

# PSALMS

## Chapter 132

*The LORD Has Chosen Zion*

A Song of Ascents.

**Remember, O LORD, in David's favor, all the hardships he endured, 2 how he swore to the LORD and vowed to the Mighty One of Jacob, 3 "I will not enter my house or get into my bed, 4 I will not give sleep to my eyes or slumber to my eyelids, 5 until I find a place for the LORD, a dwelling place for the Mighty One of Jacob." 6 Behold, we heard of it in Ephrathah; we found it in the fields of Jaar. 7 "Let us go to his dwelling place; let us worship at his footstool!" 8 Arise, O LORD, and go to your resting place, you and the ark of your might. 9 Let your priests be clothed with righteousness, and let your saints shout for joy. 10 For the sake of your servant David, do not turn away the face of your anointed one. 11 The LORD swore to David a sure oath from which he will not turn back: "One of the sons of your body I will set on your throne. 12 If your sons keep my covenant and my testimonies that I shall teach them, their sons also forever shall sit on your throne." 13 For the LORD has chosen Zion; he has desired it for his dwelling place: 14 "This is my resting place forever; here I will dwell, for I have desired it. 15 I will abundantly bless her provisions; I will satisfy her poor with bread. 16 Her priests I will clothe with salvation, and her saints will shout for joy. 17 There I will make a horn to sprout for David; I have prepared a lamp for my anointed. 18 His enemies I will clothe with shame, but on him his crown will shine."**

**Ps 132** A prayer for God's favor on the son of David who reigns on David's throne—as the structure makes clear (and see note on v. 10). Its language suggests a date early in the monarchy. The venerable belief that it was composed for the dedication of the temple may be correct (compare vv. 8–10 with 2Ch 6:41–42), but the possibility cannot be ruled out that it was used in the coronation ritual (cf. Ps 2; 72; 110). The author of Chronicles places the prayer (or a portion of it) on the lips of the king himself. In the postexilic liturgy it had Messianic implications. (CSB)

Two verses of petition (vv. 1, 10) are each followed (in Hebrew) by two four-line stanzas, all having an identical form: an introductory line followed by a three-line quotation (see the structure of these quotations). A final couplet brings the prayer to its climactic conclusion. The four stanzas, together with the final couplet, ground the prayer made in vv. 1, 10. Verses 2–9 appeal to David's oath to the Lord to find a "place" for the Lord and to his bringing the ark to its "resting place," while vv. 11–18 appeal to the Lord's oath to David and to his election of Zion as his "resting place." (CSB)

Remembers how David brought the ark of the covenant into Jerusalem (2Sm 6–7). Likely written by Solomon to underscore the significance of his bringing the ark out of the tabernacle and into the new temple he had built (2Ch 5; cf 2Ch 6:41, when Solomon uses vv 8–11). The psalm is also a meditation on God's promises to David and his descendants.

Format: Vv 1–5, a place for the Lord; vv 6–7, a place found; vv 8–10, procession with the ark; vv 11–12, David's throne; vv 13–18, Zion chosen. (TLSB)

The 132<sup>nd</sup> psalm is a psalm of prayer in which Solomon, or the people of Israel, pray for the preservation of the priesthood and the kingdom. That is, they pray for the spiritual and worldly authorities: for God's Word and temporal peace. For where these both stand well, things go well. The psalmist goes on to tell how such a prayer is not only heard, but that God has promised with an oath to preserve the kingdom and the priesthood in Jerusalem and to dwell there himself. He will give all blessings and grace himself and bring their enemies down to disgrace, so long as they also keep his Commandments and be obedient to him. (Reading the Psalms with Luther)

Psalm 132 connects the songs of ascents with the Messianic promise. (PBC)

**132:1** *remember*. The word includes the meaning of acting on what is remembered, and so this is a prayer for the Lord to fulfill his promises to David who was faithful to the Lord. (A Commentary on the Psalms - Ross)

*hardships*. Those he took on himself in his vow (vv. 2–5; see Nu 30:13, where the same technical term for a self-denying oath is used). (CSB)

**132:2** *He swore to the Lord*. This prayer for David's son is grounded in the special relationship between David and the Lord, as epitomized in their mutual oaths (see vv. 11–12). In 2Sa 6–7, which narrates the events here recalled, David's oath is not mentioned. (CSB)

