



FLOURISH
BIBLE STUDY

THE PSALMS *of* ASCENTS

LEADER'S GUIDE



LYDIA BROWNBACK



INTRODUCTION: GETTING INTO PSALMS

As you introduce this study to your group, it will be helpful for them to read or for you to restate the importance of the Psalms of Ascent. Use Lydia's information to share the purpose of these psalms, who sang them, and their context. Throughout the study, it will be good to remind your group that this same desire to be with God and his people is not just in these psalms, but it for us today and what we eagerly anticipate for eternity. As you will read in an upcoming week "I lift my eyes to the hills, from where does my help come? My help comes from the Lord, who made heaven and earth," remind the women that this study is for the sojourner in this life who excitedly awaits the new Jerusalem, where we will be in glory with Jesus.

WEEK 1: LONGING FOR HOME

PSALM 120

Many of us have felt the loneliness of living away from home, disconnected from the comfort of our own people and familiar daily rhythms. It's especially hard when we're cut off from fellow believers and surrounded instead by those who scorn our faith. You might want to begin this week talking about the ways in which group members have experienced this before you read the entire psalm together aloud. You might not have time to cover the entire lesson in your group time. As you prepare to lead your group, maybe select a particular question or questions from each section to cover during your gathering. Then, during the discussion time, ask the group if there are other questions they'd like to talk about before you move on to the next section.

1. THE BIG PICTURE (PSALM 120)

- ✦ What key words are used more than once in the psalm? Note any initial impressions these repeated words provide you.

Answer: Deceitful tongue; dwell/dwelling; peace; lying lips/deceitful tongue.

2. LONGING FOR DELIVERANCE (120:1-2)

- ✦ Think about an occasion when someone lied to you. How did it impact you and perhaps your relationship with the one who lied?

Answer: This is a worthy question for participants to consider as they individually prepare their study, but it's one that you can forgo during group time.

- ✦ Many of us tend at times to downplay the destructive nature of dishonesty. We water down the full impact when we call it “exaggeration” or “embellishment” or “white lie,” but Scripture paints a vivid picture of its effects. Fill in the following Lies and Liars chart and then write a summary statement of how the Bible portrays dishonesty.

Answer: *Answers contained in the chart passages.*

Summary statement: *Varied.*

- ✦ What is indicated in verses 1–2 about the psalmist’s state of mind when he prays, and how does he frame his prayer request?

Answer: The psalmist recalls a previous distress when the Lord delivered him. Remembering the Lord’s faithfulness in the past gives him courage to cry out for deliverance in the present.

3. LONGING FOR JUSTICE (120:3–4)

- ✦ The psalmist is most likely expressing righteous anger in these verses. At the same time, the verses could serve as a warning to the liar, revealing what he can expect for unrepentant sin. What do the images in these verses convey about what awaits unrepentant sinners?

Answer: Arrows and burning coals point to God’s judgment.

- ✦ Read Psalm 11:5–7, another passage where burning coals are used as a word picture. What does the image of burning coals in these psalms show us about God?

Answer: The Lord hates unrighteous acts and stands against wicked people because he, himself, is righteous. As the righteous judge, unrepentant sinners will experience his wrath against sin.

- ✦ It’s right to be angry at sin, although it’s very hard to be sinlessly angry. Until we are perfected in glory, the time when we will finally be free from all the effects of sin, it’s doubtful that we can experience purely righteous anger. How can adopting the psalmist’s perspective help us?

Answer: God is angry against sin, and justice is in his hands, so we can commit the injustices we see and experience to his sovereign control.

- ✦ Jesus said that Satan is a liar and the father of lies. How does Revelation 12:9 reveal the fate of this father of lies—the way in which this psalm will ultimately be fulfilled?

Answer: The ultimate deceiver will be conquered forever at the second coming of Christ.

4. LONGING FOR PEACE (120:5-7)

- ✦ How is the psalmist's living situation affecting him?

Answer: The psalmist longs to be with the Lord and the Lord's people. The Gentiles do not know or care for peace, which causes the psalmist turmoil.

- ✦ Pictured in Psalm 120 are two completely polarized worldviews. The psalmist seeks to promote peace, but the unbelieving Gentiles (non-Israelites) have a thirst for conflict. What do you think is the only lasting remedy for this conflict?

Answer: True unity is possible only between those who've been united to Christ by faith. Even then, conflicts will arise until we are perfected in glory, when Christ comes the second time.

- ✦ How would you summarize what the psalmist is longing for?

Answer: The psalmist desires peace in the presence of God.

- ✦ Until Jesus returns, there will always be spiritual conflict between God's people and those who reject him. How do the following passages help us apply Psalm 120 to our life today?

Answer: *2 Corinthians 6:14–18*. God's people are called to strengthen and encourage one another so that all are built up in the faith.

1 Peter 2:11–12. By living honorably and not giving earthly passions a foothold in our lives, we strengthen our faith and point unbelievers to Christ and his gospel.


- ✦ The psalmist found solace in journeying to Jerusalem to worship with God's people. How do we apply this in our own day?

Answer: We make it a priority to gather with God's people in a local church.

WEEK 2: KEPT FOREVER

PSALM 121

No one denies that life is hard, but it can be experienced as a joyful adventure because the Lord rules and reigns over every situation and difficult circumstance. That's how to apply Psalm 121 through our contemporary lens. As Lydia notes in the introduction to Week 2, the psalm is about persevere with confidence through life's journey. When you



look at the psalm as a whole, be sure your group understands how “step parallelism” works here. Overall, the Lord as “keeper” of his people is foundational to the psalm. You likely won’t want to take time to consider all the passages in the Kept from Evil chart on page 18. Perhaps just ask attendees if there was a particular passage that stood out to them, or ask someone for a general takeaway from the chart as a whole.

1. THE BIG PICTURE (PSALM 121)

- ✦ Notice how the psalmist uses “step parallelism” right out of the gate, where the word “help” appears in both verses 1 and 2. In what way is help *stepped up* from verse 1 to verse 2?

Answer: The psalmist identifies the source of help—it’s not in the hills but in the Maker of those hills.

- ✦ What key words appear more than once in the psalm? Note any initial impressions you get from these repeated words.

Answer: The Lord; keep/keeps/keeper. The Israelites knew God’s promise to remain faithful to his covenant with them, so this repeated word reminds them of God’s steadfastness.

