

PSALM 132

It is probable that this psalm was penned by Solomon, to be sung at the dedication of the temple which he built according to the charge his father gave him, ^{<BND>}1 Chronicles 28:2, etc. Having fulfilled his trust, he begs of God to own what he had done.

I. He had built this house for the honour and service of God; and when he brings the ark into it, the token of God's presence, he desires that God himself would come and take possession of it (v. 8-10). With these words Solomon concluded his prayer, ^{<HBB>}2 Chronicles 6:41, 42.

II. He had built it in pursuance of the orders he had received from his father, and therefore his pleas to enforce these petitions refer to David.

1. He pleads David's piety towards God (v. 1-7).

2. He pleads God's promise to David (v. 11-18). The former introduces his petition: the latter follows it as an answer to it. In singing this psalm we must have a concern for the gospel church as the temple of God, and a dependence upon Christ as David our King, in whom the mercies of God are sure mercies.

^{<ND>}PSALM 132:1-10

SOLOMON'S PRAYER FOR DIVINE FAVOUR

A song of degrees.

In these verses we have Solomon's address to God for his favour to him and to his government, and his acceptance of his building a house to God's name. Observe,

I. What he pleads — two things: —

1. That what he had done was in pursuance of the pious vow which his father David had made to build a house for God. Solomon was a wise man, yet pleads not any merit of his own: "I am not worthy, for whom thou shouldst do this; but, *Lord, remember David*, with whom thou madest the covenant" (as Moses prayed, ^{<EBB>}Exodus 32:13, *Remember*

Abraham, the first trustee of the covenant); “remember *all his afflictions*, all the troubles of his life, which his being anointed was the occasion of,” or his care and concern about the ark, and what an uneasiness it was to him that the ark was in curtains, ^{<107P>}2 Samuel 7:2. *Remember all his humility and meekness* (so some read it), all that pious and devout affection with which he had made the following vow. Note, It is not amiss for us to put God in mind of our predecessors in profession, of their afflictions, their services, and their sufferings, of God's covenant with them, the experiences they have had of his goodness, the care they took of, and the many prayers they put up for, those that should come after them. We may apply it to Christ, the Son of David, and to all his afflictions: “Lord, remember the covenant made with him and the satisfaction made by him. *Remember all his offerings* (^{<107B>}Psalm 20:3), that is, all his sufferings.” He especially pleads the solemn vow that David had made as soon as ever he was settled in his government, and before he was well settled in a house of his own, that he would build a house for God. Observe,

(1.) Whom he bound himself to, *to the Lord, to the mighty God of Jacob*. Vows are to be made to God, who is a party as well as a witness. The Lord is the Mighty One of Jacob, Jacob's God, and a mighty one, whose power is engaged for Jacob's defence and deliverance. Jacob is weak, but the God of Jacob is a mighty one.

(2.) What he bound himself to do, *to find out a place for the Lord*, that is, for the ark, the token of his presence. He had observed in the law frequent mention of the *place that God would choose to put his name there*, to which all the tribes should resort. When he came to the crown there was no such place; Shiloh was deserted, and no other place was pitched upon, for want of which the feasts of the Lord were not kept with due solemnity. “Well,” says David, “I will find out such a place for the general rendezvous of all the tribes, a place of *habitation for the Mighty One of Jacob*, a place for the ark, where there shall be room both for the priests and people to attend upon it.”

(3.) How intent he was upon it; he would not settle in his bed, till he had brought this matter to some head, v. 3, 4. The thing had been long talked of, and nothing done, till at last David, when he went out one morning about public business, made a vow that before night he would come to a resolution in this matter, and would determine the place either where the

tent should be pitched for the reception of the ark, at the beginning of his reign, or rather where Solomon should build the temple, which was not fixed till the latter end of his reign, just after the pestilence with which he was punished for numbering the people (^{<BIB>}1 Chronicles 22:1, *Then David said, This is the house of the Lord*); and perhaps it was upon occasion of that judgment that he made this vow, being apprehensive that one of God's controversies with him was for his dilatoriness in this matter. Note, When needful work is to be done for God it is good for us to task ourselves, and tie ourselves to a time, because we are apt to put off. It is good in the morning to cut out work for the day, binding ourselves that we will do it before we sleep, only with submission to Providence; for we *know not what a day may bring forth*. Especially in the great work of conversion to God we must be thus solicitous, thus zealous; we have good reason to resolve that we will not enjoy the comforts of this life till we have laid a foundation for hopes of a better.

2. That it was in pursuance of the expectations of the people of Israel, v. 6, 7.

(1.) They were inquisitive after the ark; for they lamented its obscurity, ^{<BIB>}1 Samuel 7:2. They *heard of it at Ephratah* (that is, at Shiloh, in the tribe of Ephraim); there they were told it had been, but it was gone. They *found it*, at last, *in the fields of the wood*, that is, in Kirjath-jearim, which signifies *the city of woods*. Thence all Israel fetched it, with great solemnity, in the beginning of David's reign (^{<BIB>}1 Chronicles 13:6), so that in building his house for the ark Solomon had gratified all Israel. They needed not to go about to seek the ark anymore; they now knew where to find it.