Interplay between what David swore to God and what God swore to David. (TLSB)

*Jacob*. A synonym for Israel (see Ge 32:28). (CSB)

**132:3–5** Psalm is about David's vow to the Lord, but it is not specifically ascribed to David, as he is referred to in past tense (v 1). (TLSB)

**132:5** *find a place for the Lord* – A priority of David's reign was to establish a home for the ark of the covenant, which had not had an appropriate home since the tabernacle at Shiloh had been destroyed. At first the prophet Nathan encouraged this project, but then the Lord revealed that it would be David's son who would complete the project. Though David could not finish the project himself, he made preparations for the building with the encouragement and support of the people of Israel. (PBC)

God was specially present above the mercy seat of the ark of the covenant (Ex 25:17–22). In bringing the ark and the sacrificial service of the tabernacle to Jerusalem, David understood that the Lord would dwell with His people. (TLSB)

**132:6** *we*. The Israelites, who heard about the ark of the covenant, came from far and near to witness its installation in Jerusalem and to worship where God dwells. (TLSB)

*it ... it*. Often thought to refer to the ark, but more likely it refers to the call to worship that follows (in Hebrew the pronoun is feminine, but the Hebrew for "ark" is masculine). (CSB)

*Ephrathah*. The region around Bethlehem, David's hometown (see Ru 4:11; Mic 5:2). (CSB)

Bethlehem, where both David and Jesus were born. (TLSB)

*fields of Jaar.* The call to worship is depicted as emanating from David's city and the city where the ark had been since the days of Samuel (see 1Sa 7:1). The call appears to come from a time after the temple had been built—thus involving a poetic compression of events. (CSB)

Kiriath-jearim (cf 1Sm 6:21). The ark of the covenant had been kept here before David brought it to Jerusalem. (TLSB)

**132:7** *dwelling place.* The tabernacle. (TLSB)

*footstool.* A metaphor linking the heavenly throne with the earthly; when God sits on his heavenly throne, his earthly throne is his footstool (“his holy mountain.”) (CSB)

The ark, as the point of contact between heaven and earth (cf Is 66:1). (TLSB)

**132:8** *arise.* Although the Hebrew omits (a common feature in Hebrew poetry) an introductory word, such as “saying,” vv. 8–9 are probably words on the lips of the worshippers. See introduction to Ps 24. (CSB)

*resting place.* As the promised land was Israel's place of rest at the end of her wanderings (see Nu 10:33; Jos 1:13; Mic 2:10), so the temple was the Lord's resting place after he had been moving about in a tent (see 2Sa 7:6; see also 1Ch 28:2). The expression may suggest that the temple was the place of God's throne (v. 14). (CSB)

*ark of your might.* Where God is present in His holiness is a place of power, as poor Uzzah discovered (2Sm 6:5–8). (TLSB)

Verses 8 and 9 are based on the lines that were recited whenever the ark was moved during the wilderness years (Numbers 10:35). (PBC)

**132:9** *clothed.* Beyond their normal priestly garb—may their ministry bear the character of (see Job 29:14; Pr 31:25), i.e., result in. (CSB)

Imagery is often used in Scripture (e.g., Gn 3:21; Jb 29:14; Eph 6:14; Rv 7:13–14) and is reflected in the white garments of the priests (Ex 28:39). (TLSB)

*righteousness.* Since the corresponding word in v. 16 is “salvation,” the same word used by the author of Chronicles when quoting this verse (2Ch 6:41), and since “righteousness” and “salvation” are often paralleled (40:10; 51:14; 71:15; 98:2; Isa 45:8; 46:13; 51:5–6; 56:1; 59:17; 60:17–18; 61:10; 62:1), the reference is clearly to God's righteousness that effects the salvation of his people. (CSB)

**132:10** *do not turn away.* Do not refuse his petitions (as in 1Ki 2:16–17, 20; see 1Ki 8:59; 2Ch 6:41–42). If, as some have proposed, the petitions in vv. 1, 10 form a frame around the first half of the psalm, the second half offers assurance that the prayer will be heard (perhaps spoken by a priest or Levite). In any event, David's vow to provide the Lord a dwelling place, which would be for his royal sons and for Israel a house of prayer (see 1Ki 8:27–53; 9:3; 2Ch 7:15–16; Isa 56:7), is made the basis for the appeal that God will hear his anointed's prayer. (CSB)

