

Psalm 132

A prayer for blessing on the sanctuary
A Song of degrees.

Psalm 132:

The author of this psalm has realized that belief in God's promises has formed the basis for the saint's prayer.

Because he believes in those promises, he prays for the current Davidic king.

The psalm may be outlined as follows: a petition to remember David's oath (verses 1-5), a reference to David's trouble in bringing the ark to Jerusalem; a resolution to worship at the tabernacle (verses 6-7), including the recollection of its retrieval; a petition for the ark and present king (verses 8-10); and a reiteration of the Davidic covenant (verses 11-18).

Verses 1-8 (see note on Psalm 120:1-7).

The author and occasion are not specifically mentioned.

However, the bringing of the tabernacle to Jerusalem in David's time seem likely (compare 2 Sam. 6:12-19; with Psalm 132:6-9).

Further, Solomon's quote (of verses 8-10), in his dedication of the temple (2 Chron. 6:41-42), makes that time probable.

Psalm 132 has strong historical implications with regard to the Davidic Covenant (compare 2 Sam. 7:10-14, 16; Psalms 89; 132:10-11), and pronounced messianic and millennial overtones (Psalm 132:12-18).

Essentially, this psalm contains the nation's prayers for David's royal descendants which look ahead, even to Messiah.

- I. Israel's First Prayer (132:1);
- II. David's Vow to God (132:2-9);
- III. Israel's Second Prayer (132:10);
- IV. God's Vow to David (132:11-18).

Verses 1-9:

This section focuses on David fulfilling his vow to God to bring the tabernacle to rest in Jerusalem and thus his descendants are to be remembered by the LORD.

Psalm 132:1 "LORD, remember David, [and] all his afflictions:"

“His afflictions:

This seems to be inclusive from the times of being pursued by Saul (compare 1 Samuel chapters 18-26), and through God’s judgment because David numbered the people (compare 2 Samuel chapter 24).

Perhaps because it focuses on David’s greatest affliction, which that came from not having the ark in Jerusalem.

The LORD did bless David abundantly and frequently.

There is no need for David to continue to ask for blessings on his own personal self.

I believe this is asking the LORD to allow the ark to come to Jerusalem, and a temple be built for it, so that all of David's children and grandchildren will be blessed.

Verses 2-5:

Although the specific vow is not recorded elsewhere in Scripture, the historical circumstances can be found in (2 Sam. chapter 6 and 1 Chron. chapters 13-16).

Psalm 132:2 "How he swore unto the LORD, [and] vowed unto the mighty [God] of Jacob;"

Whom Jacob called so (Gen. 49:24).

And to whom he vowed a vow, and is the first we read of that did make one, and it was concerning the house of God (Gen. 28:17).

And who had an experience of the might and power of God in protecting and defending him from his brother Esau.

Of this oath and vow of David no mention is made elsewhere, but no doubt they were made (see Psalm 119:106).

Of the Messiah's swearing, though upon another account, to whom this may be applied (see Isaiah 45:23).

“The mighty God of Jacob”:

A title last used by Jacob (in Genesis 49:24).

We see the seriousness of this request, when we see that David swore unto the LORD.

He loved God and wanted to build Him a house.

We must be very careful what we swear to do.

David should have checked with God first on this.

God does not take swearing lightly.

In fact, Jesus said swear not at all.

That is the best policy.

Psalm 132:3 "Surely I will not come into the tabernacle of my house, nor go up into my bed;"

The new house and palace David built for himself after he came to the throne, made of cedar (2 Samuel 5:11).

Not that he should never enter into it till he had found a dwelling for God, but that he should not go into it with pleasure till that was done.

For this and what follows are hyperboles, as Kimchi observes, and signify that he should have no peace nor satisfaction of mind till this was accomplished.

It may be applied to our Lord's ascension to heaven, which was not till after he had purchased the church with his blood, which is the temple and habitation of God.

"Nor go up into my bed":

Or "the bed that was made for me"; the royal bed, a bed of down, with soft pillows, fit for a person of such dignity to lie down on.

