

**Shayla:** Is Psalm 30:6 positive or negative?

**Midrash:**

First, let's examine how twenty different translations have rendered the sentence.

- **NET** In my self-confidence I said, "I will never be upended."
- **NIV** When I felt secure, I said, "I will never be shaken."
- **NLT** When I was prosperous, I said, "Nothing can stop me now!"
- **ESV** As for me, I said in my prosperity, "I shall never be moved."
- **NASB** Now as for me, I said in my prosperity, "I will never be moved."
- **God's Word** When all was well with me, I said, "I will never be shaken."
- **KJV** And in my prosperity I said, I shall never be moved.
- **AKJV** And in my prosperity I said, I shall never be moved.
- **ASV** As for me, I said in my prosperity, I shall never be moved.
- **BBE** When things went well for me I said, I will never be moved.
- **CEB** I was carefree and thought, "I'll never be shaken!"
- **CJV** Once I was prosperous and used to say that nothing could ever shake me.
- **DR** And in my abundance I said: I shall never be moved.
- **Darby** As for me, I said in my prosperity, I shall never be moved.
- **ERV** As for me, I said in my prosperity, I shall never be moved.
- **Recovery** As for me, I said in my prosperity, I will never be shaken.
- **NCV** When I felt safe, I said, "I will never fear."
- **Webster's** And in my prosperity I said, I shall never be moved.
- **WE** As for me, I said in my prosperity, "I shall never be moved."
- **Young's Literal** And I -- I have said in mine ease, 'I am not moved -- to the age.

Some people believe that the Psalmist was putting too much confidence in his quiet, peaceful, and prosperous state as king Hezekiah did in:

- [2 Chronicles 32:24-26 HCSB \(24\)](#) In those days Hezekiah became sick to the point of death, so he prayed to the LORD, and He spoke to him and gave him a miraculous sign. [\(25\)](#) However, because his heart was proud, Hezekiah didn't respond according to the benefit that had come to him. So there was wrath upon him, upon Judah, and upon Jerusalem. [\(26\)](#) Then Hezekiah humbled himself for the pride of his heart--he and the inhabitants of Jerusalem--so the LORD's wrath didn't come on them during Hezekiah's lifetime.

In this view the Geneva commentators, Jamieson-Fausset-Brown, Matthew Poole, Peake's Commentary, and Matthew Henry agree. Even the liberal commentators of Abindon Press' Interpreter's Bible agree!

The key word here is the Hebrew "*shelev*"<sup>1</sup> and according to Gesenius it can mean ease, prosperity, tranquility, or security, all terms that (though not immediate synonyms) are synonymous in their general meaning. Unfortunately, this is the only time the word occurs in the Scriptures, making a solid word study difficult if not impossible.

Having said that we can examine related words such as:

- *Shalev*; safe, at ease, at rest; Zechariah 7:7
- *Shalvah*; rest, ease, security; Psalm 122:7; Proverbs 1:32; Jeremiah 22:21
- *Shalom*; peace, completeness; Job 15:21; Psalm 35:27; 73:3; Jeremiah 33:9

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<sup>1</sup> Strong's #7959

Shalev, in Zechariah 7:7 is written within the context of complacency.

- [Zechariah 7:5-7 HCSB](#) "Ask all the people of the land and the priests: When you fasted and lamented in the fifth and in the seventh *months* for these 70 years, did you really fast for Me? (6) When you eat and drink, don't you eat and drink *simply* for yourselves? (7) Aren't *these* the words that the LORD proclaimed through the earlier prophets when Jerusalem was inhabited and secure, along with its surrounding cities, and when the southern region and the Judean foothills were inhabited?"

Shalvah, in both Proverbs 1:32 and Jeremiah 22:21 possesses equally negative connotations:

- [Proverbs 1:32 HCSB](#) For the waywardness of the inexperienced will kill them, and the complacency of fools will destroy them.
- [Jeremiah 22:21 HCSB](#) I spoke to you when you were secure. You said: I will not listen. This has been your way since youth; indeed, you have never listened to Me.

Even shalom holds a negative or at least a fearful tone in the following two passages:

- [Job 15:21 HCSB](#) Dreadful sounds fill his ears; when he is at peace, a robber attacks him.
- [Psalms 73:3 HCSB](#) For I envied the arrogant; I saw the prosperity of the wicked.

Having said that, the other passages (Psalm 35:27; 122:7 and Jeremiah 33:9) are each positive. Further, if you look carefully, you will see that in each negative example there is a lexical cue as to the negative connotation. In Proverbs, the word complacency is associated with "fools". In Jeremiah, "security" is juxtaposed against "you never listened to me." Job's peace is associated with dreadful sounds and a robber attacking. Psalm 73's prosperity is of the "wicked". So, we have five passages that give a negative sense but with lexical clues and three that give positive connotations.

Now that we see a pattern let's revisit Psalm 30

- [Psalms 30:1-12 HCSB](#) A psalm; a dedication song for the house. Davidic. I will exalt You, LORD, because You have lifted me up and have not allowed my enemies to triumph over me. (2) LORD my God, I cried to You for help, and You healed me. (3) LORD, You brought me up from Sheol; You spared me from among those going down to the Pit. (4) Sing to the LORD, you His faithful ones, and praise His holy name. (5) For His anger lasts only a moment, but His favor, a lifetime. Weeping may spend the night, but there is joy in the morning. (6) When I was secure, I said, "I will never be shaken." (7) LORD, when You showed Your favor, You made me stand like a strong mountain; when You hid Your face, I was terrified. (8) LORD, I called to You; I sought favor from my Lord: (9) "What gain is there in my death, in my descending to the Pit? Will the dust praise You? Will it proclaim Your truth? (10) LORD, listen and be gracious to me; LORD, be my helper." (11) You turned my lament into dancing; You removed my sackcloth and clothed me with gladness, (12) so that I can sing to You and not be silent. LORD my God, I will praise You forever.

There is nothing overtly negative in any of the verses leading up to verse six or even in verse six itself. However, the very next verse speaks of the Lord hiding His face, terrifying David. Verse eight implies that David was out of favor and in verse nine we see him pleading for his life! Then in verse eleven David contrasts his new heart condition with his former lamentable state.

With these in mind I would have to say that I agree with the twenty translation teams and the six different commentators that I was able to consider. I believe that verse 6 must be taken in a negative sense.