*your anointed one.* A king was installed by being anointed with oil (e.g., 1Sm 10:1; 2Sm 2:4; 5:3; 2Ki 9:3). Christ means “the Anointed One.” The anointed kings in David's line point

forward to their descendant Jesus, who was anointed by the Holy Spirit to be Savior and King. He will not turn away His face from those who call on Him. (TLSB)

**132:11–12** The Lord’s covenant with David is recalled, as grounds for the prayer. These and vv. 13–18 are a poetic recollection of 1Ki 9:1–5 (see 2Ch 7:11–18). (CSB)

**132:11** *swore...a sure oath.* 2Sa 7 does not mention an oath, but elsewhere God’s promise to David is called a covenant (89:3, 28, 34, 39; 2Sa 23:5; Isa 55:3), and covenants were made on oath. (CSB)

God’s promise to David is given in 2Sm 7:12. (TLSB)

*sons of your body* – Not just the establishment of David’s lineage as the true kings of Israel, but a prophecy of the “one” who will hold the throne “forever”; i.e., Christ. (TLSB)

**132:12** *covenant ... testimonies.* The stipulations of the Sinai covenant, which all Israelites were to keep. (CSB)

A treaty, usually between a greater king and a lesser, establishing the terms of the relationship. Many kings in David’s dynasty fell away from God. Jesus, the Son of David, fulfilled all of God’s Law on our behalf, thus establishing this promise. (TLSB)

**132:13–16** The Lord’s election of Zion recalled, as grounds for the prayer. (CSB)

**132:13** *desired it for his dwelling.* David’s and the Lord’s desires harmonize (see Dt 12:5–14). (CSB)

**132:15** The Lord enthroned in his resting place (see vv. 8, 14) will bless the land, making it a place of rest for his people (see Dt 12:9; Jos 1:13; 1Ki 5:4). (CSB)

God will “abundantly” provide for Jerusalem’s physical needs, and the temple will supply spiritual nourishment. Looks forward to the Church and the “bread” of the Sacrament. (TLSB)

**132:16** *her priests I will clothe with salvation* – Parallels v 9, making it clear that righteousness comes only from salvation, both of which must be “put on” (Eph 4:22–24; Col 3:10–14), as we are robed in Christ. (TLSB)

*saints* – The blessing goes from David, to the priests, to all the people. (TLSB)

**132:17–18** Concluding word of assurance, which addresses the petition (vv. 1, 10) directly and climactically. (CSB)

**132:17** *horn.* Symbolizes strong one, that is king.). (CSB)

David will have a descendant of unusually great power (cf Lk 1:69). (TLSB)

*prepared a lamp for.* Symbolizes the continuance of the Davidic dynasty in the city where God had chosen to cause his Name to dwell. (CSB)

Because of their poor leadership the temple built by Solomon was finally destroyed and the nation went into captivity. The rule of the Davidic dynasty over the land of Israel ended.

Nevertheless, the royal line of David was preserved until Jesus was born as the son of Mary and the heir of Joseph. (PBC)

**132:18** *clothe ... with shame*. Ironic parallel to vv 9, 16; God's enemies are clothed not with righteousness and salvation but with the shame of their own guilt. (TLSB)

*crown* – Diadem, a thin gold circlet. (TLSB)

*will shine*. Lit. “blossom”—subtly evoking the imagery: grow (v. 17) and blossom. (CSB)

**Ps 132** One of David's sons, the Anointed One, will be enthroned forever. He will clothe His people with righteousness and salvation. This psalm curses the enemies of God's Anointed, and He will “clothe [them] with shame” (v 18). Our sins would make us God's enemies. And yet, God dwells with us and clothes us with His righteousness and salvation. In David's Son, Jesus Christ, the incarnate God tabernacles with His people. He is still actually present in His Church through His Word and Sacraments. God swore an oath to work this salvation, and, like David, we can trust His promises. • O, Lord, we praise You for dwelling with us. Clothe us with the righteousness and salvation of Your Anointed One, Jesus Christ, our King. In His name. Amen. (TLSB)