

Psalm 132

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[0 : 00] is Psalm 132. Please stand for the reading of God's word. A song of ascents. Remember, O Lord, in David's favor, all the hardships he endured, how he swore to the Lord and vowed to the mighty one of Jacob. I will not enter my house or get into my bed. I will not give sleep to my eyes or slumber to my eyelids until I find a place for the Lord, a dwelling place for the mighty one of Jacob. Behold, we heard of it in Ephrathah. We found it in the fields of J.R. Let us go to his dwelling place. Let us worship at his footstool. Arise, O Lord, and go to your resting place, you and the ark of your might. Let your priests be clothed with righteousness and your saints shout for joy.

For the sake of your servant David, do not turn away the face of your anointed one. 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. If your sons keep my covenant and my testimonies that I shall teach them, their sons also forever shall sit on your throne. For the Lord has chosen Zion. He has desired it for his dwelling place. This is my resting place forever. Here I will dwell, for I have desired it. I will abundantly bless her provisions. I will satisfy her poor with bread. Her priests I will clothe with salvation, and her saints will shout for joy. There I will make a horn to sprout for David. I have prepared a lamp for my anointed. His enemies I will clothe with shame, but on him his crown will shine. This is the word of the Lord. Thanks be to God. You may be seated.

Well, good morning, Christchurch family. It is great to see so many of you here. I welcome those of you who are online with us. I wish you could just see the splendor before me, the sight, the sight of God's children gathering here in the rain. And by the way, since it's raining, you know, we've got a number of folks that have brought these tents. Feel free to crowd in there and find your way and stand. If you get a little cold today, feel free to walk around and warm up. We are just so glad that you're here.

Let me pray. Our Heavenly Father, I now pray that you would anoint that is, empower by your Holy Spirit, the words of my mouth, the meditations of my mind and heart this week from this text in ways that would bring forth from this family shouts of joy, songs of praise.

And I do it asking it in Jesus name. Amen. Well, for the better part of two years, God, the creator of the heavens and the earth, Yahweh, the Lord, the only God, has seen fit to rain down his thunderstorms upon the party of the world.

[3 : 39] I'm not yet sure that the world has come to recognize the activity of his own voice, but certainly he has dampened the souls of men and women across the globe. He has extinguished the joy that would normally rise from the human experiment.

And with this joy now on soggy soil, one wonders, where do we turn?

Where do you turn? For it's not only a disordered world that is without joy, it is sensed in our own lives, in our own mind, in our own spirits.

The architecture of our own soul is looking for something beyond what we've been given. And yet, even today, God awakens in the heavens and says, I think rain will bring me glory.

But when will this lift over your own mind? When will you be released to understand what experiment he is playing out in the world?

[4 : 59] We turn to many things, don't we? We all could report the statistics of self-medication to enliven for a moment or at least warm the hearts of those who have lost joy.

Many turn to art or even architecture. Isn't there something beautiful about the creation of men and women who with symmetry can put something before us that appeals to the eye and calms the spirit and brings order to a disordered soul?

This morning, I want to see how the Psalm 132 is orchestrated like two wonderful ionic columns, one half and then the other pointing to this symmetrical sense of calm and here it is summoning you

to shouts of joy.

Keep it open before you and take a look with me as we see this wonderfully constructed song and its beauty and structure meant to emit from our hearts joy out of a joyless ground.

It opens, doesn't it, with David and what he, verse 2, swore to the Lord. But by verse 11, it will rise beside it the Lord and what he swore to David.

[6 : 54] The two columns now rising, we see David's passion and whatever it is he swore to the Lord in 1-10 and the Lord's promise and whatever it is he makes oath to David in 11-18.

And beyond that, we'll see that the nature of David's swearing to the Lord and his passion and his promise relates to the Lord having a dwelling place.

You heard that in the text verse 5 and you saw it again in verse 7 and it will appear even in the second column rising in verse 13 and in verse 14 David's passion on the dwelling place of God.

God's promise concerning the dwelling place of his own home and notice both David's passion and God's promise summon shouts of joy.

Look at verse 9 that great ionic column of his passion brings forth these words let your priests be clothed with righteousness and let your saints shout for joy.

