

PM 1 Chronicles 17:1-15 & Psalm 132

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[0 : 0 0] Our first scripture reading this evening comes from the book of 1 Chronicles. 1 Chronicles chapter 17.

And in 1 Chronicles 17 we read of the Lord making a special promise to King David. King David is intending to build a special temple for the worship of God.

But instead God says that he will build a house for David. So let's read these words, the first 15 verses of chapter 17 of 1 Chronicles.

Now when David lived in his house, David said to Nathan the prophet, Behold I dwell in a house of cedar, but the ark of the covenant of the Lord is under a tent.

And Nathan said to David, Do all that is in your heart, for God is with you. But that same night the word of the Lord came to Nathan, Go and tell my servant David, thus says the Lord, It is not you who will build me a house to dwell in.

[1 : 2 7] For I have not lived in a house since the day I brought up Israel to this day. But I have gone from tent to tent and from dwelling to dwelling.

In all the places where I have moved with all Israel, Did I speak a word with any of the judges of Israel, Whom I commanded to shepherd my people, saying, Why have you not built me a house of cedar?

Now therefore, thus shall you say to my servant David, Thus says the Lord of hosts, I took you from the pasture, from following the sheep, To be prince over my people Israel.

And I have been with you wherever you have gone, And I have cut off all your enemies from before you. And I will make for you a name, Like the name of the great ones of the earth.

And I will appoint a place for my people Israel, And will plant them, that they may dwell in their own place, And be disturbed no more. And violent men shall waste them no more as formerly.

[2 : 3 5] From the time that I appointed judges over my people Israel, And I will subdue all your enemies. Moreover, I declare to you, That the Lord will build you a house.

When your days are fulfilled to walk with your fathers, I will raise up your offspring after you, One of your own sons, And I will establish his kingdom.

He shall build a house for me, And I will establish his throne forever. I will be to him a father, And he shall be to me a son.

I will not take my steadfast love from him, As I took it from him who was before you. But I will confirm him in my house, And in my kingdom forever. And his throne shall be established forever.

In accordance with all these words, And in accordance with all this vision, Nathan spoke to David.

[3 : 3 9] Amen. These are. Psalm 132. This is the focus of our attention tonight. And you'll see that, If you have one of the church Bibles, It's titled, A Song of Ascents.

To ascend, Meaning to go up. These are the songs, That the pilgrims would sing, As they went up to Jerusalem, To worship.

And this is the longest of the songs, Of ascents. Psalm 132. Let us hear these words. Remember, O Lord, In David's favour, All the hardships he endured.

How he swore to the Lord, And vowed to the mighty one of Jacob, I'll 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 Jar. Let us go to his dwelling place, Let us worship at his footstool.

[5 : 05] Arise, O Lord, And go to your resting place, You and the ark of your might. Let your priests be clothed with righteousness, And let 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 set 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.

[6 : 18] 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.

Amen. This is God's holy word. Well turn back with me if you will to Psalm 132.

But actually you'll need your Bibles open tonight To go through quite a number of these Psalms. I hope you'll be patient with me As we try to go through a number of these Psalms tonight.

As I said to the children earlier, The focus of worship for God's people of old Was the temple in Jerusalem. God had promised to be present with his people In a special way In the temple.

In that particular building. And that building is full of significance In different ways. There are so many Things about the temple That are important That we can learn from.

[7 : 39] But As it says in the book of Hebrews We don't have time tonight To go into the detail Of all of those things. But the important point That I want to make Just now Is that for Devout Jews Jews Who wanted to worship God In a right way There was a requirement on them To undertake a pilgrimage To go to Jerusalem For these special festivals These times of worship.

And God provided for his people A set of Psalms There are these 15 Psalms Which begin way back at Psalm 120 All the way through to 134 And they all have the title A Song of Ascent Songs for going up Songs for going up to Jerusalem And tonight we're going to focus on Psalm 132 that we read But In order to try and get an overview of that I want us to try And it's ambitious But we're going to try and go through All of the Psalms of Ascent Quite quickly In order to have a sense of How they fit together As a group of songs That are suitable For going on This special journey The first of them then Is Psalm 120 And if you've got that In your Bible There's a number of things in there That might not Be immediately obvious to you In verse 5

The psalmist says Woe to me that I sojourn In Meshach That I dwell among the tents Of Kedar What does that mean?

