

THE PSALMS OF ASCENT

JOURNEYING WITH JESUS
TO JERUSALEM

Part 14

"Psalm 133 & the Anointing of Jesus at Bethany"

13 April 2025

Introduction: Disunity Among God's People

We live in a time of significant cultural and political polarization. These wider societal trends are also present within various Christian denominations and local churches. Believers are exhorted to pursue unity (1 Cor. 1:10), but that is not always an easy thing to do. While some divisions do occur at times because of sin (John 7:43; Gal. 5:20), sometimes they are the result of disagreements where no one is particularly in error (Acts 15:36-41). True unity, however, comes by the work of the Holy Spirit (Eph. 4:2-3) and it is centered upon agreement concerning the Word of the Lord.

Main Point: _____ among believers is a blessing from God that is made possible by the reconciling _____ of Christ on our behalf.

Psalm 133

The pilgrims delight together in the blessing of unity they have as they worship the Lord in His temple.

- **They declare the goodness of experiencing unity together (v. 1)**

Psa. 133:1—¹ Behold, how good and pleasant it is when brothers dwell in unity!

⇒ The imagery is that of _____ dwelling together in a common household.

⇒ Given the use of these psalms for the feasts of Israel, it is _____ unity that is in view.

"The pilgrims enjoyed a sense of unity as they traveled as they traveled from their homes together for the main purpose of worshiping the one God, the LORD, in the holy city." — Alan P. Ross

⇒ The unity God's people experience is evidence of His _____ upon them.
"good" "pleasant"

- **Their unity is an overflow of God's own goodness. (v. 2-3a).**

Psa. 133:2-3a—² It is like the precious oil on the head, running down on the beard, on the beard of Aaron, running down on the collar of his robes! ³ It is like the dew of Hermon, which falls on the mountains of Zion!

⇒ Unity as blessing is compared to the anointing _____ used by the priests of Israel.

Aaron and his sons were anointed in the presence of the congregation. (Lev. 8:5-13)

The anointing set them apart as _____ for service to the Lord.

They were intended as a blessing for the people because of their role as _____.

(1) Between God & man (Lev. 16:32-33) (2) Between man and his fellow man (Deut. 17:8-13)

* The focus on the priesthood highlights the importance of the _____ to the spiritual unity of the nation as evidence of God's abundant blessing.

⇒ Unity as a blessing is compared to _____ on Mt. Hermon.

"which falls on the mountains of Zion"

"...as the dew comes down from heaven and covers everything, so the unity of brothers is a blessing from God and draws them all together." — Alan P. Ross

- **The sanctuary of the Lord is where the blessings of life flow to His people (v. 3b).**

Psa. 133:3b—*For there the LORD has commanded the blessing, life forevermore.*

⇒ The focus is upon God as He blesses His people from His presence and in accordance with His covenant:

“the LORD has commanded the blessing”

“life forevermore”

“The emphasis of the blessing in the psalm is on life that continues, the duration of life which includes the perpetuation of the family. And the essence of that blessing of life is the unity of brothers that is good and pleasant.” — Alan P. Ross

Key Point: God purposes to _____ His people with unity that is given in order that they might rejoice and delight in Him together!

Gospel Parallel: “The Anointing of Jesus at Bethany ” — Matt. 26:6-13

Background: In the lead-up to the last week of Christ’s earthly ministry, the Lord dined in the home of a man named Simon along with his disciples. This was a time of great joy and anticipation of celebrating the Passover together in Jerusalem in the coming week.

1. **There is an issue with the timing of this event between the accounts in Matthew, Mark, & John.**

2. **Mary, the sister of Martha & Lazarus, came and anointed His head and feet with costly oil/ointment.**

“an alabaster flask of very expensive ointment”

The anointing of His head:

The anointing of His feet:

3. **The reaction of His disciples and Jesus’ response to them demonstrated that she had a more accurate understanding of what lay ahead than they did.**

“they were indignant”

“you will not always have me...she has done it to prepare me for burial.”

Key Point: The precious _____ of the Lord Jesus was shed so that we might be reconciled to God and to one another and that we might experience unity by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit.

Concluding Thoughts

- **The Lord Jesus is the Greater _____ whose work as our Mediator makes true reconciliation possible.**

1 Tim. 2:4-5—*For there is one God, and there is one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, ⁶who gave himself as a ransom for all, which is the testimony given at the proper time.*

2 Cor. 5:18- 19—¹⁸ *All this is from God, who through Christ reconciled us to himself and gave us the ministry of reconciliation ¹⁹that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting to us the message of reconciliation.*

- **The Lord Jesus is the Greater _____ who sets us apart as a royal priesthood so that we might minister together in the unity of the Spirit.**

1 Pet. 2:5—⁵ *you yourselves like living stones are being built up as a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.*

Eph. 4:1-6—¹ *I therefore, a prisoner for the Lord, urge you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called, ²with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, ³eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. ⁴There is one body and one Spirit—just as you were called to the one hope that belongs to your call— ⁵one Lord, one faith, one baptism, ⁶one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.*

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