

The Bulletin

Meeks St. Church of Christ

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“...Let Us Go To The House Of The Lord”

by Brian Meade

In honor of our coming back to the meeting house, where the church assembles at Meeks Street, I thought we would take a look at Psalm 122.

“I was glad when they said to me, “Let us go to the house of the Lord.” Our feet are standing Within your gates, O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, that is built As a city that is compact together; To which the tribes go up, even the tribes of the Lord— An ordinance for Israel— To give thanks to the name of the Lord. For there thrones were set for judgment, The thrones of the house of David. Pray for the peace of Jerusalem: “May they prosper who love you. “May peace be within your walls, And prosperity within your palaces.” For the sake of my brothers and my friends, I will now say, “May peace be within you.” For the sake of the house of the Lord our God, I will seek your good.”

This Psalm of David emphatically describes what going to Jerusalem meant to him and what it should mean for all the Jewish people. It is a psalm that points the hearts of Israel to a proper view of God, and all that God was doing with His chosen people in Old Covenant times. It is often called a psalm of ascent, as it would be a journey up to Jerusalem which was seated on a hill approximately 2,474 above sea level.

But it would also lead them upward in a spiritual direction toward God who would give them joy, peace, and prosperity— as they continually serve and worship Him in all that He commands.

First of all, David starts out speaking of how glad he was when his fellow Israelites invited him to go with them to “the house of the Lord.”

The Hebrew word here for David’s gladness is *samach*, which means “to rejoice, be joyful. And usually refers to a spontaneous emotion or extreme happiness which is expressed in some visible and/or external manner.” (Vine’s Complete Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words, Vol. 1, p. 196). In other words, David was overjoyed to be going to God’s house!

There are several reasons why David would be glad and rejoice to go to the house of the Lord:

(1) At Jerusalem was where worship and sacrifices took place!

Three times a year the people of God were commanded to assemble for the annual festivals at Jerusalem. No matter where they lived, all Jews were required to be there to offer worship and sacrifice to God.

The Passover, also called the Feast of Unleavened Bread and Firstfruits, was the first on the Jewish calendar year (Exodus 12:1-2). It was followed by the Feasts of Weeks or Pentecost, fifty days after the Passover (Leviticus 23:15-21; Deuteronomy 16:9-12). And in the fall of the year, the Feasts of Tabernacles— also called the Feasts of Booths or Festival of Ingathering (Leviticus 23:33-43; Deuteronomy 16:13-15).



(2)The Lord's presence was there!

Notice in Psalm 100:1-4, *"Shout joyfully to the Lord, all the earth. Serve the Lord with gladness; Come before Him with joyful singing. Know that the Lord Himself is God; It is He who has made us, and not we ourselves; We are His people and the sheep of His pasture. Enter His gates with thanksgiving And His courts with praise. Give thanks to Him, bless His name."*

Just like David in Psalm 122:1, all Jews would enter joyfully in to the courts at Jerusalem where God's presence was there at the temple (1 Kings 9:3). It was the dedicated place of worship and where one went in the Old Covenant age to "come before the Lord."

(3)They would be doing God's will in service to Him there!

Moses taught the people of Israel to do God's will in Deuteronomy 26:16-17, *"This day the Lord your God commands you to do these statutes and ordinances. You shall therefore be careful to do them with all your heart and with all your soul. "You have today declared the Lord to be your God, and that you would walk in His ways and keep His statutes, His commandments and His ordinances, and listen to His voice."* What God commands is His will for us!

David would say about his experience at God's house, *"One thing I have asked from the Lord, that I shall seek: That I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, To behold the beauty of the Lord And to meditate in His temple."* (Psalm 27:4)

And David would end the 23rd Psalm by saying, *"Surely goodness and lovingkindness will follow me all the days of my life, And I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever."* (Psalm 23:6)

As we come to the New Testament age of worship today, we are reminded of what Jesus said to the Samaritan woman in John 4:20-24, *"Our fathers worshiped in this mountain, and you people say that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship."* Jesus said to her, *"Woman, believe Me, an hour is coming when neither in this mountain nor in Jerusalem will you worship the Father. "You worship what you do not know; we worship what we know, for salvation is from the Jews. "But an hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for such people the Father seeks to be His worshipers. "God is spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth."*

This teaches us that worship to God is not centered on being in Jerusalem any longer, but God's house is the church (1 Timothy 3:15; Hebrews 10:21; 1 Peter 2:5). The church is the people, NOT A BUILDING. This is one of the great misconceptions about the church, that it is physical structure made of mere bricks, wood, and stained glass windows.

And truly, we have missed these times of worship together because of the Coronavirus Pandemic! What seems like for a very long, we have not assembled here in the building at Meeks Street. So today is the day that many have hoped for....that we would be back for worship together!

But what about today? I believe the words of David may very well speak about our joy today in coming before God collectively!

(4) In the Church, we offer our sacrifices together.

Even though we may pray to God, sings songs and hymns, and do various deeds of charity as sacrifices individually, God calls us together to do certain acts together on the first day of the week.

It is on Sunday that we are to *"come together to eat, wait for one another"* to eat the Lord's supper (1 Corinthians 11:23-33; Acts 20:7); lay by in store our contribution offering (1 Corinthians 16:1-2); and it is in the church where Paul says we are *"speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, making melody with your heart to the Lord."* (Ephesians 5:19)

(2) The Lord's presence is with us!

Worship in Old Testament or New Testament times would be meaningless, if it were not for that fact that God is aware of what takes place here on the earth (Proverbs 15:3). But even more than that, God's presence is with us today as we worship Him together!

Notice what Jesus said in Matthew 18:20, *"For where two or three have gathered together in My name, I am there in their midst."*

I believe we fail to appreciate the significance of our coming together for worship if we forget that Jesus is with us in what we do! What would communion be without union with our Lord? There is a sense that we are brought closer to Jesus by remembering His death.

It is in these times we come together that we "come before the Lord" with our gifts and sacrifices (Hebrews 12:28). Thus, it should give us great joy to know God is with us in our worship!

(3) We do God's will in service to Him there!

It is a fact that God desires men and women to worship Him (John 4:23) and has done so much so that we can worship Him in holiness. That's why coming together should be a joyous occasion for all of us.

It is God's will that we do not forsake *"our own assembling together"* (Hebrews 10:25). It is His will that we must place our priority on doing in this life. Notice what Jesus said to some in Matthew 7:21, *"Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father who is in heaven will enter."* (See also Luke 6:46). But we are the people of God who take pleasure in God's will!

For all of these reasons, let us have the attitude of David in saying, *"I was glad when they said to me, "Let us go to the house of the Lord."*

News and Notes: Sick and recovering: Tim Harris Sr, Tim Harris Jr, Chad Harris, Martha Norvell (Mississippi Care), June Lawson (Lisa Busby's Mom), Debbie Keplinger, Janis Johnson, Daniel Holloway, Tammy Kilgore (Jerry's niece), Betty Hurst, Peggy Harville (cancer), Clois Wright, and Dan & Linda Hunt, Mollie Harris, David Taylor,, Danny Cottrell, Gary Doles, and Sherry Doles.

Those Who Serve:

Announcements:	Sam Johnson
Opening Prayer & Scripture Reading:	Tim Harris Jr. <i>Matthew 7:7-11</i>
Song Leader:	Jerry Kenemur
Lord's Supper:	Fred Johnson
Preaching:	Brian Meade
Sermon:	<i>"Keep Asking, Seeking, And Knocking..."</i>
Closing Prayer:	Russell Briggs