Well These places are Opposite ends of the country From one another So it's not Where he is It's more that he's Far away From Jerusalem The psalmist Begins This journey By singing a psalm Which says I'm far away From God's presence I'm in Meshach Or Kedar I'm in distress Because I'm not Close to God And so that's what He sings about In Psalm 120 And then in 121 The psalm Naturally follows on From that Because Having realised That he's far From God He sets out On pilgrimage He begins his journey Towards Jerusalem And as he begins His journey Towards Jerusalem He lifts up his eyes And sees The hills In front of him He has to journey Through the hills To get to Jerusalem And the hills Are full of danger

There were bandits There's Extreme weather All kinds of things And just the sheer Height of them And he has to get Over these hills And he says Where Will my help Come from?

[10 : 41] And he remembers That God will Keep him God will be With him On this journey And Then in Psalm 122 As he carries on On his journey He's encouraging Himself By imagining Himself As if He's there He says I was glad As we sang When they said Let's go up To the house Of the Lord Our feet Have been standing He's picturing Himself As if He's already There And thinking How great It will be To be In Jerusalem Worshipping With His The rest Of his His friends And then In Psalm 123 He comes down A little bit From that Elation Of thinking About that And comes With Humility And expresses

His attitude Of service That God Is his master And he is A servant And he's waiting Expectantly For God To have mercy On him And to rescue Him From the Spiritual Conflict That he is Experiencing Moving on To Psalm 124 We sang This one This morning It's a Famous Psalm Famous in Scotland It's been Sung often It speaks Of being Delivered And rescued From a Trap That seemed Impossible To get Out of And those Of you Who know Your Old Testament History Especially Will know There's many Many times When God's People have Been in A trap That seemed Impossible To get Out of And God Delivered Them in A way That was Unexpected And amazing So he Reminds Himself Of that As he Goes on His Journey And as We carry On we Come to Psalm 125

And here Especially in The traditional Psalter we Have this Famous Line They and The Lord That firmly Trust will Be like Cyan Hill He reminds Himself that Firmly Trusting in God Will give Him a Solid Immovable Position Of Stability He'll be Immovable As Immovable As a Mountain Psalm 126 We also Sang This Morning Another Favourite For many Because As we Make our Own Pilgrimages We need To remind Ourselves Of These Great Deliverances That We've Experienced And then We ask God to Continue We ask God to Restore Our Fortunes We ask God to Revive Us To Revive His Church Then Psalm 127 And 128

We just Sang Psalm 127 A moment Ago These Kind of Go Together As Psalms Where There's An Emphasis On Our Dependence On God And A Celebration Of How He Blesses Us In Families Sometimes We're A bit Hesitant To Sing These Psalms Perhaps Because We know That For Some People It's Not Their Experience Family Can Be A Painful Subject But For The Believer We see This In A Spiritual Sense That We're Part Of God's Family And Blessed In That Way But We Need To Also Celebrate And Rejoice That Family Is A Good Thing And A Gift From God And Then Psalm 129 Comes As A Reality Check On This Pilgrimage No Pilgrimage Goes Smoothly Does It No Journey Of This Kind Would

Go Like Without Any Problems And In Psalm 129 There's The Note Of Conflict And Suffering And These Pilgrims Are Asking God To Frustrate The Plans Of The Wicked They're Under Attack In Some Way And Then Psalm 130 Moving On Again In Our Pilgrimage We Also Sang This This Morning And It's A Surprising Psalm In So Many Ways Because We sing It Together But It's So Personal It's About Our Own Sin And Our Own Place Of Of Guilt And Of A Need For Deliverance Of Redemption Psalm 131 Then Follows On From That A Short And Beautiful Psalm Where Again The Pilgrim Expresses A Simple Childlike Faith Like