[8 : 15] or rising beside it in verse 16 her priests I will close with salvation and her saints will shout with joy.

This psalm architecturally constructed with symmetry and proportion and balance and a mirroring of itself to summon forth from the people shouts of joy elsewhere translated songs of joy that there would be singing as a result of understanding the psalm that there would be shouting as a result of understanding the psalm not the shouts of the world in which we now dwell in her joyless state but shouts in praise to the Lord who in his glory does all things wondrously made so what does David's swearing to the Lord do in the first half this this oath what is David's passion was it war we know he liked to go to war he went to war most of his adult life was it victory on the battlefield was that his driving passion in life no no it wasn't victory on the battlefield was it songwriting we know that he's called the sweet psalmist of Israel did he did he find his greatest passion in writing music for the church putting verse poetry to instrumentation for the welfare of others no it wasn't that as critical as that was to was it ruling for indeed he was anointed not only once by

Samuel and then twice and then a third time and spent most of his life waiting to ascend to a place of promise no it wasn't victory in war the writing of verse the ruling of a scepter it was surprisingly in our text finding a dwelling place for the ark of the covenant David's passion his life work revolved around finding a home for a small man-made but beautifully ornamented box that was called the ark of the covenant this this desire for God to get inside for God to have a place in the world for his presence to be known by men and women this was his supreme passion this is what kept him up in the night

I've come to think that I wake up quite often in the night I've told you that before and when I was younger I would wake up and then begin to think about things not so I am awakened because I am thinking about things and it is simultaneous the passion and the concerns and the cares of my life and the heartbeat of my soul for your welfare they awaken me they consume me they carry my every activity during the day and for

David his passion that which kept him up at night was this man-made box that represented the presence of God in the world I know that because the psalm says here in verse one remember all the hardships he endured when you and I think about hardships we think about what you're sitting in which really isn't a hardship at all when you and I think about hardships we think about generally the situation and circumstances of life things are hard but hardships here is within the context of him finding a resting place for the ark of the covenant in fact first chronicles 22 where he's talking about all the things he acquired the funding and all the things to put up the ark of the covenant he uses the same word it's the hardships of wanting God to be known in the world to put in the world a meeting place for

[13 : 46] God a place where the proclamation of his word would be known that's the hardship that actually kept him moving day by day I don't know if you know what the ark of the covenant is really about let me just say a couple of things concerning it because you ought to ask why in the world would David's passion be this ark this box what significance does this box have this is especially important for those of you who have been coming on to Christ church for a while and yet haven't yet been acquainted with the fullness of the Bible in regard to how these things emerge and play out the ark of the covenant emerges first in the second book of the Bible Exodus chapter 25 and it is the

center centerpiece furnishing of what will be the temple later on it's the centerpiece it's the furnishing around which the entire structure was built and in

Exodus 25 God says that the ark of the covenant serves the purpose twofold from there I will meet with you from there I will speak with you now you see why the ark is so representative important the ark was the place where God met with his people that's why it had this mercy seat on it in gold that's why with great symmetry it had cherubim in gold carved on either end that was pleasing to the eye so that when the blood of a sacrifice rested on the mercy seat underneath the wings! his people and stay in relationship with them that ark would house the very Torah it was the place where God would speak to his own people that's what it was like in the days of Moses that's why it traveled with them from Mount Sinai because God's presence was now portable Israel for 40 years set up and took down every week for 40 years you've only done it for 24 but they they did it and wherever the fire went or the cloud went they went and it meant that the ark went on poles and was carried and replaced somewhere else because God would always be in the center of Israel it was significant not only in Moses day it was significant in Joshua's day the ark was the very first piece of anything to enter into the waters of the Jordan when they entered in the promised land it signified that

God goes in before we go in we don't go in before God goes in and when the ark was placed and moved across those waters and he held it back the very presence of God is now in his promised place and therefore God's people can enter in in fact it became so important that they would bring it out on the day of battle for even after they were in many battles were to be fought to win and the ark would come forth until of course the people sacrificed within their own character the godliness that God required and when they entered into battle they lost and the ark itself was taken away and they wept Ichabod in a sense the glory of God the glory of God departed and it was captured eventually returned to them and then so frightening was this ark that it came to rest in a field in the vicinity of Ja'ar and didn't move for the better part of 20 years think of it here's the box representing the presence of God in a farmer's field for over two decades when they put it there they knew it was important as though we're going to get back to this but there it sat I can imagine that the tent the big the tabernacle I mean big long wooden beams today which would be like steel eye beams and canvas and thread and all of the things that were much larger than the ark probably went in the field next to it and it looked like it looked like a rural behind!

