

“The House of God”  
Psalm 132  
(Preached at Trinity, September 22, 2013)

I’m supplying these notes for the benefit of busy pastors who may be engaged in bi-vocational work, feeling the pressure of preparing to preach twice on the Lord’s Day while trying to balance full-time secular work as well as caring for their families. While the notes of another man are no substitute for personal study, I pray that these may aid in the process of preparing to preach.

**Disclaimer:** These are the actual notes I bring with me to the pulpit, which I follow loosely. They are not designed for publication. While I try to make every effort to give proper credit to my sources from the pulpit, adequate citations will sometimes be absent from my notes. If anyone feels their intellectual material has been used without adequate citation, please contact me and I’ll make immediate correction giving credit.

1. This is the 13<sup>th</sup> of the 15 Psalms of Ascent. While most of the Psalms of Ascent are very brief this psalm is much longer at 18 verses.  
While there are still two psalms remaining in the Psalms of Ascent this one serves as a great climax. You can almost feel the sense of excitement at the prospect of entering the house of God for worship.  
**Psalm 132:7 KJV** - "We will go into his tabernacles: we will worship at his footstool"  
**NAU** - "Let us go into His dwelling place; Let us worship at His footstool."
2. It is a repeat of the passion from **Psalm 122**  
**Psalm 122:1 KJV** - "I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the LORD."
3. Some believe this psalm is about the ascent of the ark to Jerusalem during the days of David. It is the only psalm that mentions the Ark of the Covenant.  
Most likely it was written by Solomon at the dedication of the temple which he built. This would be consistent with **2 Chron. 6-7**. As they carried the ark into the temple Solomon lifted up a prayer that God would fill the place with His presence.  
And his prayer was answered:  
**2 Chronicles 7:1-3 KJV** - "Now when Solomon had made an end of praying, the fire came down from heaven, and consumed the burnt offering and the sacrifices; and the glory of the LORD filled the house. <sup>2</sup> And the priests could not enter into the house of the LORD, because the glory of the LORD had filled the LORD'S house. <sup>3</sup> And when all the children of Israel saw how the fire came down, and the glory of the LORD upon the house, they bowed themselves with their faces to the ground upon the pavement, and worshipped, and praised the LORD, *saying*, For *he is good*; for his mercy *endureth* for ever."
4. This is the great plea for every true church today—that the glory of God would come down. We desire beautiful buildings that exalt the greatness of our God, but the greatest cathedrals without the presence of God are nothing more than tombs to house dead men. A mud brick hut with dirt floors is a glorious place if God’s Word is faithfully preached and God’s presence is manifest.  
Steven Lawson writes, “What makes God’s house so special is not the building or the architectural style or the materials. What truly counts is the spiritual reality of what happens inside that place—the purity of the pulpit, the fidelity of the ministries, and the sincerity of the hearts. This is what makes God’s house a true place of worship” (*Holman OT Commentary*, p303).
5. This psalm divides nicely into three sections
  - I. The Priority of worship – **Verses 1-7**
  - II. The Passion for God’s presence – **Verses 8-10**
  - III. The Promise of God’s covenant blessings – **Verses 11-18**

6. In essence, the first half reveals the resolve of God's people towards God; the second half reveals God's resolve towards His people. It is a petition by God's people and God's covenant answer to their prayer. Christ permeates this psalm.