Ainsworth renders it "the pallets of my bed"; the phrase of going up agrees with the custom of the eastern countries, who have galleries in their chambers where they are set.

At one end of each chamber in their houses there is a little gallery raised three, four, or five feet above the floor, with a balustrade in the front of it, with a few steps likewise leading up to it.

Here they place their beds; so that when they went to bed they might with great propriety be said to go up to it.

But this David could not do with pleasure, so long as there was no place and habitation for God.

Psalm 132:4 "I will not give sleep to mine eyes, [or] slumber to mine eyelids,"

Not that he never would or did take any sleep till this thing was brought about as he had so much at heart.

But that he could not and would not suffer himself to sleep comfortably and quietly because of it.

Aben Ezra interprets it of sleep at noon; the phrases express his great desire and solicitude to have this affair accomplished, and his eager and diligent pursuit of it (see Prov. 6:4).

Of the eager desire of Christ to suffer and die for his people, that they might be brought near to God, and be his dwelling place (see Luke 12:50).

Psalm 132:5 "Until I find out a place for the LORD, a habitation for the mighty [God] of Jacob."

To build a house on for the LORD; which it seems was unknown till the times of David.

For though mention had been made of a place the LORD would choose to cause his name to dwell in, yet the particular place was not pointed out (Deut. 12:11).

David was very solicitous to find it out, and did (1 Chron. 22:1).

"A habitation for the mighty God of Jacob":

See notes on Psalm 132:2.

Or "habitations", or "tabernacles":

The temple, which is meant, which consisting of three parts, the court, the Holy Place, and the Holy of Holies.

This was typical of the human nature of Christ, the temple of his body, the tabernacle of God's pitching (John 2:19).

In which the fullness of the Godhead dwells, the glory of God is seen, and through whom he grants his presence to his people.

And also of the church of God, the temple of the living God, where he dwells and is worshipped.

And that this might be a fit habitation for God was the great desire of the Messiah.

And not only the end and issue of his sufferings and death, but also the design of his preparations and intercession in heaven (John 14:2).

Now we see what the oath he took was all about.

He could not stand the thought of his having a home, and the LORD not having a home.

This is a man devoted to God.

David said, I want this so badly, I cannot sleep until I have it settled where the LORD's house will be built.

The ark had not had a permanent dwelling place since the wilderness wanderings.

David had a beautiful home for himself, and he resolved that God would have a more beautiful place for the ark to rest.

Verses 6-9:

The ark was brought from Kirjath-jearim to Jerusalem (compare 2 Sam. chapter 6; 1 Chron. chapters 13 and 15).

Psalm 132:6 "Lo, we heard of it at Ephratah: we found it in the fields of the wood."

"Heard of it at Ephratah":

Probably referring to David's younger days in Ephratah, which was an earlier name for Bethlehem (compare Ruth 1:1-2; 4:11), when he and his family had heard of the ark but had not seen it.

"Found it in the fields of the wood":

After the ark of the Covenant was returned by the Philistines in the days of Saul (compare 1 Sam. 7:1-2), it rested at the house of Abinadab in Kirjath-jearim until David decided to move it to Jerusalem (compare 2 Sam. chapter 6; 1 Chron. chapters 13 to 16).

The ark symbolized the presence of Almighty God.

How could it be hidden?

David had heard that it was at Ephratah, and he wanted to go get it and make a permanent place for it.

To David, this meant the presence of God in close proximity.

It seems David had searched it out and found it in the field.

This reminds me so much of the dark ages.

Christianity was hidden away.

Thank goodness, someone sought it out and brought it into the Light.

Psalm 132:7 "We will go into his tabernacles: we will worship at his footstool."

“His footstool”:

God’s throne is in heaven (compare Isa. 66:1), and His footstool is on the earth (compare Psalm 99:5), figuratively speaking.

Thus to worship at the ark of the covenant on earth would be, so to speak, at God’s footstool.

