far. Only mostly dead. Now, if David is only mostly dead and he did not experience resurrection, then that leaves me dissatisfied about what we have learned so far in Psalm 30.

[20 : 23] Because Psalm 30 oozes resurrection language. Look again at verse number 3. I want you to notice this. Verse number 3. Lord, you brought me up from Sheol, and you spared me from among those going down to the pit.

ESV and I think NIV say raised, and that is a helpful connection because this same word is used in 2 Kings after Elisha raises a boy from the dead.

It's clear that David is talking about resurrection, and yet David was never raised from the dead. We do find a similar resurrection theme in Psalm chapter 16, and I'd like to show you that. Look at Psalm chapter 16, and look at verse number 8. I always let the Lord guide me, because he is at my right hand. I will not be shaken, therefore my heart is glad, and my whole being rejoices. my body also rests securely, for you will not abandon me to Sheol. Did you hear that word today? [21 : 43] You will not abandon me to Sheol, to the place of the dead. You will not allow your faithful one to see decay. You reveal the path of life to me.

In your presence is abundant joy. At your right hand are eternal pleasures. Do you see some similar language here between Psalm 30 and Psalm number 16?

This is important. Here's why. In Acts chapter 2, on the day of Pentecost, when Peter stands up to pray, Peter quotes this portion of Psalm 16, not allowing your holy one, your faithful one, to see decay.

Peter quotes this portion of Psalm 16, and then he argues that this can't possibly be David talking about himself. Why not? Because we all know David died and he went into decay. His body is dust. Peter affirms what we have already surmised, that David did not experience resurrection.

[22 : 55] and then Peter says something interesting.

Peter tells us in Acts chapter 2, on the day of Pentecost, that David was actually speaking prophetically on Jesus' behalf.

In other words, David is not just writing about Jesus when he says, you will not allow your holy one to see decay.

David was actually writing as Jesus. These are Jesus' words in Psalm 16.

Peter tells us that in Acts chapter 2, and David wrote these words, never having experienced resurrection himself. Do you like movies where you get a different perspective on the same old story?

[24 : 11] You might think of the movie Cruella, which tells the story of the 101 Dalmatians, but from the villain's perspective, right? Same thing is true of the movie Maleficent.

It's the story of Snow White, but it is from the villain's perspective. Into the Woods musical tells the story of Little Red Riding Hood.

There is kind of an indie cartoon called Hoodwinked. I don't even know if this is ever still available anywhere, but I think we have the DVD, and if you really want to watch it, you can borrow it, but it's this crazy little movie that tells the story of Little Red Riding Hood from a variety of angles, and at the end it all comes together, and you go, oh, I see how that all worked out.

You get this same thing if you read Agatha Christie novels, or you watch murder mysteries, right? Like, you get to see something at the end when all of the clues come together, and you go, oh, I didn't know that's how it was all working out, but now that you've showed me the answer, now I get it.

Since Scripture confirms that Psalm 16 is Jesus speaking about his own resurrection, and since there is this connection in words and language between Psalm 16 and Psalm 30, what if David is not celebrating his own near-death rescue?

[25 : 52] What if David speaks prophetically in Psalm 30 also, not just about Jesus, but as Jesus?

What if Psalm 30 is not David reveling in his own resurrection joy? what if Psalm 30 is a psalm about Jesus reveling in resurrection joy?

Look at verse number one. Let's see this from a different perspective. I will exalt you, Lord, because you have lifted me up and have not allowed my enemies to triumph over me.

And indeed, Colossians chapter 2 verse 15, he, God, disarmed the rulers and authorities and disgraced them publicly. He, God, triumphed over them in him, in Jesus.

I'm sorry, Miracle Max, Jesus wasn't only mostly dead. Jesus was all the way dead. And with Jesus in mind, look again at verse number three.

[27 : 14] Lord, you brought me up from Sheol. You spared me. You raised me from among those going down to the pit.

what about David speaking on Jesus' behalf in verse number seven. Lord, when you showed your favor, you made me stand like a strong mountain.

But when you hid your face, I was terrified. terrified. And we remember, at the end of the three dark hours on the cross, Jesus cries out from another psalm, my God, my God, why have you forsaken me?

You hid your face, and I was terrified. terrified. Listen to Jesus, reasoning with the Father, in verse number nine.

What gain is there in my death? What gain is there in my death?

[28 : 45] death? If I go down to the pit, if I decay there in the grave, will the dust praise you?

Will the dust proclaim your truth, your faithfulness? death? If Jesus dies, and goes down into the pit, and does not rise from the dead, then he is a liar.

And not only that, his death is no more meaningful than any other human's death. Can you hear Jesus reasoning with the Father here? What profit is there in that?

If I die and I'm not raised from the dead, Jesus is echoing, actually giving Paul the language in 1 Corinthians 15.