- ✦ List all that the psalmist says about who God is and/or what God does:

Answer: *Answers contained on chart passages.*


2. ALWAYS HELPING (121:1-2)

- ✦ The same word translated as “lift up” in verse 1 is translated as “cast her eyes on” in Genesis 39:6–7, where we’re told that “Joseph was handsome in form and appearance. And after a time his master’s wife *cast her eyes* on Joseph and said, ‘Lie with me.’” Despite these different translations, the basic meaning of the word is the same. How does the way that the term is used in Genesis shed light on the psalmist’s state of mind when he uses the term in verse 1?

Answer: The psalmist has a strong desire for the Lord and the safety that only he can provide.

- ✦ In verse 2 the psalmist identifies the Lord as the one “who made heaven and earth.” How does identifying the Lord as Creator of everything show us the answer to his question in verse 1?

Answer: The Lord made those hills the psalmist looks to, and as maker of everything, he can certainly control all that he has made.

- 
- ✦ What do you think the psalmist means when he writes that God “will not let your foot be moved”? Take a look at Psalm 40:1–3 and Proverbs 3:25–26 if you want some help with your answer.

Answer: God protects the steps of his people, who are in covenant relationship with him.

3. ALWAYS WATCHING (121:3–4)

- ✦ Sleep—or sleeplessness—plagues many of us from time to time (or, in some cases, on a regular basis). Insomnia occurs for a variety of reasons. Sometimes the underlying cause is physiological, like when our hormones are out of whack. Other times, the cause of sleeplessness is stress or anxiety. In other words, the root is spiritual. What are we told in verse 4 that can break the tyranny of anxiety-induced insomnia?

Answer: Because God never sleeps, his people can entrust their cares and concerns to him, let go of the illusion of control, and go to sleep.

- ✦ Remember that the psalmist is now elaborating on the question and answer with which he opened the psalm: “From where does my help come? My help comes from the Lord.” Summarize what you learn from verses 3–4 about how the Lord helps his people.

Answer: The Lord rules his creation so that his people persevere to the end.

4. ALWAYS KEEPING (121:5–6)

- ✦ Based on the psalm as a whole, what do think it means that God is our “keeper”?

Answer: God is a steadfast presence who will not allow anything to happen to us that he has not ordained or allowed. Knowing that he keeps us should be a comfort beyond anything we can conjure or put our trust in.

- ✦ Think about what shade provides. What is the psalmist saying in a poetic way about one of the ways the Lord “keeps” us?

Answer: Shade is a protector from heat. The Lord’s “shade” offers security from the “heat” of life’s difficulties.

- ✦ Verses 5–6 actually point forward in time to the way God has planned for the ultimate “keeping” of his people in the new heavens and the new earth. We see this in Revelation 7:15–17. What more do we discover in that passage about what God has prepared for the people he keeps?

Answer: All distresses, sorrows, and dangers will be over, and his people will be safe in the care of King Jesus for all eternity.

3. KEPT FOREVER (121:7-8)

- ✦ The Lord protects his people from evil, and the ways in which we are protected are revealed all through his word. We see in the Bible that the means God uses to protect us often include our own participation. Fill in the “Kept from Evil” chart to learn about how God keeps us from evil.

Answer: *Answers contained on chart passages.*

- ✦ Verse 8 gets us to the very top of the psalmist’s “steps.” How does the last line of the psalm demonstrate this?

Answer: “Your going out and your coming in” is a Hebrew idiom for “all circumstances.” God’s keeping power is so immense that it covers everything we do for the rest of our lives and on through eternity.

WEEK 3: GATHERED TOGETHER

PSALM 122

The takeaway from Psalm 122 is the joyous vitality of corporate worship. We see such joy from the psalmist as he envisions being in Jerusalem, worshiping God together with God’s people. No journey is too great for such a glorious occasion. Although life in a fallen world mars our enjoyment of public worship, we will experience it in all its fullness one day in glory. Studying Psalm 122 encourages us to gather with our church family now and helps us anticipate the fullness of the gathering yet to come. The reason for the joy and anticipation is the one we are journeying toward, the one we gather to worship—the Lord Jesus Christ.

1. THE BIG PICTURE (PSALM 122)

- ✦ Note the repeated words or phrases in Psalm 122 that stand out to you.

Answer: Be sure to note *peace*, *house* and related imagery, *Jerusalem*.

- ✦ The phrase “the house of the LORD” occurs in both the first and last verses of the psalm. What do you think the psalmist is communicating through the placement of this repeated phrase?

Answer: This is the destination of the pilgrimage. The “house” was the designated place for worshiping the Lord. Those journeying are excited about rejoicing in their covenant Lord in the company of other worshipers.

- ✦ As you consider the psalm as a whole, what initial impressions do you get of Jerusalem as it was in the psalmist's day?

Answer: Impressions include strength, security, and royalty. Jerusalem was the city where God intended to govern his people through his appointed king.

2. GLADNESS IN THE GATES (122:1-2)

- ✦ In verse 1, he looks back on the beginning of his journey to Jerusalem. What encouraged him to embark on the trip?

Answer: Unity of purpose with other worshipers.

- ✦ Why do you think the prospect of going to the house of the Lord in Jerusalem brought gladness to the psalmist's heart?

Answer: The joy of being in God's presence in worship.

- ✦ Where does the psalmist locate himself in the present?

Answer: He and his fellow travelers are within the city gates of Jerusalem.

3. CITY ON A HILL (122:3-5)

- ✦ How are each of the following words "stepped up" in verses 3-5?

Answer: *tribes:* The twelve tribes of Israel are God's covenant people. *thrones:* God's righteousness is administered from the throne, and the king who administers it is God's anointed king.

- ✦ What is indicated about Jerusalem in each of these three verses?

Answer: v. 3. It was built intentionally as God's strong city.

v. 4. The city was intended to be Israel's homebase for worship.

v. 5. The Lord's king rules God's people from this homebase.

- ✦ What does verse 4 reveal as the primary purpose for undertaking the journey to Jerusalem?

Answer: Thanksgiving.

- ✦ How do the psalmist's words about Jerusalem in verses 3-5 enhance your understanding of why the psalmist is glad to finally be there?

Answer: God's ways rule and reign from Jerusalem. Here, righteousness is upheld, and the Lord is magnified.

- ✦ Being in Jerusalem fills the psalmist with gladness. It's clear that it satisfies his heart. How does John 1:14 reveal the way believers today share in that same satisfaction?