David wanted a quick restoration of a place to worship near unto the ark.

He is saying here, that I will bow down before the presence of God, over the ark and will worship my God.

Psalm 132:8 "Arise, O LORD, into thy rest; thou, and the ark of thy strength."

“Arise, O LORD”:

Since the Holy Place contained the bread of the presence (Exodus 25:30; 1 Sam. 21:6), the psalmist refers to moving the ark to Jerusalem.

It seems to me that there were times throughout history, when the presence of God in His church has been at a very low ebb, almost as if the presence was in hiding.

Then a Moses, or a David, or someone of this magnitude then seeks God out and brings Him to the masses.

When the children of Israel moved the ark in the wilderness, the cloud, or the fire, would arise and lead to the next destination.

This is what the psalmist is asking here.

Arise O LORD and lead the procession.

Psalm 132:9 "Let thy priests be clothed with righteousness; and let thy saints shout for joy."

(In 2 Chronicles 6:41); it is, "with salvation" (as in Psalm 132:16).

Either the ministers of the word; who may be said to be clothed with righteousness when they perform their work righteously, and faithfully dispense the word.

And thus keeping back nothing that is profitable, and administer the ordinances according to the rules of Christ.

And when their lives and conversations are agreeable to the Gospel they preach (see Job 29:14).

Or else all true believers; who are priests as well as kings unto God; and who are clothed with the robe of Christ's righteousness.

With the internal graces of the Spirit, and is the new man that has been created in righteousness and true holiness.

And with conversation garments, becoming the Gospel, and their profession of it.

"And let thy saints shout for joy":

The Levites; thy Holy Ones, as the Targum.

So Kimchi, Arama, and others; "the singers in the temple".

But rather the LORD's sanctified ones, true believers under the Gospel dispensation, are meant.

Who shout for joy, and have much reason so to do, at the incarnation of Christ and at his ascension to heaven.

At the Gospel preached by his ministers, and at the robe of righteousness with which they have been clothed.

In (2 Chron. 6:41), it is, "rejoice in goodness"; in the goodness of the LORD.

In the good things bestowed on them, or promised to them.

The priesthood had been in terrible decay, because they had no place to function.

It seems they had been fulfilling more of a civil function than a religious.

There would be priests and high priest sought, those who were righteous men, who were of the tribe of Levi.

These men would not be like the rest of the people, but would be holy men of God, dedicated to the keeping of the temple and God's law.

No man should be chosen for the priesthood, who was not interested in their living holy and separated lives.

The people who loved God would shout for joy, because they would have a place and a presence of God that they could closely relate to.

A nation that has lost their God, is in terrible sad shape.

Verses 10-18:

This section focuses on God's fulfilling His vow to David to perpetuate the Davidic throne and thus his descendants are to be remembered by the LORD.

Verses 10-12:

The words "the LORD has sworn" recall the Davidic covenant (issued in 2 Sam. 7:8-16).

Jesus is the "Anointed" who ultimately fulfills these promises (Luke 1:32-33; Acts 2:30).

Psalm 132:10 "For thy servant David's sake turn not away the face of thine anointed."

A prayer that God's promise and favor would not be withheld from David's descendants on the throne of Judah.

"Thine anointed":

As David had been anointed king (1 Sam. 16:13), so a greater King has been anointed, namely Christ, but not yet seated on the throne (compare Isa. 61:1; Luke 4:18-19).

David knew that God loved him.

He is pleading with God to do this for him, if he would not do it for all.

David even reminds God, that it was He who anointed David to be king.

Some believe this to be Solomon pleading for David, but I believe this is David.

Verses 11-12: God's covenant with David (2 Sam. 23:5), is summarized here (from 2 Sam. 7:11-16 and 1 Kings 9:1-9).

Psalm 132:11 "The LORD hath sworn [in] truth unto David; he will not turn from it; Of the fruit of thy body will I set upon thy throne."

He has made a gracious promise, that was then confirmed by an oath, which we may plead in our present necessities.