I. The Priority of worship – **Verses 1-7**

- A. King David had a great desire to build the house of God  
**Psalm 132:3-5 KJV** - "Surely I will not come into the tabernacle of my house, nor go up into my bed; <sup>4</sup> I will not give sleep to mine eyes, or slumber to mine eyelids, <sup>5</sup> Until I find out a place for the LORD, an habitation for the mighty *God* of Jacob."
1. It was his priority. His heart was set upon it. But God prohibited him  
**1 Chronicles 28:2-4 KJV** - "Then David the king stood up upon his feet, and said, Hear me, my brethren, and my people: *As for me, I had in mine heart* to build an house of rest for the ark of the covenant of the LORD, and for the footstool of our God, and had made ready for the building: <sup>3</sup> But God said unto me, Thou shalt not build an house for my name, because thou *hast been* a man of war, and hast shed blood. <sup>4</sup> Howbeit the LORD God of Israel chose me before all the house of my father to be king over Israel for ever"
  2. David would not rest until the house of God was built. Of course, we can see clearly the passion of Christ here. He would not rest and return to His throne until He had accomplished all of God's purposes in the Covenant of Grace.
  3. Although God prohibited David from building the temple, God was well-pleased with his desire. God looks upon the heart.  
**1 Kings 8:17-19 KJV** - "And it was in the heart of David my father to build an house for the name of the LORD God of Israel. <sup>18</sup> And the LORD said unto David my father, Whereas it was in thine heart to build an house unto my name, thou didst well that it was in thine heart. <sup>19</sup> Nevertheless thou shalt not build the house; but thy son that shall come forth out of thy loins, he shall build the house unto my name."
  4. As we look at **Verses 6-7** there is a compulsion to worship  
**Psalm 132:6-7 KJV** - "Lo, we heard of it at Ephratah: we found it in the fields of the wood. <sup>7</sup> We will go into his tabernacles: we will worship at his footstool."
  5. Also, as we look to the petition of **Verse 1** we find the ultimate fulfillment in Christ—Christ in all His afflictions  
 And in **Verse 7** we find the birth place of Christ  
**Micah 5:2 KJV** - "But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, *though* thou be little among the thousands of Judah, *yet* out of thee shall he come forth unto me *that is* to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth *have been* from of old, from everlasting."
- B. As we look upon the passion of David to build the house of God and the compulsion of Israel to go to the house of God we should examine our own hearts
1. We are always in danger of falling into a mere formalism – an empty religion. What is our attitude towards entering into the house of God for worship? Is our heart stirred over the worship of God?

2. Jesus condemned those in His day who were only going through the outward acts of devotion without an inward passion  
**Mark 7:6** – “And He said to them, "Rightly did Isaiah prophesy of you hypocrites, as it is written, 'This people honors Me with their lips, But their heart is far away from Me.'”
- a. God is not interested in mere external religion. The world is full of religion but it is rare to find passion for the living God.
  - b. There are far too many who merely go through the form.  
 In **Mark 7:6** Jesus refers to them as hypocrites. The word for hypocrite is ὑποκριτής – It is an ancient word that refers to an actor or stage player. The Greek stage actors were all men. They wore masks to conceal their identity. The same actor could assume several roles by changing his mask and men could play the part of women.  
 A hypocrite is someone who wears a mask; someone who is a mere pretender. He is playing the part of a Christian but has no heart for Christ.
  - c. We can put on a mask before people pretending to be a worshipper of Christ. But God is able to see behind the mask.
  - d. John Calvin – “Hence it is perfectly clear that neither words nor singing are of the least consequence, or avail one iota with God, unless they proceed from deep feeling in the heart. Nay, rather they provoke his anger against us, if they come from the lips and throat only, since this is to abuse his sacred name, and hold his majesty in derision.”  
*(Institutes of the Christian Religion. Grand Rapids; Eerdmans, Moody Press, Vol. 2, P. 180)*

## II. The Passion for God’s presence – **Verses 8-10**

- A. The psalmist’s great desire was for God to occupy the temple  
**Psalm 132:8 KJV** - "Arise, O LORD, into thy rest; thou, and the ark of thy strength."  
  1. By “rest” he is referring to “resting place” – the place of God’s abiding presence
  2. The Old Covenant saints were keenly aware of the presence of God
    - a. At the dedication of the temple we read:  
**2 Chronicles 7:1-3 KJV** - ". . . and the glory of the LORD filled the house. <sup>2</sup> And the priests could not enter into the house of the LORD, because the glory of the LORD had filled the LORD'S house. <sup>3</sup> And when all the children of Israel saw how the fire came down, and the glory of the LORD upon the house, they bowed themselves with their faces to the ground upon the pavement, and worshipped, and praised the LORD, saying, For *he is good*; for his mercy *endureth for ever*."
    - b. Without the presence of God the temple meant nothing. That which made the holy place holy was God’s presence.

3. They never presumed upon the presence of God  
In the wilderness Moses knew that they were helpless without God's presence  
**Exodus 33:15 NAU** - "If Your presence does not go *with us*, do not lead us up from here."

