

## Psalm 132-134

Psalm 132 is a celebration of God's Presence and God's Promise; His presence in Zion, His promise to David. It's not written *by* David, but it centers around events in the life *of* David. Basically it breaks down into 2 sections that deal with the people's prayer in the 1<sup>st</sup> 10 Vs, and God's response in the last 8 Vs.

God's presence and God's promises, not only are they cause for *celebration* they'll make for a sure *foundation* in our lives. God has given us the promises of His word; He is not a man that He should lie. If He says it, He'll do it. So He gives to us His promise that we might have a strong and confident faith. Of course one promise that He gives to us is His *presence*; that He will never leave us nor forsake us but that He will always be with us. Perhaps you remember the words of Jesus in what's become known as "The Great commission. He said, "*Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.*" Matt 28:19-20 He didn't say, "I am with you *most of the time*", He didn't say, "I am with you *when nothing else is going on or occupying My time*." He said, "I'm with you *always even to the end of the age.*" The book of Hebrews underscores His perpetual presence with us again where it says, "*He Himself has said, 'I will never leave you nor forsake you.'*" Heb 13:5 God's presence and God's promises; they're cause for *celebration*; they make for a strong *foundation*.

### Vs1-5

The psalmist here is calling upon the Lord that He might remember David's person; his service and his suffering (his afflictions) in seeking to establish a permanent residence for the presence of the Lord (the Ark of the Covenant). Wanting Him to remember David's work and honor David's heart; it's sort reminds me of Nehemiah. Over and over again throughout the book of Nehemiah you'll see the rundown of what Nehemiah has been doing; the good works he's done or is doing for the glory of the Lord. Though it wasn't brought about on a primrose/problem free kind of path, it was through much difficulty; affliction and distress; sometimes people complaining, other times the enemy coming against him.

He would come to a point whereby he would reflect on what he'd done, recount his works unto the Lord and then say things like, "*Remember me, my God, for good, according to all that I have done for this people.*" Neh 5:19 He said, "*Remember me, O my God, concerning this, and do not wipe out my good deeds that I have done for the house of my God, and for its services!*" Neh 13:14 and Again, "*Remember me, O my God, concerning this also, and spare me according to the greatness of Your mercy!*" Neh 13:22

Here in Vs 1 we're reading, "Lord, remember David and all his afflictions" (the way he *served* You, the things he *suffered for* You). Here's the good news, God does; He does remember you, how you serve Him; the ways in which you're afflicted due to your faithfulness to Him.

Heb 6:10 says, "*For God is not unjust to forget your work and labor of love which you have shown toward His name, in that you have ministered to the saints, and do minister.*" God *remembers* you and God will *reward* you, even as David discovered you can't out bless, you can't out give God.

You recall the situation... (you can refresh your memory in 2<sup>nd</sup> Sam 7) David was distressed; God had done so much *for* him; had blessed him, had given victory in countless wars *to* him, had given him rest from his enemies all around and had provided for him to live in a nice palace; cedar walls and all of that; he had gold and silver, the spoils of war. Then he thought, "Man this isn't right, here I live in this nice house made of cedar and the presence of the Lord (via the Ark of the Covenant) is in an old ratty tent." So He purposed in his heart that he was going to build a permanent structure (a temple) so that the presence of the Lord could dwell there.

Nathan the prophet said, "Do all that's in your heart." Later that night God called Nathan to his office and said, "Hey, you spoke out of turn, I don't want David to build My house. He's a man of war and has too much blood on his hands. I'll allow his son to build My house." The idea being that God didn't want His name to be associated with violence, warfare and bloodshed; but peace; He didn't want people to be intimidated *by* Him but rather that they would have desire to *approach* Him that they might reconcile and walk *with* Him. So Nathan went back to David the next day and said, "Hey, God said 'No', you can't build His house."

But here's the cool part, rather than complain, we see the servant's heart emerge in David. He said, "Ok, I might not be able to *construct* it, but I'll draw up the plans and gather all the materials *for* it." He was just willing, just wanting to serve the Lord in whatever way was available to him, if it wasn't exactly what he was thinking it didn't matter, he'd do what he could. But his desire was to invest in the kingdom, to do something good for God and his desire was an evidence of his devotion.

It showed where his heart was, he was able to stop, look around and consider the goodness of God toward his life. God's grace, His mercy, His provision, His protection, His salvation, His goodness, His lovingkindness and compassion; and he thought, "This isn't right; God's given so much to me yet what have I really done for Him? I'm not going to live in this palace while God's tent looks poverty stricken." So he reprioritized, he didn't feel right about focusing all of his resources upon himself while contributing so little to the Lord.