That promise was made "in truth," that is, sincerely, so that it will certainly be carried out, so that we may appeal to God, on the ground of his faithfulness, to keep his word.

"He will not turn from it":

We may be certain that he will carry it out. We may appeal to him on the basis of that promise with the utmost confidence.

"Of the fruit of thy body will I set upon thy throne":

Margin, as in Hebrew, "of thy belly."

The throne would descend to his posterity (2 Sam. 7:12; see notes at Psalm 89:3-4).

This is not just speaking of Solomon, who will truly sit upon David's throne for forty years, but is looking unto Jesus Christ, who will sit on the everlasting throne.

The kingdom of Jesus will never end.

In the kingdom of our Lord Jesus, we will be kings and priests.

Not priests, because we are from the Levitical tribe, but because we are sons of God.

This kingdom is not an earthly kingdom, but a heavenly kingdom.

Notice, in the very first line of the verse above "sworn in truth".

God swore upon himself, because there was no greater.

Psalm 132:12 "If thy children will keep my covenant and my testimony that I shall teach them, their children shall also sit upon thy throne for evermore."

This conditional aspect could interrupt the occupation of the throne, but it would not invalidate God's promise to one day seat the Messiah as king forever (compare Ezek. 37:24-28).

The condition of the above verse was more than the physical house of David would do, and so they were divided into two kingdoms.

What David's physical lineage could not do in keeping God's law; the seed of David fulfilled in the person of Jesus Christ.

This kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ, is not only a physical kingdom, but is a spiritual kingdom in that He set it up in all believers.

The biggest word in the verse above is, "if".

You see, the sin of the physical house of David brought their downfall.

Verses 13-18:

This section looks forward prophetically to the day that Jesus Christ, the son of David and the son of Abraham (Matt. 1:1), will be installed by God on the throne of David in the city of God to rule and bring peace on earth, especially Israel (compare Psalms 2, 89, 110; Isa. chapters 25 and 26; Jer. 23:5-6; 33:14-18; Ezek. chapter 37; Dan. 2:44-45; Zech. 14:1-11).

Psalm 132:13 "For the LORD hath chosen Zion; he hath desired [it] for his habitation."

Not only to build upon it the temple in a literal sense, and for the place of his worship.

But also for the seat of his majesty, and over which he has set his Son as King.

And all this from the love that he bears to Zion, which, in a figurative and spiritual sense, is speaking of his church.

Whom the LORD has chosen to privileges, to grace and glory, and for his service and honor (see Psalm 78:67).

“Zion”: Here refers to earthly Jerusalem.

"He hath desired it for his habitation":

Heaven is the habitation of his holiness and glory.

Christ is his dwelling place, in whom all the fullness of the Godhead dwells bodily.

Yet his desire is to his church and people.

His heart is set upon them, and upon their salvation.

His delight is in them, and he takes pleasure in walking with them, and dwelling among them.

They being built up a habitation for God through the Spirit (see Psalm 68:16).

This Scripture, as so many, has a double meaning.

God truly chose mount Zion to be His place of dwelling in the temple Solomon would build.

There is another Zion, the church of Jesus Christ.

God has chosen to dwell in His church.

In the tabernacle in Jerusalem, on mount Zion, the point of contact to God was through the ark of the Covenant.

The point of contact to God for the Christian is in the mighty name of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Psalms 132:14 "This [is] my rest for ever: here will I dwell; for I have desired it."

The rest of my majesty, as the Targum; the place of his rest.

And this being "for ever" shows that not Mount Zion literally, nor the temple, are meant; but the church and people of God, in whom he rests in his love, and rejoices over with joy.

Who are the objects of his delight, and with whom he abides forever.

For this phrase is expressive of pleasure and delight, and of permanency and perpetuity.

"Here will I dwell, for I have desired it":

Not merely by his omnipresence, in which sense that he dwells everywhere, both in heaven and in earth.

Nor only by his omnipotence, by which he upholds all creatures in their being, and so is present with them all.