B. Too often today we presume upon the presence of God

1. On one hand our church building is different from the temple. With the temple there was great significance upon the place. It was the dwelling place of God. In the New Covenant God's worship is not confined to a particular place. But is our meeting with God in worship any less significant?
2. Too often we presume upon the presence of God. Is the mere gathering of people a guarantee that God is present?
3. Would we recognize it if God was absent? The Church of Laodicea had become so spiritually dull they were oblivious to their emptiness and the absence of Christ.  
**Revelation 3:17 KJV** - "Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked"  
**Revelation 3:20 KJV** - "Behold, I stand at the door, and knock"
4. How do we think about entering into the presence of God?  
Would it be possible to fall asleep in the presence of God?  
Would it be possible to sing half-heartedly in the presence of God?
  - a. God is said to dwell in unapproachable light – His holiness is full of inexpressible glory.
  - b. Isaiah caught a glimpse of it  
**Isaiah 6:3-5 KJV** - " And one cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy, holy, *is* the LORD of hosts: the whole earth *is* full of his glory. <sup>4</sup> And the posts of the door moved at the voice of him that cried, and the house was filled with smoke. <sup>5</sup> Then said I, Woe *is* me!"
  - c. After Moses stood in the presence of God his face became radiant  
**Exodus 34:29-30 KJV** - "And it came to pass, when Moses came down from mount Sinai with the two tables of testimony in Moses' hand, when he came down from the mount, that Moses wist not that the skin of his face shone while he talked with him. <sup>30</sup> And when Aaron and all the children of Israel saw Moses, behold, the skin of his face shone; and they were afraid to come nigh him."
5. Granted, OT manifestations of worship had an emphasis on outward expressions of the presence of God. There were clouds and thunder and flashes and smoke.
  - a. It is true that Jesus is the incarnate glory of God.  
**John 1:14 KJV** - "And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth."

- b. When Jesus ascended into heaven He sent His Holy Spirit to dwell in us—His abiding presence in us. We *are* His holy temple.
- 6. But has the holiness of God changed?
  - a. Should we give any less attention to gathering in His presence than the OT saints?
  - b. And is it proper to presume that He will meet with us when gather? Should we not pray that God will bless us with His presence—that He would inhabit our praises; that He would empower His Word? Should we not pray that God will convict us of our sin as His Word is preached?

### III. The Promise of God's covenant blessings – **Verses 11-18**

- A. God promised His covenant presence with Israel
 

**Psalm 132:14 KJV** - "This *is* my rest for ever: here will I dwell; for I have desired it."

  - 1. On one hand, the Old Covenant was a conditional covenant
 

**Psalm 132:12 KJV** - "If thy children will keep my covenant and my testimony that I shall teach them"

**Exodus 19:5 KJV** - "Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth *is* mine:"
  - 2. On the other hand, God's promises are sure
 

**Psalm 132:13 KJV** - "For the LORD hath chosen Zion; he hath desired *it* for his habitation."

God chose Zion as His holy habitation.
  - 3. Zion has a past, present, and future reality.
    - a. Zion was the historic term for Jerusalem. Jerusalem was the great center of God's theocracy in Israel. It was the city chosen of God. It was the place of the throne of David. It was the place of God's holy Temple. It was the place of God's own abode.
    - b. In the New Covenant Zion is a present reality. It refers to God's Holy reign through Christ in the lives of His holy people. Zion is represented through the Church of Christ.
 

Jesus Christ abides with His holy people

**Psalm 132:14-15 KJV** - "This *is* my rest for ever: here will I dwell; for I have desired it. <sup>15</sup> I will abundantly bless her provision: I will satisfy her poor with bread."
    - c. Zion is also a future hope. It refers to the everlasting habitation of the people of God when they will spend eternity in His presence.
- B. All of God's Old Covenant promises find their fulfillment in Christ
 

**2 Corinthians 1:20 KJV** - "For all the promises of God in him *are* yea, and in him Amen, unto the glory of God by us."

  - 1. He is the fulfillment of the Davidic promise
 

**Psalm 132:17-18 KJV** - "There will I make the horn of David to bud: I have ordained a lamp for mine anointed. <sup>18</sup> His enemies will I clothe with shame: but upon himself shall his crown flourish."
  - 2. He is the fulfillment of the Covenant of Grace – He is the chosen seed, He has crushed the head of Satan reversing the curse of sin.

3. He has promised His covenant blessings to us. We are His people. God's promises to Israel are ours.

Conclusion:

1. Psalm 132 is a beautiful picture of God's covenant people resolved to worship and glorify God and of God's promise to bless His people.  
**Psalm 132:15 KJV** - "I will abundantly bless her provision: I will satisfy her poor with bread."
2. God blesses us with all good things. He has clothed us with the beauty of holiness.  
In **Verse 9** we find a petition:  
"Let thy priests be clothed with righteousness; and let thy saints shout for joy."  
In **Verse 16** we find the fulfillment:  
"I will also clothe her priests with salvation: and her saints shall shout aloud for joy."
3. God has filled us with joy unspeakable causing us to shout aloud for joy. And in this joy we enter His house with praise and worship our God.