If Christ has not been raised, then our proclamation, our preaching is in vain, and so is your faith.

[29 : 53] What profit? No profit. No value. If Christ has not been raised, your faith is worthless.

Why? Because you are still in your sins. Finally, hear Jesus in verse number 10, praying to the Father, perhaps at the very moment of his death on the cross.

Look at verse 10. Listen, Lord, listen, and be gracious to me. Lord, be my helper.

Do you get a sense of the desperation? Jesus lays down his life, and his enemies rejoice in their triumph, and his followers mourn and grieve, and Jesus' body, Psalm 16, rests securely in the grave.

But on that third day in the morning, God, the Father, dresses Jesus, God, the Son.

[31 : 14] He takes off his itchy sackcloth, and he clothes Jesus with gladness. Do you see that in verse 11? You turned my lament into dancing.

You removed my sackcloth and clothed me with gladness so that I can sing to you and not be silent, Lord, my God, I will praise you forever.

To die and be raised like Lazarus, is a resurrection. And to die and be raised to life like Jesus is a better resurrection.

Why is Jesus' resurrection better than every other resurrection? Because every other resurrected person had to die again, but not Jesus.

Jesus swallows up death once and for all, Isaiah 25. Better than physical healing, better than dying and being raised again, to die safe in the arms of Jesus and to be resurrected like Jesus, never to die again.

[32 : 36] This, this is a better resurrection. resurrection. You have not been raised bodily with Jesus.

Not yet. Not yet. But by faith, Jesus' joy in his resurrection recorded for us in Psalm number 30 can be your joy right now.

joy is like a full tank of gas. Even when your life feels like a rusted out, broken down, beater of a car that is flashing the check engine light, joy can be like a full tank of gas.

So let me invite you to revel in resurrection joy that fuels hope filled endurance. Endurance is exactly what I needed back in August 2022.

And you know what? Endurance is what I still need today. And I suspect that you do as well. We have need, the writer of Hebrews tells us, of endurance.

[33 : 59] Joy in Jesus' resurrection is not just for Easter Sunday. We need resurrection joy every day. If you are discouraged, if you are disappointed, if you are disillusioned with the world that we live in, let me invite you.

Lift your hands and let your heavenly father take off that itchy, sandpapery t-shirt that you've been wearing, that sackcloth of mourning, and let him clothe you with gladness, joy, in a better resurrection yet to come.

Being clothed with gladness does not mean that you are forcing a smile and saying, I'm okay when you are not okay. That's not being clothed with gladness.

Being clothed with gladness does not mean that your broken down car is suddenly replaced with a brand new one. That'd be nice, wouldn't it, Kellen? That is not what being clothed with gladness means.

Joy is not going to fix what's wrong in this world. Jesus will need to take care of what's wrong in this world and fix it. Joy does not mean, being clothed with gladness does not mean that you've got everything figured out.

[35 : 27] It means that Jesus will never leave you. Being clothed with gladness does not mean that your life won't stink. In fact, it may mean that you have adversity, pain, and trials of all sorts.

But in those trials, because of Jesus' better resurrection, you, child of God, can have joy-filled, hope-fueled, joy-fueled, hope-filled, endurance.

Weeping. Weeping may have a sleepover in our lives. I like that language in the Christian Standard version that I read. Weeping may have a sleepover.

Sometimes sorrow in our lives may feel like a houseguest who has long overstayed their welcome. But because what was dead didn't stay dead, there is joy in the morning.

Being clothed with gladness does not mean life is easy. It means remembering that Jesus is alive and because he lives, I can face today.

[36 : 50] Today! You can face today. That's joy-fueled, hope-filled endurance.

So, revel. Revel in resurrection joy. You are following in the footsteps of your Savior, Jesus. Revel in resurrection joy that fuels hope-filled endurance.

Let's pray. Father, we are grateful to have received your word. Holy Spirit, we are humbled that you have been so kind to be among us.

Thank you for filling us. Thank you for giving us insights into your word. Thank you for helping us to understand and connect some dots.

Thank you for showing us our Savior, the Lord Jesus. Father, we celebrate that our Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, is alive.

[38 : 01] That as Paul says, Christ is now raised from the dead. That death has no hold on him.

Father, we celebrate that because that is our hope. Not only for our life to come, that resurrection joy gives us hope to endure right now today.

When life can feel disorienting and disappointing and we can feel disillusioned, we need this kind of resurrection joy.

Please close us with gladness. Father, where weeping and mourning and grief have overstayed their welcome in the hearts of my brothers and sisters, would you please bring healing and comfort and encouragement and in your sweet time and by your sufficient grace, give us joy and help us to endure all that you have for us in this life.

We pray this in Jesus' name. Amen. skill skill skill