(2.) They were resolved to attend it: "Let us but have a convenient place, and *we will go into his tabernacle*, to pay our homage there; *we will worship at his footstool* as subjects and suppliants, which we neglected to do, for want of such a place, *in the days of Saul*," ^{<BIB>}1 Chronicles 13:3.

II. What he prays for, v. 8-10.

1. That God would vouchsafe, not only to take possession of, but to take up his residence in, this temple which he had built: *Arise, O Lord! into thy rest*, and let this be it, *thou, even the ark of thy strength*, the pledge of thy presence, thy mighty presence.

2. That God would give grace to the ministers of the sanctuary to do their duty: *Let thy priests be clothed with righteousness*; let them appear righteous both in their administrations and in their conversations, and let both be according to the rule. Note, Righteousness is the best ornament of a minister. Holiness towards God, and goodness towards all men, are habits for ministers of the necessity of which there is no dispute. “They are *thy priests*, and will therefore discredit their relation to thee if they *be not clothed with righteousness*.”

3. That the people of God might have the comfort of the due administration of holy ordinances among them: *Let thy saints shout for joy*. They did so when the ark was brought into the city of David (~~1065~~2 Samuel 6:15); they will do so when the priests are clothed with righteousness. A faithful ministry is the joy of the saints; it is the matter of it; it is a friend and a furtherance to it; we are *helpers of your joy*, ~~1012~~2 Corinthians 1:24.

4. That Solomon's own prayer, upon occasion of the dedicating of the temple, might be accepted of God: “*Turn not away the face of thy anointed*, that is, deny me not the things I have asked of thee, send me not away ashamed.” He pleads,

(1.) That he was the anointed of the Lord, and this he pleads as a type of Christ, the great anointed, who, in his intercession, urges his designation to his office. He is God's anointed, and therefore the Father hears him always.

(2.) That he was the son of David: “For his sake do not deny me;” and this is the Christian's plea: “For the sake of Christ” (our David), “*in whom thou art well pleased*, accept me.” He is David, whose name signifies *beloved*; and we are made accepted in the beloved. He is God's servant, whom he *upholds*, ~~301~~ Isaiah 42:1. “We have no merit of our own to plead, but for his sake, in whom there is a fulness of merit, let us find favour.” When we pray for the prosperity of the church we may pray with great boldness, for Christ's sake, who purchased the church with his own blood. “Let both ministers and people do their duty.”

◀121▶ PSALM 132:11-18

GOD'S PROMISES TO ZION

These are precious promises, *confirmed by an oath*, that the heirs of them might have *strong consolation*, ^{◀387▶}Hebrews 6:17, 18. It is all one whether we take them as pleas urged in the prayer or as answers returned to the prayer; believers know how to make use of the promises both ways, with them to speak to God and in them to hear what God the Lord will speak to us. These promises relate to the establishment both in church and state, both to the throne of the house of David and to the testimony of Israel fixed on Mount Zion. The promises concerning Zion's hill are as applicable to the gospel-church as these concerning David's seed are to Christ, and therefore both pleadable by us and very comfortable to us. Here is,

I. The choice God made of David's house and Zion hill. Both were of divine appointment.

1. God chose David's family for the royal family and confirmed his choice by an oath, v. 11, 12. David, being a type of Christ, was made king with an oath: *The Lord hath sworn and will not repent*, will not turn from it. Did David swear to the Lord (v. 2) that he would find him a house? The Lord swore to David that he would build him a house; for God will be behind with none of his people in affections or assurances. The promise made to David refers,

(1.) To a long succession of kings that should descend from his loins: *Of the fruit of thy body will I set upon thy throne*, which was fulfilled in Solomon; David himself lived to see it with great satisfaction, ^{◀118▶}1 Kings 1:48. The crown was also entailed conditionally upon his heirs for ever: *If thy children*, in following ages, *will keep my covenant and my testimony that I shall teach them*. God himself engaged to teach them, and he did his part; they had Moses and the prophets, and all he expects is that they should keep what he taught them, and keep to it, and then *their children shall sit upon thy throne for evermore*. Kings are before God upon their good behaviour, and their commission from him runs *quamdiu se bene gesserint* — *during good behaviour*. The issue of this was that they did not

keep God's covenant, and so the entail was at length cut off, and *the sceptre departed from Judah* by degrees.

(2.) To an everlasting successor, a king that should descend from his loins of *the increase of whose government and peace there shall be no end*. St. Peter applies this to Christ, nay, he tells us that David himself so understood it. ⁽⁴⁰²⁾Acts 2:30, *He knew that God had sworn with an oath to him that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne; and in the fulness of time he did so, and gave him the throne of his father David,* ⁽⁴¹²⁾Luke 1:32. He did fulfill the condition of the promise; he kept God's covenant and his testimony, did his Father's will, and in all things pleased him; and therefore to him, and his spiritual seed, the promise shall be made good. He, and the children God has given him, all believers, shall *sit upon the throne for evermore,* ⁽⁴¹²⁾Revelation 3:21.