Answer: The Son of God came in the flesh and dwelt among human beings. After his ascension back into heaven, he dwells within God's people today by means of the Holy Spirit. The joy we and peace we know through our union with Christ is what those Israelite pilgrims anticipated when they went to Jerusalem.

3. PRAY FOR PEACE! (122:6-9)

- ✦ As king, David was responsible for the welfare of the city and its occupants. What motivates his pursuit of peace in these verses?

Answer: Peace provides security for God's people and protects their freedom to worship unhindered.

- ✦ How does the psalmist view himself in relation to all those who set their sight on Jerusalem?

Answer: He is a "brother" and "companion" to the rest of the believers.

WEEK 4: MIGHTY TO SAVE

PSALMS 123-124

You'll want to note up front why it's good to study Psalms 123 and 124 together. As Lydia writes in the introduction, Psalm 123 shows us a low point for God's people, a time when they were battling discouragement. The psalm shows us how they battled it and what lifted them back out. Following up with Psalm 124 reinforces the help provided in 123. Read Psalm 123 aloud in its entirety at the beginning, and then do the same for Psalm 124 when you get to the Big Picture section for this second psalm. For the sake of time, you can ask a group member to simply summarize question 9 and, later, question 15 rather than discussing each passage in detail.

1. THE BIG PICTURE (PSALM 123)

- ✦ Jot down the repeated words or phrases in Psalm 123 that stand out to you.

Answer: You'll want to note *eyes*, *hands*, *mercy*, and the various household roles.

- ✦ As you consider the psalm as a whole, what mood or outlook is expressed here?

Answer: The psalmist is utterly reliant on the Lord and laments current troubles.

2. EYES LIFTED UP (123:1)

- ✦ The psalmist lifts his eyes—he directs his desire—to the Lord, who is “enthroned in the heavens.” What does this description of the Lord convey about why the psalmist turns to the Lord in his difficulty?

Answer: The Lord’s being enthroned indicates his kingship—his rule and reign—and the place of his enthronement, the heavens, shows the vast scope of his authority (he is over everything).

- ✦ What does Revelation 22:1–4 add to your understanding of the Lord’s kingly rule?

Answer: It will last for eternity, and all his subjects will dwell with him in glorious worship, free from pain and suffering.

3. WANTING AND WAITING (123:2)

- ✦ What outlook or posture is conveyed in the psalmist’s words?

Answer: The psalmist shows a posture of humility. He does not take matters into his own hands, but waits for the one he trusts.

- ✦ Some Bible commentators have interpreted this verse to mean that the psalmist is waiting for instructions from the Lord, but when we consider the psalm as a whole, and this verse in particular, we come up with a different interpretation of what the psalmist is waiting for. What is it?

Answer: The psalmist is waiting for the Lord to show him mercy.

- ✦ The psalm gives us a biblical picture of how to wait for the Lord—for answers to prayer, for deliverance from injustice, for relief from trouble. What do we learn from verse 2 about *how* to wait on the Lord?

Answer: The psalmist shows us how to wait in trust and hopeful expectation.

4. MORE THAN ENOUGH! (123:3–4)

- ✦ Based on what you see in verses 3–4, what demonstration of God’s mercy do you think the psalmist is requesting?

Answer: The psalmist desires relief from persecution (contempt, scorn) from those who flaunt their ease.

- ✦ What do we learn from the following verses about pride and arrogance?

Answer: *Proverbs 16:5:* The Lord hates pride and will punish unrepentant arrogance.

1 Corinthians 13:4: Arrogance is antithetical to love. The rudeness and other expressions of arrogance are unloving.

- ✦ In Psalm 123:4, we see a link between arrogance and contempt. Why do you think that proud people are contemptuous of others?

Answer: People with too a high view of themselves tend to have a low view of others, resulting in feelings of contempt for those they look down on.

- ✦ The psalmist's prayer in verses 3–4 points forward to, or foreshadows, what Jesus experienced. In the New Testament we're told that proud people "treated him with contempt and mocked him" (Luke 23:11). Because he was subjected to scorn and contempt, he knows how it feels and has compassion on us when people scorn us. There's a huge difference, however, between his experience of contempt and ours. As sinners, we deserve contempt. Jesus had no sin. How does Isaiah 53:1–6 explain why Jesus the sinless one was scorned?

Answer: He was scorned so that those who trust in him don't have to experience the scorn they deserve.

5. THE BIG PICTURE (PSALM 124)

- ✦ We find many vivid nature images in the psalm. What do these images convey?

Answer: v. 3. The images in this verse convey the harm that the wicked can do. "Kindled" is an image of destructive fire.

v. 4. "Floods" and "torrents" can sweep away anything in their path, which is what the wicked intend to do.

v. 5. "Raging waters" connote being completely overwhelmed.

v. 6. "Prey to their teeth" is an image of merciless devouring with the purpose of consuming.

v. 7. "Snare" shows that the wicked intend to trap the godly.

- ✦ Note which part of the psalm is past tense and which is present. How does this show us what's changed in the psalmist's circumstances?

Answer: The initial problems, recounted in verses 1–5, are now past. The psalmist now rejoices in the Lord's deliverance (vv. 6–8).

6. IF . . . (124:1–5)

- ✦ The threat that faced Israel was nothing short of utter calamity. What prevented the calamity from happening?

Answer: The Lord was on their side.

7. BLESSED ESCAPE (124:6–7)

- ✦ Israel rejoices in their deliverance from a danger unknown to us, but their rescue foreshadows a much greater deliverance that we do know, one that reaches way beyond Israel. Note how each passage in the Deliverance chart reveals this greater rescue.

Answer: *Answers contained in chart passages.*

3. WHAT'S IN A NAME? (124:8)

- ✦ On another occasion the Lord appeared to Moses and after some necessary preparation, he revealed his glory. Read what happened then in Exodus 34:6–7. How does that incident from Exodus help us understand why Israel hopes in this name?

Answer: The question should have included Exodus 34:5, where we're told that what comes next in verses 6–7 is a declaration of all that's included in the Lord's name: mercy, grace, steadfast love, faithfulness, slow to anger. This is why Israel hopes in the Lord's "name."

- ✦ The psalmist's declaration, "Our hope is in the name of the LORD, who made heaven and earth," is another part of the psalm that points far into the future. How does John 8:58 show us where the psalmist's declaration ultimately points?

Answer: The declaration points to Jesus, who is the great "I am."