[15 : 44] A Child With Its Mother Childlike Faith In God's Provision And Then We Come To Psalm 132 And We'll Come Back To That In A Minute But Let's Just The Last Couple There After That 133 The Great Celebration Of Unity And 134 The Final Of These Songs Of Ascent And Here The Pilgrimage Is Over They've Arrived In Jerusalem And They Can Really Worship They Now Are In The Temple Of The Lord In That Holy Place Standing Standing By Night In The House Of The Lord So That's The Songs Of Ascent And It's Ambitious To Try And Take It All Together And If You'll Bear With Me Let's Try And Really Quickly Recap

Again If We May 120 The Psalmist Sees The Spiritual Need For Worship He Needs To Change His Situation 121 He Sets Out On His Pilgrimage But He's Anxious Conscious Of His Need Of God's Sovereign Care And Then 122 He's Going Forward With Joy And Picturing Himself As If He's Already There And 123 Comes Before God As A Servant Asking For Mercy And 124 He Recalls These Great Deliverances Of The Past And 125 He Asserts The Security That Comes From Trusting The Lord And 126 He Moves From Recalling Past Deliverance To Praying For Revival And 127 And 28 He Recalls God's Mercy And Blessing And Families And 129 Admits The Reality Of Conflict And Trouble And

In 130 Is A Personal Note Of Confession In The Context Of A Corporate Salvation And 131 As I Say This Childlike Faith Is Expressed Then 132 Is This Longer Psalm Which We'll Come Back To But In 133 There's Rejoicing In The Unity Of God's People And 134 Rejoicing In Having Arrived And Really Being Able To Worship And The Blessing Of Those Who Are Already There And Who Are Permanently There So These Psalms Taken As A Big Group Are Like A Playlist Or A Soundtrack For A Journey And It's A Spiritual Journey A Pilgrimage To Jerusalem Originally But Then Then And Now They Also Describe For Us Our Spiritual Journey Through Life As

Christians We're On A Pilgrimage To The Heavenly Jerusalem And These Psalms Are Relevant For Us But The Longest And In Some Ways The Most Difficult Psalm To Summarise Is 132 And I'm Contending It's Also One Of The Most Important Of These Psalms Because It Speaks About Why The Pilgrims Are Going To Jerusalem In The First Place What Is At The Heart Of This Worship What Is The Basis For The Worship That Has Been The Reason For This Pilgrimage In The First Place Are They Just On Some Keeping Up A Tradition By Always Going Up To Jerusalem At Certain Times Of The Year And More Importantly Why Have I Just Taken Such A Long Time To Try And Summarize The Purpose Of These Psalms In What Way Can These Possibly Be Relevant For Us Tonight Well

As We Look More Carefully At 132 I Hope Some Of That Will Become Clearer For Us Psalm 132 Speaks About A House That David Offered To Build For God That Was What We Read About In First Chronicles And Here In Psalm 132 We Read About David Offering To Find A Dwelling Place For The Mighty One He Offers He Makes This Offer To God And Says I'll Build A House For You And That House Of Course Is The Temple In Jerusalem Where The Pilgrims Are Going To Worship But When David Offers To Build The Temple And Build A House For God Instead Says No You Will Not Build That But I God Will Build A House For You So What Is The Fulfillment Of This House That Is Built For David Well That

[20 : 47] Is Fulfilled In The Coming Of The Lord Jesus It's We Still Use That Expression Today The House Of Windsor Or Whatever Is Not A Physical House It's A Line Of Kings Isn't It Or Whatever And The House Of David Is Not A House It's These Kings Culminating In The King Of Kings The Lord Jesus Christ And That's What This Psalm Is About And Lastly We'll See That It's A House Not Made Of Wood Or Stone But It's Also In One Sense A House That's Made Of People It's Made Of Believers I Hope You'll Be Able To Stay With Me As We Run Through This Psalm Then Together What Is Psalm About Well It Starts Doesn't It Talking About David It's Talking About The Efforts That He Made The Energy Remember Oh Lord In David's Favor All The Hardships He Endured See How He's Expended