2. God chose Zion hill for the holy hill, and confirmed his choice by the delight he took in it, v. 13, 14. He *chose the Mount Zion which he loved* (⁽⁴⁰⁸⁾Psalm 78:68); he chose it for the habitation of his ark, and said of it, *This is my rest for ever*, and not merely my residence for a time, as Shiloh was. Zion was the city of David; he chose it for the royal city because God chose it for the holy city. God said, *Here will I dwell*, and therefore David said, *Here will I dwell*, for here he adhered to his principle, *It is good for me to be near to God*. Zion must be here looked upon as a type of the gospel-church, which is called *Mount Zion* (⁽³²²⁾Hebrews 12:22), and in it what is here said of Zion has its full accomplishment. Zion was long since ploughed as a field, but the church of Christ *is the house of the living God* (⁽³¹⁵⁾1 Timothy 3:15), and it is his *rest for ever*, and shall be blessed with his presence always, even to the end of the world. The delight God takes in his church, and the continuance of his presence with his church, are the comfort and joy of all its members.

II. The choice blessings God has in store for David's house and Zion hill. Whom God chooses he will bless.

1. God, having chosen Zion hill, promises to bless that,

(1.) With the blessings of the life that now is; for godliness has the promise of them, v. 15. The earth shall yield her increase; where religion is set up there shall be provision, and in blessing God will bless it (⁽³⁵⁶⁾Psalm 67:6); he will surely and abundantly bless it. And a little

provision, with an abundant blessing upon it, will be more serviceable, as well as more comfortable, than a great deal without that blessing. God's people have a special blessing upon common enjoyments, and that blessing puts a peculiar sweetness into them. Nay, the promise goes further: *I will satisfy her poor with bread.* Zion has her own poor to keep; and it is promised that God will take care even of them.

[1.] By his providence they shall be kept from wanting; they shall have provision enough. If there be scarcity, the poor are the first that feel it, so that it is a sure sign of plenty if they have sufficient. Zion's poor shall not want, for God has obliged all the sons of Zion to be charitable to the poor, according to their ability, and the church must take care that they be not *neglected*, ~~400~~ Acts 6:1.

[2.] By his grace they shall be kept from complaining; though they have but dry bread, yet they shall be satisfied. Zion's poor have, of all others, reason to be content with a little of this world, because they have better things prepared for them. And this may be understood spiritually of the provision that is made for the soul in the word and ordinances; God will abundantly bless that for the nourishment of the new man, and satisfy the poor in spirit with the bread of life. What God sanctifies to us we shall and may be satisfied with.

(2.) With the blessings of the life that is to come, things pertaining to godliness (v. 16), which is an answer to the prayer, v. 9.

[1.] It was desired that the priests might be *clothed with righteousness*; it is here promised that God will *clothe them with salvation*, not only save them, but make them and their administrations instrumental for the salvation of his people; they shall both *save themselves and those that hear them*, and *add those to the church that shall be saved*. Note, Whom God clothes with righteousness he will clothe with salvation; we must pray for righteousness and then with it God will give salvation.

[2.] It was desired that the saints might *shout for joy*; it is promised that they *shall shout aloud for joy*. God gives more than we ask, and when he gives salvation he will give an abundant joy.

2. God, having chosen David's family, here promises to bless that also with suitable blessings.

(1.) Growing power: *There, in Zion, will I make the horn of David to bud,* v. 17. The royal dignity shall increase more and more, and constant additions he made to the lustre of it. Christ is the *horn of salvation* (denoting a plentiful and powerful salvation) which God has raised up, and made to bud, *in the house of his servant David*. David had promised to use his power for God's glory, to cut off the horns of the wicked, and to exalt the horns of the righteous (⁴⁹⁵⁰Psalm 75:10); in recompence for it God here promises to make his horn to bud, for to those that have power, and use it well, more shall be given.

(2.) Lasting honour: *I have ordained a lamp for my anointed. Thou wilt light my candle,* ⁴⁹⁸⁸Psalm 18:28. That lamp is likely to burn brightly which God ordains. A lamp is a successor, for, when a lamp is almost out, another may be lighted by it; it is a succession, for by this means David shall not want a man to stand before God. Christ is the lamp and the light of the world.

(3.) Complete victory: "*His enemies, who have formed designs against him, will I clothe with shame, when they shall see their designs baffled.*" Let the enemies of all good governors expect to be clothed with shame, and especially the enemies of the Lord Jesus and his government, who shall rise, in the great day, *to everlasting shame and contempt*.

(4.) Universal prosperity: *Upon himself shall his crown flourish,* that is, his government shall be more and more his honour. This was to have its full accomplishment in Jesus Christ, whose crown of honour and power shall never fade, nor the flowers of it wither. The crowns of earthly princes *endure not to all generations* (⁴⁹⁷⁴Proverbs 27:24), but Christ's crown shall endure to all eternity and the crowns reserved for his faithful subjects are such as *fade not away*.