

Psalm 122 - The City of the Pilgrim:-

This Psalm is a reflection of a visit to Jerusalem by the pilgrim. By indicating that the journey has been accomplished it acts as a sequel to the two previous Psalms. Either the pilgrim is still in Jerusalem about to leave for home, or he is back home reminiscing about his recent visit.

Verses 1 – 2, Joy in Pilgrimage:- The Psalmist recalls with what joy he responded to the invitation to join a group of pilgrims. Now that the journey is over he can remember that he has actually stood in the Holy City, the desire expressed at end of every Passover meal – ‘*next year in Jerusalem*’.

Verses 3 – 5, Impressions of Jerusalem:- The emphasis in these verses is on Jerusalem’s function in uniting the people. Many of those present in the city would be visitors especially there for the feast celebrations. The verb used for ‘*bound together*’ in verse 3 usually refers to close human associations. On the completion of any ‘pilgrimage’ it is easy to share thoughts and experiences of the journey. Friendships made on these occasions are often close and long-lasting. The going up of the tribes accentuates this togetherness and the attendant sense of fellowship.

Verses 6 – 9, Prayer for Jerusalem:- Before leaving to return home, the pilgrim asks his companions to pray for the prosperity and peace of the city. Remember that the Temple was seen as the dwelling place of the Lord God. – Read Isaiah chapter 6 verses 1 – 5.
Make this request your prayer this week!

The prophet Ezekiel in chapters 40 - 47 gives a vivid picture of the dwelling place of the Lord God in the restored Temple in Jerusalem; this vision still awaits fulfillment. As Christians we look forward to the New Jerusalem described in Revelation chapters 21 and 22. The presence of the Lord God in the midst of His people reflects the desire of the People of God down the ages.

*“A reminder that
Here we have no abiding city, and
Along with pilgrims down the ages
We journey on.
Day by day.
Step by step.
Seeking, always seeking our first love.
The reality of the presence of the Living God.
And He is here,
Walking the Way with us.”*

From ‘Pilgrimage’ © TWB 2010

1) *O what their joy and their glory must be,
those endless Sabbaths the blessed ones see;
crown for the valiant, to weary ones rest:
God shall be all, and in all ever blest.*

2) *Truly, “Jerusalem” name we that shore,
city of peace that brings joy evermore;
wish and fulfillment are not severed there,
nor do things prayed for come short of the prayer.*

3) *There, where no troubles distraction can bring,
we the sweet anthems of Zion shall sing;
while for thy grace, Lord, their voices of praise
thy blessed people eternally raise.*

4) *Now, in the meantime, with hearts raised on high,
we for that country must yearn and must sigh,
seeking Jerusalem, dear native land,
through our long exile on Babylon’s strand.*

5) *Low before him with our praises we fall,
of whom, and in whom, and through whom are all;
of whom, the Father; and in whom, the Son;
through whom, the Spirit, with them ever One.*

Peter Abelard 12 C.