WEEK 5: GOODNESS GUARANTEED

PSALMS 125–126

This week's two psalms focus on trusting the Lord to do right by his people and that actions have eternal consequences. As you discuss Psalm 125, spend time on the questions that focus on how God is unmovable and the language of the mountains, especially vital in light of how enemies of our faith and the gospel attempt to surround us also. If time is at a premium, you can bypass discussing questions 8 and 18. Psalm 26 traces a typical pattern in the lives of all God's people in every age: The Lord rescues his people from trouble; then they find themselves in trouble yet again and in need of more divine rescue; because God was faithful to rescue in the past, they can be confident that he will rescue them again. Be sure to note this pattern as you discuss this psalm.

1. THE BIG PICTURE (PSALM 125)

- ✦ What comparisons and contrasts do you notice in Psalm 125?

Answer: *Comparisons:* The Lord surround his people as mountains surround Jerusalem. Trust in the Lord makes believers as steady and unshakable as Mount Zion.
Contrasts: The Lord is good to the upright; evildoers are led away.

- ✦ How would you characterize the psalmist's posture toward the Lord in this psalm?

Answer: The psalmist is confident in the Lord's protective rule.

2. SAFELY SURROUNDED (125:1-2)

- ✦ Why, according to the psalmist, can the Lord be trusted?

Answer: Because he surrounds his people in a protective way.

- ✦ What do you learn from the following passages about how the Lord surrounds and protects his people?

Answer: *Psalm 139:5–10.* The Lord knows everything about his people and governs the course of their lives.

Proverbs 16:9. The Lord directs our every step, even when we aren't consciously aware that he is doing so.

Romans 8:28–39. God works every circumstance together for the good of each of his people, transforming them to be more and more like Jesus.

Ephesians 3:20–21. God's power is at work within his people to accomplish more than they can ask or imagine.

3. WHEN EVIL RISES UP (125:3)

- ✦ It's easy to understand the threat posed by foreign enemies, but just as much vigilance is needed when evil rules closer to home. According to verse 3, what temptation can afflict people who are subject to evil rulers?

Answer: They are themselves tempted by the sins of those in authority.

- ✦ What promise is given in verse 3?

Answer: God will not allow evil to permanently reign. Although evil did "rest" on Israel through many a wicked king, all those wicked kings were brought down in God's perfect timing, and now King Jesus reigns supremely over God's people.

- ✦ The psalmist expresses confidence that God has always been faithful to deliver his people from evil oppression, wherever it arises, in his perfect way and time. How does the prayer in Ephesians 1:15–22 paint a fuller picture of what’s promised in Psalm 125:3 and what underlies the confidence of God’s people in every age?

Answer: Jesus Christ rules from his heavenly throne, and the more our hearts are enlightened about his power and good purposes, the more confident we will be.

- ✦ While it’s always been challenging for Christians to live under secular powers, one of the greatest difficulties we face is not conforming to the worldly environment foisted upon us under those secular powers. How do the following passages encourage us?

Answer: *Romans 12:2.* As we immerse ourselves in God’s word, we get a taste for how to live it out and apply it to our daily lives and situations, discovering what pleases God and blesses us in the process.

1 Peter 1:13–16. Peter tells us to prepare our minds for action; in other words, we pursue spiritual growth through God’s Word, prayer, and fellowship with other believers. As we do, holiness becomes an increasing priority.

1 John 2:15–17. We are to guard ourselves against allowing our human desires to master us, drawing us to love worldly ways more than God’s ways.

4. GOD’S GOODNESS (125:4–5)

- ✦ What warning is held out to those who reject God to embrace the ways of the world?

Answer: They will find themselves swept up in wickedness and carried off to the same destiny.

5. THE BIG PICTURE (PSALM 126)

- ✦ Identify the repeated words and phrases in Psalm 126.

Answer: Fortunes, great things, joy, sowing/reaping.

- ✦ How does the outlook of the psalmist change from the beginning of the psalm to the end?

Answer: The psalmist begins by looking back on a time when the Lord restored lost blessings to his people. As the psalm progresses, the psalmist asks for this same blessing again, and he ends on a note of hopeful expectation that this is what the Lord will do.

6. A LOOK BACK (126:1–3)

- ✦ How would you summarize Israel’s response to the Lord’s great deliverance?

Answer: Israel joyfully reflects on the Lord's rescue.

- ✦ How did God's blessing of his people serve as a testimony to outsiders?

Answer: Outsiders attributed the blessings of the Israelites to God. The acknowledge that the Israelites have the favor of God upon them.

7. A LOOK AHEAD (126:4-6)

- ✦ Turning from reflecting on the past in verses 1-3, what seems to be the present condition of God's people as they pray in verse 4?

Answer: Israel is back in a situation of neediness.

- ✦ The "Negeb" was the southernmost part of Judah. The term *negeb* means "dry" or "parched." How does this term help us understand Israel's prayer in verse 4 and what they hope for in verses 5-6?

Answer: The Israelites are praying to be restored to the full abundance they'd enjoyed when peace and righteousness characterized the nation.

- ✦ How would you classify the tone Israel takes in verses 5-6?

Answer: Hope-filled.

- ✦ Israel is dependent on God for restoration and blessing, which is clear from their prayer in verse 4. At the same time, God typically answers the prayers of his people often through human means. How is this evidenced in verses 5-6?


Answer: God provides the harvest, but his people have to do the work of sowing and reaping. The spiritual principle is that sowing to God's word and ways produces a harvest of righteousness and spiritual prosperity. Perhaps ask your group what such "sowing" looks like practically (Bible study, fellowship, obedience to God's word, etc.).

- ✦ Agricultural images are used to convey spiritual truths in both Old and New Testaments. What do we learn from the farming images in the following passages?

Answer: *Hosea 10:12-13*. When we sow obedience, we reap holiness. As we pursue the Lord wholeheartedly, the fallow (hard) ground of our hearts softens.

Matthew 13:1-9, 18-23. The fertile ground that produces an abundant harvest points to humble, tender hearts open to the gospel and all God's ways.

Galatians 6:7-9. If we live to gratify our appetite for sex, food, drugs, or other worldly pleasures, we will destroy our bodies and, if unrepentant, our souls as well. If we live for the Lord instead of fleshly cravings, we will experience all the blessings of righteousness. God has hardwired the world to work this way.



Revelation 14:14–16. There will be a final reaping, which is the final judgment. The righteous will be gathered into heaven and the unrighteous will be cast out by the reaper.

