

## **Sermon about Psalm 126 on Sunday of Fulfilment 2024 in Antwerp and Brussels**

**Blessing:** Grace to you and peace from him who is and who was and who is to come. (Amen.)

**Sermon: 1.:** 'Are you dreaming? Hey, wake up! The music's playing here.' The teacher had stood unnoticed behind the boy at the window. For almost the whole lesson, he had only been looking out, playing with something invisible on the window frame. He jolts up. The harsh reality has him back. He was far away in his thoughts. Away from the merciless teacher, the uncomprehending parents, the nasty classmates. Simply away.

When the Lord restored the fortunes of Zion,\*  
we were like those who dream.

'Child, do you have to cry again? It's all no use! Yes, I miss dad too. But we have to see that we can cope. Soon the sirens will be wailing again. No, I don't know if he'll return from captivity.'

Restore our fortunes, O Lord, like streams in the Negeb!

'Yes, home is far away and here in Europe I also have to work hard to somehow make ends meet. I clean the toilets at the motorway service station, even though I would have liked to be a teacher. - But I'm getting enough to eat and I'm safe, even though I miss my loved ones and my country very much. But only death awaited me there, from soldiers or hunger. Maybe one day I can return and help rebuild my country.'

Those who sow in tears shall reap with shouts of joy!\*

He who goes out weeping, bearing the seed for sowing, shall

come home with shouts of joy, bringing his sheaves with him.

**2.:** Dreams will come true. Tears are dried. Prisoners will return home. There will be reason to breathe a sigh of relief, to laugh and praise, good things will grow from yesterday's tears, with which one can live and be filled. Jerusalem, the desired place of three religions, the Holy City, which is sinking into the mire of hatred, violence and revenge, will be renewed and become a haven of peace and God's dwelling place with us.

These are marvellous prospects. - He who believes will be blessed, we say disparagingly about such things in German. And yes, it's true: He who believes will be saved!

**3.:** Yes, that is precisely the hope of our faith! St Paul writes: 'But if we believe in the resurrection and it does not take place, we are miserable. We can say today: If we place our hope in a life with God in which there is peace, respite and well-being for all and it does not exist, eternity, then we are miserable. Yes, we can freely admit that to all mockers. We cannot prove it. But we also have nothing to lose.

And we can draw each other's attention to the many signs of this new world that is already growing up hidden in the recesses of walls. The rose that suddenly blooms in my neighbourhood in winter, the people who simply defy the logic of war and violence and eat and drink and talk and celebrate together. The countless people who work every day to care for the sick, free traumatised people from their nightmares and give them the opportunity to dream again, do not leave the dying alone or educate and teach children and think a lot about how to do justice to the individual because they are convinced that they are helping to build a good society.

**4. :** These are not proofs, but indications. And we have even more: God's word and promises. God says: This is how it will be, this is how it will be. God says: I have a future for you with me. God says: Much more will come true than you dare to dream. God says: I will dwell with you, and you will be my peoples, and I myself, I with you, will be your God; and I will wipe away all tears from your eyes, and death will be no more, neither will mourning nor crying nor pain be anymore, for the former things have passed away. Behold, I make all things new! And when God says something, it is true.

**5. :** For the people of ancient Israel, dreaming did not mean having fantasies, but looking to the future. God also invites you and me to dream! It's about focussing on God and his salvation. It's already here. Because God and his salvation are eternal! And eternal means that it has always been and is right now and will always be. When we dream of peace and of a world in which there is no more reason to weep, when we celebrate worship or go through our everyday lives with God, then we are connected to this reality. Then we always have a kind of umbilical cord to eternity. This gives us new hope. It gives us strength to bring this eternal reality into our world.

And when it comes true on a small scale - even now - and thus also gives us a hint and hope for what is to come.

Then our mouth was filled with laughter, and our tongue with shouts of joy;\*  
then they said among the nations, "The Lord has done great things for them."

The Lord has done great things for us; we are glad.\*

**Blessing:** The peace of God, which passes all human dreaming and hoping and understanding, keep your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.