[18 : 41] behind chain link fence gravel lot in which there stood a box that was covered and pilings of fabric and long beams until the grass grew up and the presence of God was hidden from the world and nearly forgotten and then David comes and he has a passion that this ark kind of like an old classic car that somebody put in a farmer's field would be restored to her glory this this ark like something that was important but left in an urban lot only to rust over centuries or days anyway or years generations would be restored and David says if there's one thing that

I want to do in life I want to restore the presence of God in the world in which I live so that he can meet with us and we can meet with him so that we have a place where he can speak to us and we can speak to him this was his passion let me say this the presence of God has fallen on hard times in this world you and I have been privileged to be born at a moment in time where it is deeply in spiritual decline our glory is to live in a time when God is not well known where there are fewer and fewer homes for him where no one knows that he even exists let alone speaks desires to forgive sins is this what keeps you up at night according to

David this is even what kept him away from his own home when he was awake for David the visible manifestation of the presence of God in the world was everything Spurgeon said oh that many were more seized with sleeplessness!

Because the house of the Lord lies waste! by the look of verses 6 through 8 it looks like David sent out a search party it looks like he knew enough to say where is that thing because my Bible reads behold we heard of it in Ephrathah we found it in the fields of Jaar let us go to his dwelling place let us worship at his footstool so off this search party goes and they find the field and the overgrown grass and the box that's been sitting for over two decades and the moth ridden deteriorating fabrics and poles that are bent and he says get the box verse 8 arise notice it doesn't say arise a box arise arise oh lord go to your resting place you and the ark of your might and the bible then recounts this journey not without difficulty first by death to some who touched the ark but then with great dancing as

David brings this treasure into the midst of Jerusalem 2nd samuel 6 tells that two part story of David bringing the ark into the city death followed by dancing or to put it in the language of verse 9 let your priests be clothed with righteousness and let your saints shout for joy the restoration of God's presence on the streets of Jerusalem summoned shouts of joy from among God's people because God now had a place to meet with them and they had a place where they could hear from God and let me tell you what David did on that day David danced David sang David led the procession in ways that his own wife was humiliated by he was despised for the degree of exuberance as he entered into the city and he danced before the

[24 : 21] Lord with all his might because he knew when they did not know that God was now here in our midst that remission of sins could be retained again through the sacrifices and through blood that the word itself under which his people live would be known and heard and enjoyed he knew all this and he let loose some thought he was over the top oh may they think so of us one day too and yet before before I turn to the second part of this text before I move from David's passion which was God's dwelling which summoned shouts for joy to

God's promise on his dwelling which likewise someone shouts for joy before I do that something has to be said between what happens between the dot of verse 10 and the words the Lord of verse 11 something happens in the life of David that you can only know if you go back and look at 2 Samuel 7 because what happened was while David had put the ark into the city it now had a home he was disappointed because he knew that God's home now was only in a tent you can imagine he finally got it in have you ever had this happen in life you were so focused on something and then it finally came to fruition and rather than the joy being sustained what did you think well I don't know why but there's a letdown in my life there's a there's something that's not

I don't feel the way I did I remember watching when the bears you weren't born yet when the bears won the super bowl in 1985 and I watched Walter Payton who had played his whole life waiting for a super bowl and I watched him walk off the field with the look of dejection in his eye he hadn't scored a touchdown that day William Perry had but there was something about the victory of the moment that was met not with exuberance but joy but with ongoing disappointment of soul and David felt that the box had a home but the home was a tent it was it was the erection of a covering through poles stuck in the ground and it looked hideous given the glory of what he thought God should be like in the world because he says I gotta build you a house now