Energy In Making This Commitment To Do Something It's Given In These Extreme Terms I'm Not Even Going To Go To Bed I'm Not Going To Close My Eyes Until I've Built A House For You So Old Testament Worship At The Time Of David Focused Around Not A Temple But A Temporary Building It Was Called Sometimes Called The Tabernacle It Was Like A Tent As We Read Of In First Chronicles It Was A Temporary Structure That Could Be Taken Down And Put Up Again Easily And Inside That Temporary Structure There Was The Ark Of The Covenant And This Was The Focus Of Worship In King David's Day And From The Time Of Moses Actually All The Way Through To King David And The Point Is In This

Psalm That We See That This Tent Where People That Was The Only Place You Could Truly Worship But Verse Six Which Seems A bit Mysterious Behold We Heard Of It In Ephrath We Found It In The Fields Of Jar Not All The Commentators Really Agree With What That Means But The Thing That Seems Clear To Me Is That It's Not Even That Obvious Where To Go To Worship Truly They're Hearing A Rumour Almost In A Place Called Ephrath Well We Could Go And Worship Somewhere Where I Don't Know Maybe In Commentators Say That The Fields Of Jar Is A Place That's Called We Read About It In Samuel Kiriath Jerim And Actually Kiriath Jerim Or The Fields Of Jar Is A Place Where The Ark Of God Had Actually Been Stolen By God's Enemies The Philistines And Then It Was Returned

To Kiriath Jerim So We Didn't Know Where The Ark Was We Didn't Know How To Worship God Properly And This Is A Problem It Didn't Have A Permanent Place The People Are Going Here And There Trying To Find Out Where To Worship And Now That David Has Been Given These Victories By God And There's Now Stability There's Military Stability If You Like His Enemies Have Been Defeated And He's Relatively Secure And He Says Well Now I'm Going To Build A Permanent Place Somewhere Where People Can Really Worship And They'll Know Where To Go And This Tent Represented God's Presence With His People And David Expresses Here His Desire To Honor God By Making This Presence More Permanent But Instead Of God Saying Yes

That's A Great Idea God Instead Says No You're Not The One To Build That But I Will Build A House For You Some Of You Know That It Was David's Son Solomon Who Actually Physically Constructed The Temple It Was In His Time That That Was Built And Put Into Use And That's The Temple That These Pilgrims Are Hidden Towards But David Has Been Told That God Will Build A House For Him And That's The Context Of The Second Part Of This Psalm Where The Lord In Verse 7 Swear Swore To David A Sure Oath From Which He Would Not Turn Back And So On This Psalm Here Is Making This Prophetic Reference To The Fulfillment Of This Promise

[25 : 50] Given To David God Says That He Will Build A House For Him Or A Temple If You Like For Him And The People Who Originally Sang This Psalm As They Were Going Up To Jerusalem To Worship Would Have Known The Detail Of That Special Promise We Sometimes Call it A Covenant Promise The Covenant With David That We Read About In Chronicles So Look At Verse 13 With Me It's The Lord Who Has Chosen To Dwell In His Temple To Sit Enthroned Do You See That The Lord Has Chosen Zion And Desired It For His Dwelling Place But Then In Verse 17 It Speaks Of A Descendant Of David Now The Language Here It Says He'll Make A Horn Sprout For David So That's A Way Of Saying That One Of David's Descendants Will Grow Strong A Horn

Is A Symbol Of Strength In Old Testament Times So One Of David's Descendants Will Wear This Crown That's Referred To In Verse 18 And Will Dwell In This Temple So Is It Is It The Lord In Verse 13 That's Going To Dwell Here Or Is It One Of David's Descendants Who's Going To Dwell In The Temple With New Testament Eyes We Can See That Only In Jesus Christ Can We Have One Person Who's Both Human And With An Ancestry Going Back To David Human In That Sense But Also At One And The Same Time Divine The God Man Christ Jesus And So The House That Is To Be Built For David Is The House Of

The Lord Jesus Christ As It Were And This Part Of The Psalm Of Course For Those Originally Singing It Is A Prophecy That Hasn't Been Fulfilled Yet And So They Wouldn't Have Known The Detail That We Know As They Sang It But What's Happening Here In This Psalm Is That Those Who Are Singing It Are Remembering That It Was David's Idea To Build The Temple But God In Promising To Bless It Made This Even More Significant Promise That Is Somehow Connected To The Worship Of The Temple But It's Going To Bring About A Spiritual To A To To To To To To To To To To Bring About This Perfect Rule Where Everything Will Be Perfect There Will Be These Abundant Provisions In Verse 15 There Will Be This Sense Of Rest In Verse 14 There

