

Sow in Tears, Reap in Joy

LENT 3, Wednesday Evening

March 7, 2018

Responsive Psalm: Psalm 126

1 When the LORD brought back the captivity of Zion, We were like those who dream.

2 Then our mouth was filled with laughter, And our tongue with singing. Then they said among the nations, AThe LORD has done great things for them.@

3 The LORD has done great things for us, And we are glad.

4 Bring back our captivity, O LORD, As the streams in the South.

5 Those who sow in tears Shall reap in joy.

6 He who continually goes forth weeping, Bearing seed for sowing, Shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, Bringing his sheaves with him.

Sermon Text: **Psalm 126:5-6:**

Those sowing in tears, in joy they will reap.

He goes, going forth weeping and bearing the seed for sowing;

He comes, coming in joy, bearing his sheaves.

IN THE NAME OF JESUS.

Psalm 126 is a song of the Son of God.

He goes forth from the Father in sorrow, sowing seed in tears.

The seed he sows is the seed of his own body. His own life, sown into the ground in pain, a dead body laid in the grave, this is the body that bore our sin.

His Body carried the sin of Israel, his chosen people, even the sin of all men of all time, from Adam up to us, even to our children and grandchildren, until the generation of this world is brought to a close. All sin of all people in the Body of Christ Jesus.

That is Jesus= tears and suffering: all our death laid on Him. The Father=s wrath against our sin fully and completely expended on him.

So Psalm 126 speaks of him going forth from the Father to the cross. Psalm 126:5:

AHe goes, going forth weeping and bearing the seed for sowing.@

And what he sowed into the ground was his own life bearing all sin of every sinner.

Then his sorrow is overturned! Psalm 126:6:

AHe comes, coming in joy, bearing his sheaves.@

He went to the cross in tears, humiliated, he came back from being sown into the ground of the grave, returning to his Father, in joy, exalted. As Hebrews 12:2 gives it:

For the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

He comes back to his Father bearing his sheaves. That is, bearing the harvest of His having been sown in the ground in the grave, and the harvest of his death is ... **all sins of all sinners of all time nailed to the cross and sown into the grave**. For bearing them in his own Body, he gave his life over to death.

So now his harvest, in which he rejoices, is ... **us**—us and our children. All those hearing the proclamation of all sin put to death on the cross and sown into the grave.

And he comes back to His Father in joy, bearing his sheaves, his harvest, all those belonging to him.

Psalm 126 is about Jesus. And because Jesus has joined himself to us in Baptism, Psalm 126 is about us.

For that reason the Lord gave us Psalm 126 (as also all the other Psalms, for all the Psalms are about Jesus and about us), giving us Psalm 126 as the words of a song to speak to each other for comfort and to speak to him in prayer.

Psalm 126:5-6:

Those sowing in tears, in joy they will reap.

He goes, going forth weeping and bearing the seed for sowing;

He comes, coming in joy, bearing his sheaves.

We now sow in tears. We now live in what our Lord refers to as Athis valley of the shadow of death@ in Psalm 23.

And our lives are, indeed, on their way to being sown into the ground.

But, the sorrow of our sin is overthrown.

AThose sowing in tears, in joy they will reap.@

Like a farmer looking at a little seed but not seeing the beautiful plant it becomes when sown into the ground, we look at our lives and can=t see the perfect, glorious life prepared for us when we are with our LordCour bodies being made like his glorious Body.

We live, though, a life of joy.

But we live in the faith of knowing that we are being brought to him Who came not to destroy men's lives, but to save them, even to the point of taking their sin from them, putting it to death in his own Body on the cross.

Because we are given to live in this faith, we know that we will come to our Lord not as we went forth in our sinful flesh, but will come to him in joy, rejoicing in the life he has gained for us.

He went forth in the sorrow of our sin. He came back in the joy of having ransomed those he loves, bringing his harvest, the fruit of his cross, with him, into Heaven.

This Lent, as we repent, that is, as we lament our sin and turn to him for his grace, the song of Psalm 126 is given to us and our children for our comfort and rejoicing, for our prayer and our praise:

Those sowing in tears, in joy they will reap.

He goes, going forth weeping and bearing the seed for sowing;

He comes, coming in joy, bearing his sheaves.

[Psalm 126:5-6]

And his sheaves, his joyful harvest, includes you.

IN THE NAME OF JESUS.