

# Personal Joy of the Psalmist

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6/5/2016

## INTRODUCTION

The Hebrew word *samach* [שמח] means “rejoice, be glad” [Thomas 8055]. Holladay defines it as “(1) rejoice; (2) be joyful, glad.” This word occurs 154x in 147 verses.

Joy may be found in physical activities. In the book of Ecclesiastes, the preacher says that we should be happy in our activities (Eccl. 3:22), including times of labor and toil (Eccl. 5:19; 8:15).

*Ecclesiastes 3:22 (NASB95) — 22 I have seen that nothing is better than that man should be happy in his activities, for that is his lot. For who will bring him to see what will occur after him?*

*Ecclesiastes 5:19 (NASB95) — 19 Furthermore, as for every man to whom God has given riches and wealth, He has also empowered him to eat from them and to receive his reward and rejoice in his labor; this is the gift of God.*

*Ecclesiastes 8:15 (NASB95) — 15 So I commended pleasure, for there is nothing good for a man under the sun except to eat and to drink and to be merry, and this will stand by him in his toils throughout the days of his life which God has given him under the sun.*

We should be happy in our lifetime (Eccl. 3:12), especially during childhood and youth (Eccl. 11:9), and if we are granted long life, happiness should extend down through the years (Eccl. 11:8).

*Ecclesiastes 3:12 (NASB95) — 12 I know that there is nothing better for them than to rejoice and to do good in one’s lifetime;*

*Ecclesiastes 11:9 (NASB95) — 9 Rejoice, young man, during your childhood, and let your heart be pleasant during the days of young manhood. And follow the impulses of your heart and the desires of your eyes. Yet know that God will bring you to judgment for all these things.*

*Ecclesiastes 11:8 (NASB95) — 8 Indeed, if a man should live many years, let him rejoice in them all, and let him remember the days of darkness, for they will be many. Everything that is to come will be futility.*

We can derive happiness from food, drink and material possessions, although the benefits of the latter may be overstated (Eccl. 10:19).

*Ecclesiastes 10:19 (NASB95) — 19 Men prepare a meal for enjoyment, and wine makes life merry, and money is the answer to everything.*

Turning our attention to the personal joy of the Psalmist, we can also find happiness in the person of God, in His providential care, and in spiritual activities.

## **REGARDING ENEMIES**

Seeking vindication, the Psalmist repeatedly asked God, “Let not my enemies rejoice over me” (Psa. 30:1; 35:15, 19, 24; 38:16).

*Psalm 30:1 (NASB95) — 1 I will extol You, O Lord, for You have lifted me up, And have not let my enemies rejoice over me.*

*Psalm 35:15 (NASB95) — 15 But at my stumbling they rejoiced and gathered themselves together; The smiters whom I did not know gathered together against me, They slandered me without ceasing.*

*Psalm 35:19 (NASB95) — 19 Do not let those who are wrongfully my enemies rejoice over me; Nor let those who hate me without cause wink maliciously.*

*Psalm 35:24 (NASB95) — 24 Judge me, O Lord my God, according to Your righteousness, And do not let them rejoice over me.*

*Psalm 38:16 (NASB95) — 16 For I said, “May they not rejoice over me, Who, when my foot slips, would magnify themselves against me.”*

## **REGARDING GOD’S JUSTICE**

The Psalmist rejoiced over God’s justice (Psa. 109:28).

*Psalm 109:28 (NASB95) — 28 Let them curse, but You bless; When they arise, they shall be ashamed, But Your servant shall be glad.*

*Psalm 109:26–29 (NASB95) — 26 Help me, O Lord my God; Save me according to Your lovingkindness. 27 And let them know that this is Your hand; You, Lord, have done it. 28 Let them curse, but You bless; When they arise, they shall be ashamed, But Your servant shall be glad. 29 Let my accusers be clothed with dishonor, And let them cover themselves with their own shame as with a robe.*

## **REGARDING GOD’S LOVINGKINDNESS**

The Psalmist rejoiced over God’s lovingkindness (Psa. 31:7).

