

**Readings for the week of Oct. 27/24:**

Jeremiah 31:7-9

Psalm 126

Hebrews 7:23-28

Mark 10:46-52

These readings bring to mind Ecclesiastes 3:1 that says, *“For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven”*, and also, Psalm 30:4-5, which says, *“Sing praises to the Lord, O you his saints, and give thanks to his holy name.*

*For his anger is but for a moment, and his favor is for a lifetime. Weeping may tarry for the night, but joy comes with the morning.”*

I have been blessed by meditating on these readings. They have encouraged me at a time when I have been very frustrated. My husband and I have been sick with a respiratory illness, which has been circulating in the community. We have had this for a while now, so it has gotten us down. We’ve been feeling like this will never end, but these readings give me hope that it will.

We have all likely experienced some situation in life that causes us frustration, or maybe even hopelessness. Not everyone experiences a physical challenge, but it could be emotional, mental, financial, relational or something else.

Psalm 126:1-3 reminds us, *“When the LORD restored the fortunes of Zion, we were like those who dream. Then our mouth was filled with laughter and our tongue with shouts of joy; then it was said among the nations, “The LORD has done great things for them.” The LORD has done great things for us, and we rejoiced.*

The Jews had been in literal captivity by the Babylonians, but the same thing can be said for any problem you face that seems like you are a prisoner to your circumstances.

Jeremiah 31:8 reassures us that everyone is part of God’s plan - to restore us and bring us joy. That verse says, *“See, I am going to bring them from the land of the north and gather them from the farthest parts of the earth, among them the blind and the lame, those with child and those in labor together; a great company, they shall return here.”*

God knows us and sees us, and He has a plan for our lives. We may be facing difficult challenges right now, but God can use that part of your life, if you are willing to trust Him. Romans 8:28 tells us, *“And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose.”*