

SONGS OF THE ASCENT – The KEY PRINCIPLES of the ASCENT Psalms

There are KEY KINGDOM PRINCIPLES found in Psalms 120-134. These psalms are also called the “Songs Of The Steps, Pilgrim Psalms, Songs Of The Journeyings Up, Songs Of Degrees”.

Question: Who shall ascend the hill of the Lord? Who shall dwell in thy holy hill?

Answer: Psalm 15 and Psalm 24:3-5

A. There were 15 STEPS UP into the Temple described by Ezekiel in his prophecy, by which the PRIESTS ASCENDED; Ezekiel 40:6, 22-31. This points to the PROGRESSION, or Growth of the New

Testament Royal Priesthood, the Bride; 1 Peter 2:9-10. It reflects the steps into maturity, the need for repentance, change, transformation of God’s new creation.

B. The first SEVEN of the Psalms of Ascent can be compared to the SEVEN STEPS UP into the Most Holy Place in the Temple of Solomon; 1 Kings, chapters 5-8. This can be compared to:

a. Seven principles of character development added to faith; 2 Peter 1:4-9

b. Seven Churches of Revelation 2-3 (seven steps to the throne of Revelation 3:21)

c. Principles of the 7 Days in Genesis - Six Days of Creation and the Seventh Day of Rest; Genesis 1

d. The Seven Feasts of the Lord - A Progression Into Fullness, Perfection, Completion

C. The Jewish Mishnah records that 15 steps led up from the Court of the Women to the Court of the Men, and upon them, the Levites used to sing. In scripture, the number 15 symbolizes “Rest” in The Most Holy Place; its dimensions were 15 x 15 x 15. See also Esther 9:18 and Leviticus 23:34.

D. These Psalms were chanted by God’s people as they WENT UP to the Temple at Jerusalem for the Feasts of Passover, Pentecost and Tabernacles. These pilgrimages are referred to in Exodus 34:24 and Deut. 16:16. These were sung by the people in a higher key (degree) in an elevated voice, as they returned to Jerusalem from the Babylonian captivity (Ezra and Nehemiah).

E. The Songs of the Ascent reveals God’s people ASCENDING INTO HIGHER REALMS IN THE SPIRIT, as they grow in the grace and knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ. This UPWARD JOURNEY leads to Mount Zion and the full authority of His throne. The Psalms of Ascent are divided into THREE STAGES OF ADVANCEMENT, development of the spiritual life:

Psalms 120-124 - The Stage of Purification for Beginners: 30-fold; the Laver; from the Earthly to the Heavenly; Song of Sol. 2:16

Psalms 125-129 – The Stage of Enlightenment for Progressors: 60-fold; the Candlestick; from the Soulsh to the Spiritual; Song of Sol. 6:3

Psalms 130-134 – The Stage of Union for the Mature: 100-fold; the Mercy Seat; from Duality to Oneness; Song of Sol. 7:10

OUTLINE of the Principles of the 15 Ascent Psalms 120 – 134:

1. Psalm 120 – The Awakening; Renunciation of the Evil and Vanity of the world; Separation from Babylon; Deliverance from confusion; Seeing God in things present
2. Psalm 121 – The Truth of Preservation in Coming In (private life) and Going Out (public life); The Lord is my Keeper; I am kept and preserved by God; Learning where to get answers
3. Psalm 122 – The principle of Peace within God's Habitation; Companionship; Proper Objectives
4. Psalm 123 – The principle of Patience in Vision; Learning to Wait, to be Gracious under Discipline; a Cry for Mercy in Distress
5. Psalm 124 – The principle of Dependence upon the Lord; Escape from enemies; Doctrine vs. Experience
6. Psalm 125 – The principle of Trust in God and the Confidence which comes after inner Conflict and Victory; Established Stability and Security
7. Psalm 126 – The principle of Joy in Communion; a Turning from Captivity; Sowing in Tears and Reaping in Joy
8. Psalm 127 – The principle of Total Commitment in Works; Building and Growing; Futility of Human Effort compared to Useful Kingdom Work
9. Psalm 128 – The Fear of God and consequent blessings of walking in His ways; the Fruitfulness of the mature, spiritual life
10. Psalm 129 – The principle of Victory over Afflictions; Suffering with balance; the life of the Spirit stands in contrast to the life of the Flesh
11. Psalm 130 – The principle of waiting for Redemption; an Inward Look and Cry from within the depths; Waiting in brokenness
12. Psalm 131 – The principles of Humility, Lowliness and Meekness; the Humble, Weaned one finds a place of occupation in the Body
13. Psalm 132 – The principle of Determination motivated by desire; Mutual desire and fulfillment; Union with God
14. Psalm 133 – The principle of Brotherly Love; Unity among brethren; the blessedness of Body Life
15. Psalm 134 – Perfected ministry in praise and worship; blessing the Lord and ministering unto Him through the night; unceasing praise reflects the principle of Rest