

## Devotion

Psalms 132, 133, 134

G. Davison.

July 1958

I assure you, beloved brethren, that I value devotional ministry as the greatest encouragement that can be ministered to the saints of God, and I am assured that what I have to say concerning these three Psalms will not detract from what we have been hearing concerning our blessed Lord. I had these Psalms before me when our brother referred to them and now venture to ask you to turn to them again and to add a closing word to these meetings.

Psalm 132 was obviously written by Solomon, as we see in 2 Chron. 6: 41, 42. The Temple was built, the objective reached in relation to the ark, and he is the one who gave utterance to these words, "LORD, remember David, and all his afflictions." We had in our reading that wonderful exhortation that we might all be dedicated to God to accomplish His will for His pleasure. Think of David, a young man, not at the time when the Psalm was written, but at the beginning of his exercise regarding which this Psalm was uttered. We have noticed together that a life devoted to the accomplishment of the will of God will bring its own peculiar testings and difficulties, for we are offering ourselves wholeheartedly, devotedly, for the service of God in a world that is dominated by Satan. Obviously, there is bound to be a gulf between the one circle and the other, and in the process of transfer, by the work of God in our souls, from the one to the other, God will fit us for the service for which He has called us. How true, as we have heard, that we cannot extract anything from this world to help us in our service for God; hence the testing through which we are passed to fit us for this service. I can see this to be David's experience in this Psalm.

I want to call special attention to v. 6, "Lo, we heard of it at Ephratah." We understand that when David went out to fight Goliath he was about seventeen years old. I believe he had the things mentioned in this Psalm in his heart at that time. The ark of Jehovah was in captivity through the failure of Israel, and it seems that while David was attending his father's sheep in Ephratah where he lived, hearing of the ark in captivity, he vowed to God that he would not rest till that ark was out of the hands of the enemy and once again in the centre of the people of God, its proper place. One shepherd lad, one out of eight and the youngest of the family, made this vow in his heart without the slightest idea how he would accomplish it. He made the vow, and only God knew about it; and having made the vow it becomes the point of the whole Psalm. I have the impression that it was this vow which caused God to say to Samuel (in the matter of the refusal of Saul) that He had found a man after His own heart, and He sent Samuel to anoint him. Samuel thought that Eliab was the man, then Abinadab — and so on. What was wrong with these men, probably valiant men in their way? I believe it was that there had been no decision in their hearts like that which was in the heart of the youngest of that family — David. He was not even there at the outset but Samuel said "Send and fetch him," and as he came in fresh from minding the sheep, the LORD said, "Arise, anoint him; for this is he," (1 Sam. 16: 12). Samuel did not know of that vow but God knew as He said to Samuel in v. 7, "the LORD looketh on the heart."

Having heard of it in Ephratah, the moment came when they "found it in the fields of the wood." It was from there they brought it up till it was now in the temple, and I understand that between these two statements in this verse there may have been about forty years, for Saul reigned for this period. At last it is in the centre, in the temple, in the most glorious day of the history of Israel, for they never had a day like that before nor since. All this came about through the vow in the heart of a shepherd lad who

apparently had no external means of bringing it to pass. God saw to it that he did have the means to bring that ark back to Zion.

Linking this with the end of Psalm 78, we read there that God chose the place and chose the man, for Zion did not come to light till David's day. This reminds us of the sovereignty of Divine purpose, for we have Divine selection as the fruit of counsel. He chose David while following the flocks, that is where the whole thing began, till it reached a glorious conclusion as celebrated in this Psalm. We read that David began by putting the LORD first and his own interests second, but in the process, the Lord's interests, those of David and those of the people made further progress, as voiced by Solomon. Jehovah first: the saints second, v. 9; Solomon, "thine anointed," v. 10, third. We thus learn that if one is devoted to the interests of God as the fruit of all He has done for us, the circle of the saints is going to benefit by that service. We serve the saints in our service for God; He first, the saints second and ourselves last, as devoted to His service in serving one another.

In Psalm 133 we are assured that when Christ has the chief place in the hearts of the saints, the Spirit will come in to seal in our affections what is of Christ. Twice in the Psalm the thought of coming down and once the thought of descending are mentioned, binding together by this holy ointment which comes **down**, not comes **in** from this world, as we have heard. As far as I can see, this ointment was used in the anointing of the high priest only in the day of his sanctification, dedication and consecration, as outlined in Ex. 29. Would not this anointing be twofold? To give us power in a hostile scene to accomplish the will of God as in Psalm 132, and also to maintain this unity in a scene where there is no hostility but where Christ is in the affections of His people unified in the power of eternal life.

Have we not experienced this in our gatherings this week? May we take away with us the blessedness of this dwelling together with but one single thought — that the interests of our Lord might be paramount in all our lives.

Lastly, in Psalm 134, we see the servants of God in the sanctuary blessing and praising God. Why is the Lord ministering to us at moments like this? Is it not that first, He may have His rightful place in the midst and in our hearts? That the Spirit may strengthen us to meet the foes outside, and then to stand in our places as priests in the house of God, that we may direct our praise to Him for the delight of His heart of love? The true end of all ministry is that God may be magnified in our eyes so that He may become more and more the object of our praise and our worship. "By night" would suggest the absence of Christ from this world; yet there is a company who know God and draw near to God as anointed by Him to worship Him in the sanctuary. This is the end of all that God is seeking today. It is ours, beloved, to take up this privilege of priestly service, to bless our God, and then we can be assured as we do so that He will bless us from His holy habitation.

May the Lord help us all to devote ourselves to His service whether in the circle of the saints or in the sanctuary and thus we shall be enjoying the full pouring out of His blessing brought **down** to us by the Holy Spirit.