WEEK 6: BLESSINGS OF A HAPPY HOME

PSALMS 127–128

Studying Psalms 127–128 together makes sense because, as Lydia notes in the introduction, Psalm 127 shows us what the Lord does, and Psalm 128 shows us what we are to do in response. Both are designated as “wisdom” psalms, which means that the themes and the language used reflects Israel’s wisdom traditions found in Job, Proverbs, and Ecclesiastes. Other ancient cultures had similar wisdom instructions, but Israel’s is the only one that was ground in “the fear of the LORD” (see Prov. 9:10). These two psalms center on how living in the way of biblical wisdom blesses families.

1. THE BIG PICTURE (PSALM 127)

- ✦ The first part of the psalm, verses 1–2, seems at first to be completely unrelated to the second part, verses 3–5, but as we will see, both parts actually fit together. As you consider the psalm as a whole, can you identify a theme or themes threading through the entire psalm?

Answer: All blessings in life, including a thriving family, depends on the Lord.

2. UNLESS . . . (PSALM 127:1–2)

- ✦ What do these verses teach us about work and labor?


Answer: Success isn’t guaranteed by hard work. The outcome of all our labors is in the Lord’s hands.

- ✦ What do these verses teach us about the Lord?

Answer: He is watching over us as work and rest, even while we are asleep.

- ✦ If you’ve ever struggled with insomnia, the inability to either fall asleep or stay asleep, perhaps you know firsthand that anxiety is a root cause. What does verse 2 reveal as the remedy?

Answer: A drive to control our circumstances can make us anxious and rob us of sleep, but trusting that the Lord will bless our efforts in ways he chooses and knows are best, we have no need to lie awake anxiously. This is the second time



sleep has factored into the psalms of ascents. We saw in Psalm 121 that we can sleep because the Lord never does.

- ✦ Look again at the first part of verse 1: “Unless the LORD builds the house, those who build it labor in vain.” A house is a dwelling, of course, but the term can also be used for “kingdom,” similar to the way *dynasty* is often used. With that in mind, Solomon might have been reflecting on God’s promise to his father King David, a promise that was carried forward a generation later by Solomon himself. Read God’s promise in 2 Samuel 7:1–16. In what way is that promise reflected here in the psalm?

Answer: In this section where we read of the Davidic covenant, David has a desire to build the Lord’s house. The Lord honors this desire but the Lord is the one who will build it, with his chosen builder, using his chosen plan, and in his chosen time.

3. FRUITFUL FAMILIES (PSALM 127:3–5)

- ✦ In what specific ways in verses 4–5 do children (sons in particular in this passage) serve as a “reward”?

Answer: Sons would serve as additional male protection for the family and ensure that the family line would continue. The continuity of lineage was very important in Israel, including retaining land rights and providing for extended family.

- ✦ How does the warrior imagery in these verses tie into the overarching theme of a “house” being built (keep in mind God’s promise in 2 Samuel 7:1–16)?

Answer: The answer here builds on the answer to question 6. The family dynasty is protected through many sons, and in the bigger picture, the dynasty of King David, the Lord’s anointed king, is kept through David’s kingly descendants, culminating in the Messiah, the Son of God and final King of God’s people.

- ✦ We can see in the New Testament that the promises of Psalm 127 point beyond Solomon’s time to a spiritual reality for God’s people in our very own day. How do you see that in 1 Peter 2:4–5?

Answer: In Christ, the Lord’s people together make up a spiritual house to the praise of God’s glory.

4. THE BIG PICTURE (PSALM 128)

- ✦ Underline repeated words or phrases in Psalm 128. What do the repeated words indicate about the psalm’s primary theme?

Answer: Fruit/fruitful, blessed, wife/children/ “fears the Lord.” Together these



words indicate the blessings that generally come to those who walk in the ways of godly wisdom.

5. FRUITFUL FEAR (128:1-2)

- ✦ The Bible's Wisdom Books link wisdom to the fear of the Lord (see, for example, Proverbs 9:10). This kind of fear isn't about being afraid of God. It's about orienting every aspect of our lives—all our plans and loves and choices—around him. So we're told here in the opening verses of Psalm 128 that wisdom is to fear the Lord and walk in his ways. What do you think it means to walk in the Lord's ways?

Answer: It means to orient our thoughts, affections, choices, and actions on what pleases God and reflects his character.

- ✦ The language Solomon uses in these verses is “covenantal,” which means it reflects God's promises of faithfulness to those who worship and serve him. While not a guarantee, what blessings generally come to those who orient their lives around the Lord?

Answer: Provision as the reward for diligence.

6. A HAPPY HOME (128:3-4)

- ✦ A godly man's wife and children will reap the rewards of his godly leadership. The vine and the olive in the Old Testament are symbolic of particular blessings. What impression to you get about both wife and children from the way these images are used here?

Answer: *Wife like a fruitful vine:* She flourishes in bearing and raising children.
Children like olive shoots: symbolic of hardiness and steady growth.

7. BLESSINGS, BLESSINGS, AND MORE BLESSINGS (128:5-6)

- ✦ None of us lives in the fear of the Lord perfectly or walks in all his ways. We know that we sin every day. Because that's true, we might find ourselves anxious as we study this psalm and wondering if our sins disqualify us and our families and friends from the blessings held out here. But Psalm 28 is merely a foretaste of even greater blessings in store for God's people. How are those blessings shown in Ephesians 1:3–10, and how do God's people receive them?

Answer: Those adopted into God's family receive forgiveness for all their sin through the blood of their brother Jesus, and they obtain the full inheritance rights that accompany redemption—grace, wisdom, knowledge of God, and eternal life.

WEEK 7: KNOCKED DOWN BUT NEVER DEFEATED

PSALM 129

Lydia writes in the Week 7 introduction that “for God’s people, oppression and evil never get the last word. Victory was sure for Israel, and it is sure for Christians today. We find this assurance in our study of Psalm 129.” In this life, we surely get tastes of victory, but our full experience of it is ahead of us, when Christ returns to take us home to heaven. In the meantime, we are forced to contend with sin and temptation and the oppression of evildoers. But we’re not left to ourselves while the battle rages. This psalm helps us focus forward and shows us where present strength lies. Question 7 raises the issue of “imprecatory prayer.” These are prayers for the defeat and destruction of Israel’s and, therefore, God’s enemies. Your group might have questions about such prayers and how (or if) we can apply them today. One approach is that rather than praying for the defeat of our enemies, we pray that God would slay evildoers with the gospel. And it is always right to pray for the defeat of evil itself.