It's a good heart check that we all do well to occasionally stop and evaluate how and in what way we're giving of ourselves to the Lord. Where our priorities are at and how much time or what amount of our finances that we're setting apart to the Lord Vs focusing upon ourselves; make sure that somehow and in some way you're serving, you're contributing to the kingdom. God has made an investment into your life; stop and meditate upon that; what it means, what it cost Him, and how it is that you should respond?

David was willing to sacrifice to serve the Lord, it cost him to provide the materials for the temple. The wealth he turned over to Solomon came from the spoil of many of the battles he'd fought. There was hardship and affliction tied to David's service; even the property that the temple was built upon cost David a great deal of pain (2 Sam 24). So David sacrificed, and he suffered in his service to the Lord; but it was in his heart to establish a dwelling place for the Ark; a place for the presence of God to dwell with permanency.

Vs 6-9

Where it says, "Arise O Lord, to Your resting place" the idea is that they're going to transport the Ark from where it was being currently kept to Jerusalem, it's new (and meant to be) permanent location.

Couple things I want to point out in passing here, #1 Vs 7. The psalmist says, "I want to go into the *house* of the Lord and worship at the *feet* of the Lord." I love that; it should be cry that compels the heart of every child of God, we should long to spend time *with* God, just worshiping *before* God, waiting *upon* God desiring to feast on the word *of* God.

That's an *idealistic* desire; unfortunately it's not always a *realistic* desire. We have this crazy thing to contend with called our flesh, and having a sin nature we gravitate naturally toward the things of the flesh. But we have to cultivate through discipline a life led in the Spirit; we're exhorted in the scriptures to crucify our flesh and make no provision for it so as to fulfill it's lusts. May our hearts hunger for more of the things of the Spirit and less for the things of self. "Let us go into His tabernacle; let us worship at His footstool."

The 2<sup>nd</sup> thing I want to point out is found in Vs 9, "Let Your priests be clothed with righteousness" you'd think that's be a statement that would go with out saying. But integrity in ministry is such an important thing; holiness toward the Lord and goodness toward men. Pray for me, pray for the leadership here, pray for your pastor (if you're from another fellowship); that as ministers unto the Lord that we would be clothed in righteousness. Not just positionally in Christ (we all have been gifted that) but inwardly, (in our motives), practically in our dealings with people. We want to reflect and represent the person of Jesus Christ *accurately*. We want to walk *sensitively* to the Holy Spirit and toward the people of God. It's something we all need...

Vs10-12

This takes us back to what I was sharing earlier in how you can't out bless, you can't out give God. David wanted to bless the Lord, wanted to build a house for the Lord. God said to David, "That's awesome David that you've found it in your heart to build Me a house. But here's what's going to happen, I'm going to build *you* a house and your throne will be established forever." You can't out give God, you can't out bless the Lord...

2 Aspects to this promise of God, 1 conditional, 1 unconditional; the unconditional element? That One of David's lineage would rule and reign upon his throne eternally; that was a promise issued unconditionally; it's fulfillment *specifically* as you know is found in the Person of Jesus Christ who is both the root and the offspring of David. The conditional aspect is that one from his body would sit upon the throne *perpetually* from that day forward *if* (Vs 12) "your sons will keep My covenant and My testimony which I shall teach them."

Perhaps you're thinking, "Well, there's no son of David sitting upon a throne in Israel today..." That's exactly right; they didn't keep the covenant; they didn't honor the word of God. As a matter of fact Solomon himself didn't live his whole life remaining faithful to God. So even the 1<sup>st</sup> son of David to sit upon the throne after him strayed, there were only a handful who saw revival, the majority of them were ungodly and therefore God gave them over to captivity in Babylon.

But the Lord has sworn in truth to David and will not turn from it; Jesus Christ will rule and reign upon the throne of David eternally fulfilling God's word, God's promise to David personally.

Vs13-18

The people pray, the Lord responds in promise. Now Jerusalem (geographically, geologically) isn't really this amazing place. What makes it special is the fact that God (through simple sovereignty) chose it; it wasn't special so God chose it, God chose it so it's special. That's your story and mine as well. We're not special therefore God chose us, God chose us therefore we're special. What makes you special or me special isn't me or you; it's Christ in you, it's Christ in me; it's God's work that's amazing, not my work.

God says here, "I will provide abundantly, I will bless liberally; the strength of David will grow exponentially." with regard to Christ "I will clothe His enemies with shame but upon Himself His crown shall flourish." The people have prayed, God has promised and Christ will be exalted.

Psalm 133

Vs1

Few things here quickly; 1<sup>st</sup> of all unity requires family. The reference here is to "brethren" that is, the body of Christ. We talked Sunday morning about the conflict that occurs between light and darkness; you can't be unequally yoked with the unbeliever; what fellowship has righteousness with lawlessness; Christ with Belial, or the believer with the unbeliever?

But as it pertains to brethren we're to strive to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. God's already *created* the unity; we're a body, different members doing different things, there's diversity yet there's a unity. We don't have to *make* unity, just *maintain* unity.