*Psalm 31:7 (NASB95) — 7 I will rejoice and be glad in Your lovingkindness, Because You have seen my affliction; You have known the troubles of my soul,*

*Psalm 31:6–8 (NASB95) — 6 I hate those who regard vain idols, But I trust in the Lord. 7 I will rejoice and be glad in Your lovingkindness, Because You have seen my affliction; You have known the troubles of my soul, 8 And You have not given me over into the hand of the enemy; You have set my feet in a large place.*

## **REGARDING GOD’S PEOPLE**

The Psalmist rejoiced over God’s people, Israel (Psa. 106:5).

*Psalm 106:5 (NASB95) — 5 That I may see the prosperity of Your chosen ones, That I may rejoice in the gladness of Your nation, That I may glory with Your inheritance.*

*Psalm 106:4–5 (NASB95) — 4 Remember me, O Lord, in Your favor toward Your people; Visit me with Your salvation, 5 That I may see the prosperity of Your chosen ones, That I may rejoice in the gladness of Your nation, That I may glory with Your inheritance.*

## **REGARDING GOD’S PROMISES**

The Psalmist rejoiced over God’s promises (Psa. 16:9).

*Psalm 16:9 (NASB95) — 9 Therefore my heart is glad and my glory rejoices; My flesh also will dwell securely.*

*Psalm 16:8–11 (NASB95) — 8 I have set the Lord continually before me; Because He is at my right hand, I will not be shaken. 9 Therefore my heart is glad and my glory rejoices; My flesh also will dwell securely. 10 For You will not abandon my soul to Sheol; Nor will You allow Your Holy One to undergo decay. 11 You will make known to me the path of life; In Your presence is fullness of joy; In Your right hand there are pleasures forever.*

## **REGARDING GOD’S WORKS**

The Psalmist rejoiced in God’s works (Psa. 92:4).

*Psalm 92:4 (NASB95) — 4 For You, O Lord, have made me glad by what You have done, I will sing for joy at the works of Your hands.*

*Psalm 92:4–5 (NASB95) — 4 For You, O Lord, have made me glad by what You have done, I will sing for joy at the works of Your hands. 5 How great are Your works, O Lord! Your thoughts are very deep.*

## **REGARDING GOD HIMSELF**

The Psalmist rejoiced in God Himself (Psa. 9:2; 104:34).

*Psalm 9:2 (NASB95) — 2 I will be glad and exult in You; I will sing praise to Your name, O Most High.*

*Psalm 104:34 (NASB95) — 34 Let my meditation be pleasing to Him; As for me, I shall be glad in the Lord.*

*Psalm 9:1–2 (NASB95) — 1 I will give thanks to the Lord with all my heart; I will tell of all Your wonders. 2 I will be glad and exult in You; I will sing praise to Your name, O Most High.*

*Psalm 104:33–34 (NASB95) — 33 I will sing to the Lord as long as I live; I will sing praise to my God while I have my being. 34 Let my meditation be pleasing to Him; As for me, I shall be glad in the Lord.*

## **REGARDING TODAY**

The Psalmist rejoiced in the blessing of today (Psa. 118:24).

*Psalm 118:24 (NASB95) — 24 This is the day which the Lord has made; Let us rejoice and be glad in it.*

*Psalm 118:22–24 (NASB95) — 22 The stone which the builders rejected Has become the chief corner stone. 23 This is the Lord's doing; It is marvelous in our eyes. 24 This is the day which the Lord has made; Let us rejoice and be glad in it.*

## **REGARDING WORSHIP**

The Psalmist rejoiced in opportunities for worship (Psa. 122:1).

*Psalm 122:1 (NASB95) — 1 I was glad when they said to me, "Let us go to the house of the Lord."*

*Psalm 122:1–5 (NASB95) — 1 I was glad when they said to me, "Let us go to the house of the Lord." 2 Our feet are standing Within your gates, O Jerusalem, 3 Jerusalem, that is built As a city that is compact together; 4 To which the tribes go up, even the tribes of the Lord— An ordinance for Israel— To give thanks to the name of the Lord. 5 For there thrones were set for judgment, The thrones of the house of David.*

## **CONCLUSION**

Let us find joy in the simple pleasures of life, and also in the spiritual blessings that come from sharing a relationship with God the Father, and His Son, Jesus Christ.