I mean the box has a home but the home can't be a tent so I'm gonna build you a house and that's when God's promise now comes look at the text the Lord swore to David a sure oath from which he will not turn one of the sons of your body I will set on your throne if your sons keep my covenant my testimonies that I teach them their sons also forever shall sit on the throne David said I love you Lord I want to build you a house now God says well you do have a heart after my own but you know I don't need this house thing but I'll tell you what I am going to do from your home is going to come a ruler that will build me an eternal household of faith that will come from all the nations will will you will will but even in this if you look at

Israel's history and again I speak particularly to those of you who aren't able to process yet what happens to this in the Bible you need to keep reading it Israel disappointment would follow David would spend the rest of his life securing the resources for the house Solomon would build the house but Solomon's character was deficient the kingdom eventually would be divided many portions of God's people would be carried off into Assyria others would then be carried off into Babylon the gates of the city into which he entered would be burned and the temple itself destroyed and the ark and all of the implements and furnishings would have gone into dilapidated care of the enemy again signifying almost the dampening and the extinguishing of joy in the world for

[29 : 45] God had fallen silent and in all his glory and in all his warmth and in all his beauty and all his splendor he was yet hiding again behind clouds that were so opaque as to leave a world without knowledge of him that is until Christmas!

Hallelujah! The birth of Christ on that night let me tell you what that was it was an outdoor service and we may be outdoors yet Christmas Eve who knows when God came he didn't come inside it was an outdoor service but think of it this way on that night when Christ was born that box that David took from a farmer's field from the vicinity of Ja'ar was now a baby boy in a feed trough five miles southwest of Jerusalem that God brings his light into the world behind the tall grasses of a dilapidated spiritual state in a way in which no one at the time could recognize it and yet from that moment from the boy in the feed trough who was the fruition of the box in the field

God had returned although nobody yet knew it well a couple of shepherds John 1 14 says he tabernacled among us he he tented among us christmas is movement from god's oath to david to the advent of god's son christmas is the old testament covenantal promise to the promised child now come christmas is the promise that david saw something in ephrotha verse six to emmanuel now in bethlehem christmas is the return of the presence of god for the purpose of summoning shouts of joy in fact when when david and when jesus enters into the city himself i mean you can almost i mean what a moment does your view of the triumphal entry change forever upon hearing this i hope so now here's jesus entering into the city the boy from the box now the man entering into the city the very presence of god coming in in a triumphal entry and and it's quoted from zachariah 9 9 that he's going to come in on a colt and in zachariah 9 9 it says that when he comes guess what's coming with him righteousness and salvation go look at it zachariah 9 9 9 when the lord comes into his city righteousness and salvation come with him and look at your text in psalm 132 9 let your priest be clothed with righteousness verse 16 her priest i will clothe with salvation jesus in righteousness and salvation entering into the city king the one who comes in the name of the lord to meet with us and what does he do how do we meet him how do we see him he goes on a cross he becomes a mercy seat his own blood is now where you go to meet with god it's where you're going to recapture joy it's where you can look at all the dilapidated architecture of your own soul and say there is life for me yet there is hope for me yet in this body of mind like a tent in decay dwells the holy spirit who incorruptible to incorruptible from death to life from under his judgment to under his grace all of this comes in christ hallelujah if that doesn't summon a shout of joy I can't dance and I feel like dancing you think it's cold and I'm starting to think it's warm the holy spirit dwelling within this dilapidated tent is the most stunning and astounding truth other than what happened at christmas it is just amazing to me your humble field god resting there your deteriorating tent of flesh god dwelling there david's passion god's promise united in purpose christmas summoning shouts of joy from among god's people and his return will be cause for great songs of eternal joy one day dear family one day you will look back at moments like this and someone may ask you as they will ask me and i already know dave helm what was the most memorable enjoyable significant year of your life hands down i'll say 2021 when it was all on the line and god did his thing the disordered architecture of the soul of the world in her joyless state will only be met by the architecture of the soul inhabited within the local church who praises jesus for all that he is and all that he's done oh hallelujah glory be his name singing songs shouts of joy remission of sin growing in grace training in godliness granting of praise graciousness toward others all because god fulfills his word hallelujah amen