1. THE BIG PICTURE (PSALM 129)

- ✦ As you consider the psalm as a whole, what do you see that enables us to consider the psalmist’s tone as victorious rather than defeated?

Answer: Point to verse 4: “The Lord is righteous; he has cut the cords of the wicked.” The psalmist trusts that the Lord has and will continue to uphold his righteousness, which means “blessing” (v. 8) for the Lord’s covenant people.

2. A LOOK BACK (129:1–3)

- ✦ What do you infer about Israel’s suffering from the images the psalmist uses to describe it?

Answer: The image of long furrows plowed on the psalmist’s back is a metaphor for the various ways that God’s enemies have inflicted suffering on Israel over the years. The idea conveyed is intense oppression.

- ✦ What do we learn from the psalmist in these verses about how Israel’s past persecution turned out?

Answer: The Lord pushed back the wicked time and time again so that they didn’t prevail.

- ✦ Why, according to the following passages, can God’s people be sure of the outcome that the psalmist notes in verse 2?

Answer: *Romans 16:20.* God has promised that Satan will be crushed “soon,” in other words, in God’s perfect time. We should see the word “soon” in this verse in light of eternity.

Hebrews 2:14–16. Any power Satan has is under God’s authority. Although Satan uses his power to bring about death, Christ defeated Satan’s power through his own death on the cross.

3. DELIVERANCE ACCOMPLISHED (129:4)

- ✦ The evil that the wicked inflict is described as “cords.” Think about the purpose cords serve, what they are used for. How does this help us understand the effects of evil and the intentions of wicked people?

Answer: Cords are for restraining and binding. The wicked desire to enslave people in their own wickedness and use them for their own purposes.

- ✦ What do we learn about the nature of the Lord’s righteousness in verse 4?

Answer: As aspect of his righteousness is to conquer and obliterate unrighteousness. The Lord delivers his people from the “cords” of sin, death, and the schemes of wicked people.

4. A LOOK AHEAD (129:5–8)

- ✦ These requests for the Lord to defeat the wicked are called “imprecatory” prayers. An imprecation is a curse, a wish for destruction. Here, the psalmist uses farming imagery to colorfully illustrate his imprecatory petitions. How do these images help us see what the psalmist is asking in each verse?

Answer: v. 5. He asks that the wicked would be ashamed of their wickedness and be forced to abandon their plans.

v. 6. He asks that their plans fail before they can gain traction.


v. 7. He asks that they find no prosperity or success.

v. 8. He asks that no one will prosper through the schemes of the wicked.

- ✦ We can grow our understanding of Psalm 129 by taking a look at Psalm 2 as well.

How does Psalm 2 help us understand why the writer of Psalm 129 isn’t wrong to pray for the destruction of Israel’s enemies?

Answer: Psalm 2 holds up the triumph of God’s anointed king. The king celebrated in Psalm 2 is David, and his triumphant reign is meant to point forward to the eternal King Jesus, whose enemies must one day acknowledge his kingship or be



destroyed. To pray for the destruction of the Lord's enemies is to uphold the Messiah's victory.

✦ Where do you see an indication of God's grace held out to the rebellious in Psalm 2?

Answer: In verse 12, David is clear that if a person submits to the Lord, he is gracious to save them.

WEEK 8: HOPE, HUMILITY, AND TRUE HAPPINESS

PSALMS 130–131

The emphasis this week is humility. It underlies both psalms in Week 8. Psalm 130 shows us that the humble are those who get real about their sin—how bad it is in light of God's holiness—and how desperately sinners need God's mercy. The humble are also that let go of trying to control their lives and entrust themselves to God's providences and the paths he marks out in his word. If time runs short, you can skip over question 9. And when you get to the chart in question 14, ask attendees to share a particular passage from the chart that stood out to them, or ask one or two group members to summarize their overall takeaway from the chart passages.

1. THE BIG PICTURE (PSALM 130)

✦ Underline repeated words and phrases in Psalm 130. How does the repetition reveal the primary purpose of the psalm, its overarching theme?

Answer: “Oh LORD,” wait/waits, hope, iniquities, “more than watchmen for the morning.” The psalmist praises God with a penitent heart, rejoicing in the grace he knows has been promised.

2. OUT OF THE DEPTHS (130:1–2)

✦ In Scripture, the “depths” or the “deep”—words associated with going down—are sometimes a poetic way of describing particular situations or conditions. What sort of circumstances do these words bring to your mind?

Answer: The psalmist seems to feel cast down or like he's bearing a heavy weight.

✦ What does the psalmist desire here in Psalm 130:1–2?

Answer: The psalmist desires that the Lord will hear him.

3. THE ONLY REMEDY (130:3-4)

- ✦ What can we infer from verses 3–4 for why the psalmist’s soul is troubled?

Answer: The psalmist feels the guilt of his sin.

- ✦ In what does the psalmist ground his appeal for God’s forgiveness?

Answer: God’s character. The Lord is one who does not “mark iniquities” but offers forgiveness.

- ✦ According to verse 4, what happens in the heart of someone who truly experiences God’s forgiveness?

Answer: Being forgiven results in a deeper fear—respect, awe, reverence—of the Lord.

- ✦ The psalmist lived centuries before Christ came to redeem sinners on the cross and reconcile them to God. Even so, he expresses great confidence in the Lord’s forgiveness. How is this confidence explained in Romans 3:21–26?

Answer: The Law and the Prophets revealed glimpses of a Savior, and the forgiveness the psalmist yearns for rested in this Messiah yet to come.

4. WATCHING AND WAITING (130:5-6)

- ✦ We want to consider what exactly the psalmist is waiting for. He’s confident that his sin has been forgiven, so we know that isn’t it. As you consider the way that the psalmist expresses his heart here, what do you think he is waiting for? (You’ll find a hint in another plea for forgiveness. Psalm 51:8–12 shed light on what the psalmist is waiting for here in Psalm 130.)

Answer: The psalmist is longing to enjoy guilt-free worship in the presence of the Lord.

- ✦ How does 1 John 1:5–9 show us the way out of the dark of a spiritual night?

Answer: We don’t hide our sins. We confess them to the Lord and find spiritual cleansing, which renews joyful fellowship with the Lord along with our zeal to walk in the light, or in obedience, so we don’t mar our fellowship with the Lord again.