Will Be Peace From Our Enemies There Will Be Righteousness There Will Be Priests Clothed With Righteousness And There Will Be Saints Shouting For Joy This Sounds Like Heaven Doesn't It And As I Just Said A Careful Reading Of This Psalm Gives Us A Divine King One Who Would Be Both The Lord And A Descendant Of David And This Would Have Been I'm Sure Mysterious To The Original Singers So This Is A Picture Of God Dwelling With His People In A Way That Brings Abundant Blessing And That's What The Old Testament Temple Signified And That's What This Worship That They Were Going Up To Jerusalem To Engage In Would

Celebrate Rejoicing In God's Presence With His People I'm Conscious That This Is Quite A Lot There Are Quite A Lot Of Threads Here To Hold On To But I'm Hoping You're Still With Me Here The Question Now Becomes How Is This Relevant For Us Today It's So Very Interesting To Had Some Times Of Joy In Their Festivals And They Went On Their Pilgrimages And They Had These Great Songs To Sing And Maybe That The Most Spiritually Aware Of Them Would Have Celebrated In The Temple Worship This Physical Reminder Of God's Presence With Them But Why Are We Still Talking About It Today Well It's Because The Temple Is Really Just A Picture It's Really Just Something That Signifies

[30 : 51] Something Much More Important It's A It's Something On Earth That Is That Was Real And It Had Importance In It Day But It Had A Far Greater Significance And That Significance Is That It Points Us To Jesus The Emphasis In This Psalm Is On Dwelling The Word Dwell Occurs Lots And Lots Of Places In The Psalm A Temple Was A Place Where God Could Dwell With His People And That Is Fulfilled Perfectly In Jesus Turn Turn Turn with Me If You Will To The Gospel Of John And There's An Important Verse There In Chapter Three I Think It's Chapter Three Verse Twenty One

No It's Not It's John Chapter Two I Beg Your Pardon John Two I'll Just Read Verse Nineteen To Twenty One Just to Give You The Context What's Happening Here In The Gospel Of John Is That Jesus Has Gone To This Exact Same Temple Sp~~██~~temos~~█~~ inne Do you have any miracle you can perform in order to prove that you have this authority to do this?

And they say, what sign will you show us for doing these things? And Jesus answered them, destroy this temple. And in three days, I will raise it up.

The Jews then said, it's taken 46 years to build this temple. Will you raise it up in three days? But he was speaking about the temple of his body.

When therefore he was raised from the dead, his disciples remembered he had said this. And they believed the scripture and the word Jesus had spoken. Jesus was speaking about the temple of his body.

[33 : 21] Do you get that? So the temple was just a picture. Just something that pointed us forward to Jesus. And it is in Jesus that God really dwells with his people.

And the sign that Jesus gave these people who asked him was that he would destroy the temple and he would raise it again in three days.

So the temple points us forward to Jesus. I've got something else for you. The doctrine that we call union with Christ means that the temple is also us as the church.

So this is quite complicated. Let me read from the larger catechism. Question 66. What is the union which the elect have with Christ?

The union which the elect have with Christ is the work of God's grace. Whereby they are spiritually and mystically yet really and inseparably joined to Christ as their head and husband.

[34 : 39] Which is done in their effectual calling. There's quite a lot to take in in that catechism answer there. But what it's saying is that when we become Christians the connection between us and Jesus is so strong that we become joined to Christ in a way that is spiritual but also real.

And there's an inseparable joining of us to Jesus. And this is expressed most clearly in the book of Ephesians.

If you're able to turn up Ephesians. And we just quickly read chapter 2 verses 18 to 22. It speaks of the work of Jesus.

This is a passage which is explaining that doctrine that I mentioned, the union with Christ. And it says, For through him we both have access in one spirit to the Father.

So then you're no longer strangers and aliens. But you're fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God. Built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets.

