

Psalm 131 - The Trust of the Pilgrims:-

Although this is essentially a song of trust it reads like a confession.

Verses 1 - 2; A Spirit of Humility:- As a pilgrim the author has left behind ambition and desire for the things of this world. He has “*quieted his soul like a child quieted at it’s mothers breast:*” The picture of a fractious baby quietened and satisfied with a cuddle and a feed. The pilgrim has found that his every need is satisfied in the Lord.

Verse 3; A Desire for Israel:- As in the preceding Psalm the writer expresses the desire that others in Israel may come to know his inner faith and peace.

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Psalm 132 - The Assurance of the Pilgrims:-

For the background to this Psalm see 1 Samuel chapter 6, verses 1 - 2: 10 - 16 and verse 19 - chapter 7, verse 2. Also 2 Samuel chapter 6, verses 1 - 15. The Psalm is celebrating the return of the Ark of the Lord back to the City of Zion. It may have been included in these *Songs of Ascents* as a processional song for a group of pilgrims on the final stage of their journey. It is a reminder for us of the long historical link of the Jewish people with the ancient city of Jerusalem / Zion.

Verses 1 - 5; The faithfulness of King David remembered:- David was instrumental in finding a site for the Temple to contain the Ark. He also amassed building materials for its construction but was forbidden by the Lord God to actually begin the work - see 2 Samuel chapter 7. The building of the temple was left to his son Solomon.

Verses 6 - 10; The finding and return of the Ark of the Covenant:- See the background readings above.

Verses 11 - 12; The Promise to David:- See 2 Samuel chapter 7, verses 10 - 16. Sadly, after the death of Solomon the kingdom was divided with only the tribes of Judah and Benjamin remaining faithful to the Temple worship in Jerusalem. (1 Kings chapter 12).

Verses 13 - 18; The Promise of the Lord to Zion:- The promises here are being fulfilled down the ages. The sinfulness of mankind has broken the covenant. However the Lord is faithful and His Word remains sure.

Read Acts chapter 2, verses 29 – 36. Our Lord Jesus Christ, descendant of David now reigns in glory. As His Pilgrim People we journey on - our assurance as Christians being the words of the Lord Jesus Himself - “*I go to prepare a place for you that where I am you may be also*” the Gospel of John, chapter 14, verses 1 - 3.

*Break thou the bread of life, O Lord, to me,
as thou didst break the loaves beside the sea.
Beyond the sacred page I seek thee Lord;
my spirit longs for thee, O living Word!*

*Thou art the Bread of Life, O Lord, to me,
thy holy word the truth that saveth me;
give me to eat and live with thee above;
teach me to love thy truth, for thou art love.*

*O send thy Spirit Lord, now unto me,
that he may touch my eyes, and make me see;
show me the truth concealed within thy word,
and in thy book revealed I see the Lord.*

*Bless Thou the Bread of Life to me, to me,
as thou didst bless the loaves by Galilee;
then shall all bondage cease, all fetters fall;
and I shall find my peace, my all in all.*

Mary Artemesia Lathbury, (1841-1913);