5. HOPE THAT NEVER DISAPPOINTS (130:7-8)

- ✦ What reasons does the psalmist give for his confident call to hope?

Answer: The psalmist bases his confidence on the Lord’s love and desire to redeem sinners.

- ✦ Read Ephesians 2:1–9. How does this passage, especially verse 4, show us what underlies these final verses of Psalm 130?

Answer: The hope of the psalmist and all sinners who long for forgiveness is the Lord's mercy and love. But because the Lord is holy, sin must be punished. So God made provision for this through the death of his Son so that he can freely forgive those he chooses to save.

6. THE BIG PICTURE (PSALM 131)

- ✦ As we consider the psalm as a whole, we get an idea of the psalmist's spiritual condition from the way he describes himself. What do you glean from what he says about:

Answer: *His heart:* He is humble. *His mind:* He is content to not know everything. *His soul or spirit:* He is peaceful and contented.

7. PORTRAIT OF CONTENTMENT (131:1)

- ✦ In God's word, a lifted-up heart is a proud heart. David is saying that he isn't dominated by pride. What particular traits of pride does he seem to renounce in verses 1–2? You might want to take a look at Deuteronomy 8:11–14 and 29:29 to help you answer.

Answer: He rejects the pride of control, either of his circumstances or his knowledge.

- ✦ The opposite of a lifted-up heart, one that is proud, is a humble heart. Identify particular traits of humility by completing the Traits of a Humble Heart chart below.

Answer: Answers contained in the chart passages.

- ✦ “Things too great and too marvelous” concern matters in which humans have limited knowledge or understanding. God in his wisdom doesn't reveal everything to us, but we can be confident that he has revealed all that we need to know. What do you think underlies the temptation to obsess about unknowable things?

Answer: Underlying the craving is a desire to master those things so we can control them.

- ✦ Despite King David's declaration of humility in verses 1–2, the Bible tells us of times when he didn't live this way! Surely, like all of us, he was tempted toward pride all his life. For that reason, we know that his declaration here points beyond David himself to the greater King, Jesus Christ, the only one who lived humbly all his days. How is Jesus's humility revealed in Philippians 2:5–8?

Answer: He gave up his rights and sacrificed himself—his very own life—out of love.

8. CALM AND QUIET (131:2)

- ✦ As you consider the psalm as a whole, what do you think it means to have a “calmed and quieted” soul?

Answer: A calmed and quieted soul is one submitted to Christ and trusting in God’s ordering of her life. If time permits, you might want to look with your group at one of the following passages:

Proverbs 3:5–8. Trust characterizes the one who recognizes her limitations and rests instead in the Lord’s sovereign oversight.

Philippians 2:3–5. A woman with a Christlike mindset sees life from a biblical perspective and recognizes that a life of love is her greatest purpose. Fretting over personal ambitions increasingly fades.

Philippians 4:4–7. Trusting in the Lord’s constant presence breeds joy and quells anxiety.

9. HUMILITY’S GIFT (131:3)

- ✦ Why do you think that hope characterizes a heart that lives in submission to the Lord?

Answer: Knowing that God is for us can only lead to hope. Romans 8:31–32 tells us, “If God is for us, who can be against us? He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all, how will he not also with him graciously give us all things?”

WEEK 9: PROMISES KEPT

PSALM 132

This will likely be the most challenging week to prepare for and lead your group discussion. Psalm 132 is impossible to understand without diving into a bit of Israel’s history. Much of the history is laid out for you in the lesson, but checking out a commentary or two might be helpful as well. The psalm celebrates the Davidic king and Zion. The travelers sing this psalm on their journey as a reminder that David’s kingly dynasty, headquartered in Jerusalem, was meant for their enduring stability. It’s hard to get excited about what we find here until we realize that the Bible is actually one big story about God’s plan to redeem a people for himself by sending a Redeemer. Everything in Israel’s history points to this. Psalm 132 reflects on how this grand plan has advanced over time, and the psalm’s triumphant tone points forward to its eventual fulfillment in the coming King



Jesus. Definitely take time to cover question 2, which looks at the covenant God made with David in 2 Samuel. This “Davidic covenant” underlies the entire psalm.

1. THE BIG PICTURE (PSALM 132)

- ✦ Psalm 132 is referred to as a “royal” psalm. What words in the psalm convey the idea of royalty?

Answer: Anointed, throne, crown.

- ✦ Read 2 Samuel 7:4–16, which recounts the covenant God made with David. Note how you see the covenant promises reflected here in Psalm 132.

Answer: Both passages highlight a desire for a place for God to dwell, the promise that David’s heir will always sit on the throne, and the promise that the Lord will provide the much-desired rest. Both passages focus on a place that is fit for a king and will be well established.

2. DAVID’S DETERMINATION (132:1–5)

- ✦ Scripture makes clear that God never forgets facts and details and people. So what do you think the psalmist means when he calls on God to “remember” his covenant promises to David in verse 1?

Answer: This is a request for God to do what he’s promised.

- ✦ As king of Israel, David was responsible to oversee the nation’s well-being—no light task! How do verses 1–5 reveal what ruled his heart and governed his priorities?


Answer: David was consumed with zeal to establish a dwelling place for God, to have the Lord near and as a constant presence with David and all Israel. From this desire, the great temple in Jerusalem was later built.

3. LOST AND FOUND (132:6–7)

- ✦ How would you classify the mood of the travelers as they near the great city, and how do these verses reveal it?

Answer: The Israelites recount the nation’s history as they travel. They anticipate their arrival in Jerusalem with great joy.

- ✦ The Israelites persevered on their journey until they reached Jerusalem, the place of worship. In other words, they made an effort to get there. What was their motivation, and how is it applicable to believers today concerning our own worship routines?



Answer: They are joyfully determined. Worship is of great importance—the greatest of importance—to them and they remind each other of this in song as they travel.

4. THE ANOINTED ONE (132:8-10)

- ✦ On what does this “anointed one” base his appeal for God’s favor?

Answer: He bases his appeal on God’s promise to David, which included all subsequent Davidic kings.

- ✦ David is held up as the great king here, but all Israel knew that he’d made some really bad blunders as king and committed horrendous sins while in office. In light of this, it’s logical to wonder why they were able to sing this psalm with such confidence. The reason is that the psalm, guided by the Holy Spirit, was composed to foreshadow a greater David, an “anointed one” who would rule God’s people perfectly. Who is this anointed one, according to Hebrews 1:8–9?