Doesn't mean we have to see eye to eye on non-essential issues; you might be a mid-trib guy; I'm a pre-trib guy that's ok. We're still brothers.

David says here that hanging out with a group of likeminded brothers/sisters is #1 "Good" and #2 it's "pleasant". Now some things are good, they just aren't pleasant. Strenuous exercise may be good, but it's not pleasant, eating healthy can be good, but it's not pleasant, mandatory community service might be good, it's no pleasant).

On the flip side some things might be pleasant but they're not good; (eating junk food is pleasant, it's not good; sitting around being lazy can be pleasant, but it's not always good). However likeminded fellowship in the Lord is both good *for* us, and it's pleasant *to* us as believers. It's edifying, it's encouraging.

You know there's a lot that we've learned as a fellowship, as leadership due to this time of community crisis. Yet we've also been blessed to realize with a heightened sense of awareness (as people have joined us from literally all over the country coming here to serve in that spirit of unity/like mindedness in the Lord), that it's good to dwell together; to fellowship with one another and get to know each other in the Lord. I've made a lot of friends that I'd have otherwise never known, yet there's a bond that takes place, a goodness/pleasantness that transpires in the time of fellowship.

So there's a *goodness*, a *pleasantness* that take place in unified fellowship; it's also a *witness* to the world. Jesus said, "*By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.*" John 13:35 In John 17 He amplified His point when He prayed for you and me saying, "*...that they all may be one, as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You; that they also may be one in Us, that the world may believe that You sent Me.*" John 17:21 The love of God *in* you, on display *through* you toward one another will convince the world of the reality of Christ.

It was a few weeks ago, (I've shared this story a # of times since) that this big ol' Italian man named Chris Phillips comes up to me in the food tent and says, "I wanna be a born again Christian! I've never sensed this kind of love, never seen this kind of love...since my dear momma (God rest her soul) I've never felt anything like this." The love of God He was seeing and sense drew him to Christ. Christ centered unity, there's a goodness *to* it, a pleasantness *about* it, and a witness that takes place *through* it. (But wait...there's more!)

Vs 2-3

Unity in the body brings a blessing with it, there's an anointing that transpires through it. The oil that Moses used to pour over Aaron's head was the anointing oil that had a sweet fragrance to it, a very specifically ordained purpose to it. As you know the anointing oil in the scriptures was to speak of the sweetness, the anointing and empowering of the Holy Spirit upon a person's life. It started at the head and ran down upon the body from there.

It's not something that we work *up*, it's something that God sends *down* and pours *out*. But as the body we have to be connected to the Head; it starts with Jesus; as we're connected with Jesus, abiding *in* Jesus we benefit and are blessed through the fragrance of the Spirit being poured out upon us as well. Unity is always found when the body is linked to the Head; coming together in Christ. It's when one member or the other is "out of joint" that disunity takes place.

So there's an anointing, it's also refreshing and refocusing to be tucked away for awhile with like minded believers; like the dew of Hermon descending upon the Mts of Zion. It's a source a refreshment; productivity and fruitfulness. Discord wears us out, unity refreshes the soul.

So much to be blessed *by* and benefit from in the Spirit of unity; the goodness, pleasantness, the witness, the anointing (the dynamic that takes place in the corporate gathering that we don't get when we're alone), the refreshing and the fruitfulness. "Behold how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!"

Psalm 134

Vs 1-3

Bless the Lord all you servants of the Lord. I venture to say that there are those of you here who have *never* raised your hands in worship to the Lord. Just saying, "Lord I surrender *to* You, I'm open *before* You, I want to receive *from* You all that You have for me." The bible exhorts us, "Lift up your hands in the sanctuary and bless the Lord."

If you raise your hands *up* to bless the Lord (Vs 2), the Lord will reach *down* His hands to bless you (Vs 3). It blesses God when we humble ourselves, set our pride aside and just worship Him.

He's available to you 24/7-365; day or night. Vs 1 here is speaking of worshiping the Lord throughout the night. Listen, "*He who keeps you will not slumber. Behold, He who keeps Israel Shall neither slumber nor sleep.*" Ps 121:3-4 The bible teaches that sleep is a gift from God to His people; but the day and the night are both alike to Him, when you sleep He stays up, He's watching *over* you, taking care *of* you; and when you wake He's still with you; He never leaves you nor forsakes you.

So no need to fret, no need to worry. Just, "Be still, and know that I am God." (Ps 46:10)

Bless the Lord...and so be blessed *by* the Lord...

Prayer Points:

God we're so thankful for Your presence, we're so thankful for the precious promises of Your word. Help us Lord that we not be carnal or reveling in immaturity, but rather that we endeavor to maintain the Spirit of unity, in the bond of peace; Lord pour out Your Spirit and may we lead lives that bless You, and that are blessed *by* You.