[36 : 04] Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone. In whom the whole structure being joined together grows into a holy temple in the Lord.

In him you also are being built together into a dwelling place for God by the Spirit. In him you also are being built together into a holy temple in the Lord.

In him you also are being built together into a holy temple in the Lord. In him you also are being built together into a holy temple in the Lord. So this temple that we go up to to worship and that we sing of in these great songs. Is primarily Jesus.

But it's also the church. So when we're all together in this way. Our union with Christ means that this is the place where God dwells with his people. And this is a truth which if we really understand it.

Will make us amazed. And will really change how we relate to one another. So let me try and recap briefly.

[37 : 17] These songs of pilgrimage. Are songs that God's ancient people would sing in going up to worship. In the temple.

And connected to the temple worship is this promise. That's embedded inside Psalm 132. That God will dwell with his people. And I hope I've tried to show you that this promise is fulfilled.

In Jesus Christ the son of David. And that we saw a moment ago that Jesus said that he was the temple. And we just read here in Ephesians that when we become Christians we are joined to Christ.

And so we become the temple. We become that place where God dwells with his people. And so in these psalms we have a more glorious reason.

To celebrate our lives as a pilgrimage as we make our way to the heavenly Jerusalem. Rejoicing that God dwells with his people through Jesus Christ.

[38 : 27] So I hope I've tried to show you that this psalm is not a historical irrelevance. It's something wonderful for us to rejoice in.

A few takeaways then. These songs as I say were originally suitable for people on pilgrimage to the temple in Jerusalem.

And that was a journey with a specific destination. That building in Jerusalem. But our lives in the same way are not purposeless.

And as we sing these psalms we can remind ourselves that we are consciously on a pilgrimage to the heavenly Jerusalem. And on that way we make decisions about what to do and what not to do with an awareness that we are supposed to be heading to the heavenly Jerusalem.

And these psalms give us a soundtrack to help us on our way. And to give us suitable things to sing about as we go. Notice also in verse 1 of the psalm the hardships and afflictions are mentioned that David endured.

[39 : 47] If you've been a Christian for a while you won't need me to mention this. But the Christian life is not a bed of roses. We've been told to expect hardship and affliction.

So we shouldn't be surprised by it when it comes our way. But neither should we be discouraged thinking that it's purposeless. It's part of our journey toward the heavenly Jerusalem.

Think also about the fact that as we read David had this good desire and right motives. He wanted to build something permanent for God.

But in God's providence and in God's plans he had to step back from something that he had offered as something good.

And instead he was given a place of great honour in God's plan of redemption. Something much more glorious than the physical building. The temple building is just, doesn't even exist.

[40 : 55] It was destroyed, you know there were several temples actually. But the last one was destroyed in AD 70 and there's no temple now. But what was given to David was something much more glorious.

A place in this, in the fulfilment of God's plan of redemption which is a great honour. And it's the case for us too that if we put the welfare of Christ's church first.

There may still be times where we have to step back from what we thought were perfectly good plans. And acknowledge that God's sovereign plan is better.

And we need to be patient and humble. When we make plans, especially plans to benefit God's church. But the main application, and with this I close, is that the temple in Zion is described as being God's dwelling place.

Where God dwells with his people. And as I've tried to show, now it's the church where God has chosen to dwell with his people.

[42 : 12] And that means that individually and corporately, each person in a Christian fellowship, and each individual believer, is precious.

Thinking that this is the temple of God, where God is delighted to dwell with his people. How will that influence how we speak to one another?

How much patience and forbearance we have with one another? Are we willing to bear with each other's weaknesses? What lengths will we go to, to show love and compassion to one another?

Remembering that we are a temple where God has delighted to dwell with his people. Lastly, in closing, there's always this note I find in Scripture.

Note that Christ's enemies are clothed with shame in verse 18. It's not possible to be neutral in relation to the worship at this temple.

[43 : 26] If we're not worshipping at this temple, we're worshipping at some other temple which is glorifying someone or something that is not the true king of kings.

And so, once again, a note on, a close on a note of warning. Let us be sure that we are part of that glorious heavenly temple and on our way to the heavenly Jerusalem.

Amen. Thank you.