Answer: The Son of God, who is king forever.

- ✦ What blessings do those singing Psalm 132 on their way to Jerusalem share in common with the travelers back in Moses day and the joyful people in David’s day?

Answer: The Israelites in these three scenarios all praised God for his presence with them, worshipping him as they neared a place where they would rest with him.

- ✦ At this point in our lesson, summarize why the ark was such a huge deal.

Answer: As Christians on this side of the cross, we are used to God always being with us in the form of the Holy Spirit that resides within. For the Israelites, to have the visual of God’s resting place in the ark would have been encouraging, emboldening them that their God was in their presence.

5. THE FOREVER KING (132:11-12)

- ✦ In what way is verse 11 a response, a counterpart, to verse 2 earlier in the psalm?

Answer: In verse 2, David swears an oath to God, and in verse 11 the Lord swears an oath to David. The wording points us to how David was the one anointed to carry forward God’s plans to provide for his people.

- ✦ At the beginning of this lesson, you looked at the establishment of God’s covenant with David in 2 Samuel 7:4–16. What specific promises from the covenant are celebrated here in Psalm 132:11–12 of the psalm?

Answer: The establishment of David's kingly offspring. One of his heirs, the Messiah, will establish the kingdom forever.

6. ABUNDANT SATISFACTION (132:13-18)

- ✦ These verses are God's answer to the prayer lifted up in verses 8–9. Note God's answer to each petition in the Covenant Promises chart below.

Answer: *Answers contained in the chart passages.*

- ✦ The Lord's answers to those prayer requests reach far beyond King David and the traveling worshipers in Israel. How is this revealed in Revelation 21:1–5?

Answer: Jerusalem will be perfected, with the renewal of the heavens and earth, and God's people will live into eternity with him.

WEEK 10: GATHERED TOGETHER

PSALMS 133-134

The last two Psalms of Ascents end our study on a high note. Psalm 133 sets out the blessings of unity, blessings intended not only for Israel but for believers today too. Psalm 134 gives us a glimpse at the way Israel worshiped God. Both psalms provide us with good points of application. You might want to suggest Ephesians as good follow-up reading to Psalm 133, as this epistle in particular emphasizes the importance of the corporate body of believers, the church. The third Let's Talk question is meant as a wrap-up to the entire study, so you'll want to allow sufficient time to discuss it.


1. THE BIG PICTURE (PSALM 133)

- ✦ Unity is clearly the theme of the psalm. David uses two similes (comparisons that use the word *like* or *as*) to describe this theme. Certain elements in these comparisons might be unfamiliar to us, but we can still grasp the big picture. What do David's similes tell us about unity?

Answer: These words convey the idea of something special, set apart, and of refreshment.

2. HOW GOOD IT IS! (133:1)

- ✦ Given the context of the psalm—its place among the Psalms of Ascents, we can infer that when David describes the experience of God's people who “dwell” together, it



means something more than living together under one roof. What do you think is meant by “dwell” here in verse 1?

Answer: Dwelling infers a closeness, doing life together in harmony and with joy.

- ✦ Israel experienced the goodness of unity when they reached Jerusalem to worship and celebrate the annual feasts. Why do you think “good and pleasant” is a fit way to describe the fruit of unity?

Answer: The harmony of getting along with others is one of life’s richest joys.

3. LIKE PRECIOUS OIL (133:2)

- ✦ Now that you know a bit about Aaron and the Old Testament priesthood, why do you think it’s a good picture of what unity produces?

Answer: It promotes spiritual growth and joy.

- ✦ The link between unity and Aaron’s anointing becomes even clearer when we understand that Aaron’s priesthood pointed forward in time to Jesus’s priesthood. Jesus is the Great High Priest, which we see most clearly in the New Testament letter to the Hebrews. A good portion of that letter is devoted to showing us Christ in this priestly role. How is Christian unity portrayed for believers living under Christ’s priesthood in Hebrews 10:19–25?

Answer: Together we encourage each other’s faith and serve one another in love, and the regular rhythm of gathering together for worship is where this is renewed.

4. LIKE THE DEW OF HERMON (133:3)

- ✦ What fruit of unity can you see in David’s picture of dew in verse 3?

Answer: We refresh one another through mutual encouragement. Together we are “well watered.”

- ✦ The message here is that joyful fellowship is a gift that comes when people are united in their purpose. As you consider when these Psalms of Ascents were most likely sung (while traveling to Jerusalem), what was the united purpose of God’s people on those occasions?

Answer: Their purpose was to worship the Lord and together enjoy his presence.

4. THE BIG PICTURE (PSALM 134)

- ✦ It seems that the travelers have reached their destination. They have made it to Jerusalem. What do you see in the psalm that indicates this?

Answer: They are standing in the house of the Lord, speaking to those who there (priests, caretakers, servants).

5. HERE AT LAST! (PSALM 134:1-2)

- ✦ How do these verses show Israel's attitude about worship?

Answer: They demonstrate joyful reverence.

- ✦ What do these verses indicate about Israel's focus in worship?

Answer: The Lord God is their entire focus.

- ✦ All God's people were to bless the Lord in worship, but in view especially here are those who lead the people through it. What do these verses tell us about what characterizes godly ministers?

Answer: These people who "stand by night" means they are totally committed, ever watchful, and protective of the Lord's house and his glory.

6. BLESS YOU! (PSALM 134:3)

- ✦ How does the psalmist describe the Lord in verse 3, and what significance to you think this description adds to his closing blessing?

Answer: As the Creator God, he is able to bless abundantly in and through his creation in any way he chooses.

- ✦ Zion—Jerusalem—was the designated place of worship for Israel. All that changed when Christ came. Christian believers, those united to Christ by faith, have God's presence indwelling their very being by means of the Holy Spirit, so they can worship the Lord everywhere. According to the following passages, how does the Lord bless believers today as they gather for worship?

Answer: *1 Corinthians 12:4–7*. The Lord gives believers different gifts for the growth of all.

Ephesians 2:19–22. Christian growth is meant to occur primarily in a corporate (gathered) context.

Hebrews 10:23–25. Together we "stir up" one another to Christian love and to live holy lives.

- ✦ How does Revelation 21:1–4 show us the ultimate fulfillment of Psalm 134, the time when the joy of gathering for worship won't be diluted by stress and difficulties?

Answer: We will be with the Lord in heaven and worship will be unhindered by grief, sin, or any other effect of the fall.