

=Story Behind the Psalm=

Psalm 130-134

NOTE: *These lessons are designed simply as a guideline. As a Sunday School teacher part of your job is to study the lesson and develop it for the pupils in your class according to their age and spiritual development.*

Scripture: Psalms 130-134

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The Story Behind the Psalms

These are called "Psalms of ascension." They were basically travel Psalms. They were used specifically for the three annual feasts. As the Jews would march to Jerusalem for the feast, they would sing these Psalms of ascension. From anywhere in the promised land, it was always "up" to Jerusalem, for Jerusalem was the highest point in the land. So as the people would ascend to Jerusalem, they would sing these songs one after another.

When they arrived at Jerusalem, they would go to the temple. These Psalms were sung on the steps of the temple. Psalm 120 would be sung on the first step, Psalm 121 on the second step, etc. until each Psalm had been sung (there were 15 steps ascending to the temple). Since these were sung going up the steps, they were called "Psalms of ascension." As they are read it should be kept in mind that these were travelers going to the holy city for a feast. Read carefully Psalm 128 and imagine a great group of pilgrims journeying for a time of worship in the beloved city.

The Way They Were Used by God's People

Not only were they used for trips to the feasts and to Jerusalem, these were Psalms used for any journey. What a tremendous thing it would be for a Christian family to claim Psalm 128 as they leave on vacation or for a Christian businessman to claim its promises as he leaves for a business trip! In these days of advanced travel, these Psalms should be used over and over again as we journey to and fro.

LESSON:

Each of these Psalms has a main subject the Jews would sing about. These are all subjects worthy of lifting our voices unto God and ought to be regular themes of the heart.

- 1. Psalm 130** – Wait for the Lord, he will hear you
 - a. The psalmist is crying out of “the depths”, or a time he is overwhelmed with trouble. This was probably written during the captivity and is a penitential psalm. He is crying and pleading the LORD to hear his supplications.

- b. Notice how he addresses the mercy of God; “If thou, LORD, shouldest mark iniquities, O Lord, who shall stand? But there is forgiveness with thee, that thou mayest be feared.” God can hear our prayers because He does not mark (keep track of) our iniquity.
 - c. But until God hears, the psalmist said, I will keep on serving Him. I will wait for the LORD and look constantly for him. And He shall redeem Israel (8). That takes a lot of faith to say.
- 2. **Psalm 131-**
 - a. The Psalmist display a true sense of humility. (Psalm 9:12; James 4:10; I Peter 5:5)
- 3. **Psalm 132-** This psalm refers to the rebuilding of the temple and bringing the ark of God back to rest in Jerusalem.
 - a. The psalmist (most likely Solomon) has the LORD as his first priority. He is longing to see the tabernacle, the ark, the priests performing their duties and the tabernacle of the LORD built and in operation. We likewise ought to desire the things of God and have “His house” as a number one priority in our life. Not just to be in attendance, but also to see the house of God having a great impact on everyone.
- 4. **Psalm 133- Unity**
 - a. This psalm is written regarding the priests in the temple and God’s people. How good it is for them to dwell in unity. If everyone in the church would keep God as their head and follow the Word of God then we would all always be on the same page. There is no attribute as powerful as unity.
 - i. We can do anything when we are unified.
 - ii. There is peace when we are unified.
- 5. **Psalm 134-**
 - a. This psalm is addressing the priest which watch the temple day and night. We are the keepers of the things of God. Day and night we need to stand guard around right in our personal life and in the church house.

Memory Verse: *If thou, LORD, shouldest mark iniquities, O Lord, who shall stand? But there is forgiveness with thee, that thou mayest be feared.* **Psalm 130:3-4**