

“Let Us Go to the House of the Lord”

Psalm 122:1-4

In February of 1985, I went to West Germany to finish my tour in the U.S. Army. I would be there for approximately 18 months. I was stationed north of Frankfurt in Giessen, and worked at the Butzbach and Friedberg MP stations as a desk sergeant. I was newly married and terribly homesick. I couldn't wait to attend the post chapel service on my first Sunday. When I went, it was disappointing. It was cold and impersonal. It was a generic protestant service.

One evening, I ventured off post to get some bratwurst and pommes frits (fried potatoes similar to fries). I saw a soldier that I had met earlier in the day who was a believer. His name was David. He saw me pray over my meal and came and talked with me. He asked me where I was going, and I told him to get a bratwurst and pommes frits. He took me to a place that had the best. As he showed me around, he asked what I was doing for Sunday worship. I told him that I was going to the post chapel service, but that it was really dry and lacking. He invited me to a Baptist church that was made up of Americans and Germans. I went and loved it. The service was in English, and they sang familiar choruses and hymns. Most of the people were fellow service members and their families. The pastor was a retired Army officer. I felt at home. After that, I looked forward to attending church. I could understand King David saying, *“I rejoiced with those*

who said to me, ‘Let us go to the house of the Lord.’” When Caroline joined me a few months later, they welcomed her and made us part of their family. We still have friends from Giessen Baptist Church.

We have been unable to worship together for two and a half months due to the Corona virus restrictions. I rejoice that we can gather together once again to worship our Lord. What can we learn from this passage of scripture?

1. Let us go to the house of the Lord in a spirit of joy
(122:1)

“I rejoiced with those who said to me, ‘Let us go to the house of the Lord.’”

- When we come to worship our God and Savior, we should do so in a spirit of joy. Our God is deserving of a joyful spirit. He has freely given us eternal life through the death of His Son. He has been faithful to provide for us and to protect us. Joy is not happiness. Joy is inner confidence in God that He is going to help me and bless me no matter what the circumstances.
- David rejoiced because God's Spirit dwelled in the Tabernacle. He knew that he was going to worship the God who made him king of Israel, and protected him from his enemies. He would worship God in a spirit of joy because of who God was and for what God had done.

- Do not let anyone or anything rob you of the joy that you have from God. Yes, we are living in troubled times, but we worship a God of peace. We worship the Savior who calmed the wind and the waves. We worship the God of the universe, who has all things under His control. Paul said of Jesus: *“He existed before everything else began, and He holds all creation together”* (Colossians 1:17). Paul said, *“May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you believe in Him so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit”* (Romans 15:13). Worship God in a spirit of joy (and if you don’t have joy, start worshipping Him and you will find it!).
- 2. Let us go to the house of the Lord in a spirit of praise and prayer (122:4, 6)

“Yahweh’s tribes go up to give thanks to the name of Yahweh.”

“Pray for the peace of Jerusalem.”

- David rejoiced to go to the Lord’s house to praise Him for His faithfulness to His people, or as he said, *“tribes.”* Israel was surrounded by enemies, but she was not defeated or oppressed. The enemies who came against King David were defeated or destroyed. God kept His word with David, and was faithful to His servant.

- He praised God for peace and prosperity, and prayed for Jerusalem’s peace and wellbeing. At the time, Jerusalem was an almost impossible city to invade. She was safe even though surrounded by enemies who wanted to destroy her.
- Praise God for all that He has done for you. Praise Him for His faithfulness to you and your family. Praise Him for the gift of eternal life through Jesus Christ. David said: *“I waited patiently for the Lord, and He turned to me and heard my cry for help. He brought me up from a desolate pit, out of the muddy clay, and set my feet on a rock, making my steps secure. He put a new song in my mouth, a hymn of praise to our God. Many will see and fear, and put their trust in the Lord”* (Psalm 40:1-3). Pray for our state and nation. Pray for God’s peace in your heart and life. Worship God in a spirit of praise and prayer.

Paul told troubled believers: *“Don’t worry about anything; instead, pray about everything. Tell God what you need, and thank Him for all He has done. If you do this, you will experience God’s peace, which is far more wonderful than the human mind can understand. His peace will guard your hearts and minds as you live in Christ Jesus”* (Philippians 4:6-7). Come to the Lord’s house as you are, where you are. Let us worship in the house of the Lord in a spirit of joy, praise, and prayer.