And they all live and move, and have their being, in him.

This is by his Spirit and grace which is reviving and refreshing the hearts of his people with his gracious presence.

Which is enjoyed in his house and ordinances, and makes them lovely and delightful.

And may be expected there, since he has promised it, and it is so desirable and agreeable to himself to dwell there.

This is a statement from God Himself.

The Zion, spoken of here, is the church.

2 Corinthians 6:16 "And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in [them]; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people."

One of the most heart-warming statements in the Bible, if you are a Christian, is the following.

Revelation 21:3 "And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God [is] with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, [and be] their God."

Psalms 132:15 "I will abundantly bless her provision: I will satisfy her poor with bread."

Margin, surely.

Hebrew, "Blessing I will bless."

A strong affirmation, meaning that he would certainly do it.

That he would do it in every way; that every needed blessing would be imparted.

The word rendered provision is a cognate form of the word in (Psalm 78:25).

Translated meat: "He sent them meat to the full."

It properly refers to food for a journey, but it is applicable to any kind of food.

The original idea is that of food obtained by hunting, as game, venison (Gen. 25:28; Job 38:41).

The meaning here is that God would provide abundantly for their support.

"I will satisfy her poor with bread":

I will give them what they need (see notes at Psalm 37:25).

We read, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you".

Psalms 37:25 "I have been young, and [now] am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread."

The needs of God's people are taken care of, not their greed.

The provision of those who truly love God is a bountiful provision.

Psalm 132:16 "I will also clothe her priests with salvation: and her saints shall shout aloud for joy."

With the garments of salvation, as the Targum; in answer to the petition (Psalm 132:9).

But more is promised than is prayed for, "salvation" including "righteousness" and all of the other blessings.

And may be interpreted, as there.

Either of the ministers of the Gospel clothed with the doctrine of salvation by Christ, coming forth full fraught with it, openly publishing and proclaiming it.

Salvation being made public and manifest by them as a garment, as Aben Ezra observes.

Moreover, Gospel ministers are instruments of saving others.

The Gospel preached by them being the power of God unto salvation, as well as they themselves are saved in the same way (1 Tim. 4:16).

Besides, they are kept by the power of God, and in the hands of Christ.

Who protects them, and as it were covers them with the garment of salvation, while they are publishing it to the world.

To whose reproaches and insults they are exposed.

This may be interpreted of the people of God in common, who are all kings and priests to God.

And are all clothed with the garments of salvation (Isa. 61:10).

Salvation by Christ is brought near to them, is applied to them, and put upon them as a garment.

It is from Christ, and without them, though upon them; it is their clothing and their ornament, as well as their security from sin, law, death, and hell (see Psalm 149:4).

"And her saints shall shout aloud for joy":

Not only "shout", as is entreated (Psalm 132:9); but "shout aloud".

It shall be a jubilee time with them on account of the Gospel of salvation, the joyful sound sounded in their ears by the ministers of it clothed with it; and on account of the salvation itself.

So great, so suitable, so free, so complete and full, and in which the glory of God is so much highly displayed.

And on account of the application of it to themselves, being clothed with it and possessed of the joys of it.

These the Jewish writers generally understand of the Levites.

We remember that the priests are symbolic of the believers in Christ.

Jesus is the High Priest, and we are the priests.

How many times have we spoken of the robe of righteousness that Jesus provides for us being the robe washed in the blood of the Lord?

Salvation is through His shed blood.

The joy that we feel is the joy that only the blessedness of salvation can bring.

Psalm 132:17 "There will I make the horn of David to bud: I have ordained a lamp for mine anointed."

The horn was an emblem of power; and then, of success or prosperity (see notes at Luke 1:69).

The word rendered "to bud" means to grow, or to shoot forth as a plant, or as grass grows.

And then it may be applied to anything which shoots forth or grows.

The allusion here would seem to be to a horn as it shoots forth on the head of an animal.

So David would be endowed with growing strength and would have the means of defending himself against his enemies, and of securing victory.

