

To all members of the St James Traditional Services

**A Weekly Word of Encouragement: Sow with tears, reap with joy**

The psalm for St James Day is Psalm 126 – read it reflectively.

This psalm speaks of joy and laughter, tears and weeping.

Both experiences are true for God's people. Throughout biblical history, we see God at work restoring His people: from slavery to freedom, captivity to restoration, death to victory, suffering to glory. We live our lives bordered by the memory of God's acts in the past, the certain hope of the fulfillment of God's promises for the future, and the assurance of God's presence now, so that we can say "The Lord has done great things for us." (v. 3)

Joy is the consequence of Christian discipleship – walking the way of faith and obedience. For all of us as God's people, there are periods of barren dryness (the Negev of v.8 in the south of Israel is an arid desert) – times of tears over our sin or the sins of others, over our own brokenness of pain, suffering, loneliness or misfortune. Christian discipleship means joy is found, not in feeling good about ourselves, but about God, whose ways are dependable and promises sure.

So come in tears of repentance, believing prayer, and a desire for holiness. Seasons of Tears can be opportunities for growth (see Rom. 5:3-5). Sowing does not bear fruit quickly, but God is at work, restoring - bringing revival, fruitfulness, dreams fulfilled. The desert will blossom and grow (Isaiah 35:1, 2) and we will say: The Lord has done great things for us, and we are filled with joy, and that joy can be experienced now and for eternity.

**Prayer**

Lord, I am praying, not only for myself, but for my church, my country and for the people I love – that we all may be spiritually empowered and renewed. Help me to rest in your timing, knowing that my tears in prayer are like seeds that will come to fruition in my life and the lives of those I care for. Teach me to find joy in being Yours, and to keep on growing in all circumstances as I follow you. Amen.

**Remember**

- keep praying daily
- keep reading God's Word
- keep in touch with one another, and know that I am only a phone call away: 0438 455 493.

With Christian love,  
Robert