The language had no original reference to the Messiah, but it is not improperly applied to him (as springing from David in Luke 1:69).

On the word horn (see notes at Psalm 75:4; and compare Psalms 89:17, 89:24; 92:10; 112:9; Daniel 7:8; 8:5).

"I have ordained a lamp for mine anointed":

Margin, a candle.

I have appointed; that is, I have given him that which will always be as a lamp or guide to him; that by which he will see to walk.

I have given him true and precious promises, which will be to him as a lamp, a candle, a lantern is to one walking in the night (see Psalm 18:28, and notes at Psalm 119:105).

We have learned in these studies that the horn is symbolic of the strength or power.

The strength of David budded in the Lord Jesus.

The name of David would be lightened in the seed, who was Jesus Christ the Light.

Jesus was not only the seed of David in the flesh, but was David's God in the Spirit.

Psalm 132:18 "His enemies will I clothe with shame: but upon himself shall his crown flourish."

With the garments of shame, as the Targum.

Very different from the clothing of Zion's priests.

All that are incensed against Christ as a King and Savior shall sooner or later be ashamed.

Either here, when brought to a sense of their evil, to repentance for it, and faith in him.

Or hereafter, at the resurrection, when they will rise to shame and everlasting contempt.

And when they shall see him come in the clouds of heaven, in power and great glory, to judge the world in righteousness (Isa. 45:24).

"But upon himself shall his crown flourish":

Being crowned with glory and honor, as he now is at the right hand of God.

He reigns, and will reign, till all his enemies become his footstool.

His throne is for ever and ever, and his kingdom an everlasting one.

And will be very flourishing in the latter day, when his subjects shall be many.

And when there shall be an abundance of peace and prosperity, and of that no end.

The crown of the Messiah shall flourish on him as a king, shine out and be very conspicuous, as Aben Ezra and Jarchi interpret the word used.

And so his crown as a priest; the same word is used of the holy crown of the priests put upon the mitre, on which Holiness to the Lord was inscribed.

The Septuagint, Vulgate Latin, Syriac, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions, render it, "my holiness".

And, as his own crown is a never-fading one, such a one he will give to his ministers, and all that love him appearing (1 Peter 5:4).

The true enemy, who is just demonstrated in all of these earthly enemies, is Satan, himself.

Jesus defeated Satan on the cross.

The shame of Satan was made worse, when Jesus went into Satan's place of dwelling and brought captivity out with Him.

He took the keys of hell and death away from him as well.

The crown and rule of Jesus is an eternal rule.

It will never diminish.

Psalm 132 Questions

1. What blessing is David really asking for in verse 1 of the 132nd chapter of Psalms?
2. What shows us the seriousness of this request?
3. Jesus said, _____ not at all.
4. What did David say, he would not do, until he found a place for the habitation of God?
5. The ark had not had a dwelling place since when?
6. Where had he heard of the ark as being?
7. What did the ark symbolize?
8. Where had David found it?
9. What does this remind the author of?
10. What is David saying in verse 7?
11. What happens when the Presence of God diminishes in the church?
12. When the ark moved to a new destination, what led it?
13. What were the priests to be clothed in?
14. The priests for the new temple must be from what tribe?
15. Why would the saints shout?
16. A nation, who has lost their God, is in _____ .
17. What two fruit is verse 11 speaking of?
18. Why will the Christians be priests?
19. Who had God sworn by?
20. What the physical lineage of David could not do in keeping Gods law; the seed of David did in the person of _____ .
21. Where has God chosen to dwell?
22. In the tabernacle in Jerusalem, what was their point of contact?
23. What is the point of contact with the Christians?
24. What does the author think to be one of the most heartwarming Scriptures in the Bible?
25. The _____ of God's people are taken care of, not their _____ .

26. Verse 16 says, He will clothe her priests with _____.
27. Who are these priests?
28. What is the horn symbolic of?
29. Jesus was not only the seed of David, but was David's ____.
30. Who is the true enemy?