Psalm Chapter 132 - Prelude

We now come to the *thirteenth* Psalm in a series of fifteen Psalms (120-134), which are the "Song of Degrees", and refers to the "degrees" on the sundial of Ahaz, by which the shadow of the sun went *backward* in the days of his son, Hezekiah (2 Kings 20:8-11; Isa 38:7-8, 20). And, let's remember that **Psalm 120** had the subject/title of "***Distress***" because Hezekiah was imploring the Lord (YHVH) for help from the 'Assyrian threat'. And, in particular, he was asking for deliverance from their lying lips and deceitful tongues, i.e. when they waged an *intense* phycological war against him, and Jerusalem's army, trying to get them to surrender the city. For, even though Hezekiah was trying to make peace with the Assryians, they were still 'hell bent' on taking over the capital city. And that's why he (metaphorically) 'warned' them that their lies would *only* 'get them' God's fierce wrath via judgment… which, indeed, did happen! And then, **Psalm 121** had the subject/title of "***Trust in Yehovah***", because it taught us some of the reasons *why* we should trust in the one-and-only *true* God, Yehovah (i.e. YHVH). And the *main* reason why is because He is the *only* one who can care for us, and protect us, from *anything* that happens. And that's why we saw the same Hebrew word (shamar, #8104) used so many times. *Thrice* was this word used when pointing out how the Lord (YHVH) will *not* tire, nor sleep - but rather, He will 'keep' (#8104, guard and protect) a close eye on us (who love, fear and obey Him) just as a shepherd cares for, and protects, his flock (vs 3-5). And *thrice* was this word used when pointing out how He will 'preserve' (#8104, guard and protect) our soul from all evil (calamities), even in our daily activities. So, the Lord (YHVH) watches over us closely *and* is also <u>actively</u> guarding, protecting, strengthening, and helping us in our life, *so long as* we continue to seek, love and obey Him *wholeheartedly*. And then **Psalm 122** (which was written by David) had the subject/title of "***Deliverance, Blessing, and Peace in Zion***" because David was praying for peace, protection and safety for Jerusalem *and* for all those who went up to the 'house of the Lord' (God's Temple) to worship Him. And, he also prayed for peace to be 'within' Jerusalem (i.e. deliverance from all enemies) so the people *could* worship the Lord in peace and safety. And, while there was peace in Jerusalem *at times* (ex: during David and Hezekiah's reign), the city has *not* had peace for *most* of its history. Therefore, this Song was also quite *prophetical* of the *true* peace that will *only* come at the return of the *true* 'Prince of peace' (Isa 9:6), at Jesus Christ's Second Advent.

And then **Psalm 123** began the *second* 'group' in this series of 'Song of Degrees'. Therefore, it's subject/title was (yet again) "**Distress**" (just as it was in Psalm 120) because Hezekiah was (yet again) imploring the Lord (YHVH) for help from the 'Assyrian threat'. For he, and those in Jerusalem, truly 'had their fill' (and more) of ridicule, and disrespect, from those who were 'at ease' (secure in their haughtiness). And he was referring to the *intense* psychological war that the Assyrian delegates waged against him, his delegates, and those guarding Jerusalem, in an attempt to get them to surrender the city. And then **Psalm 124** (which was written by David) had the subject/title of "***Trust in Yehovah***", because it taught us (as Psalm 121 did) *why* we should trust

in the one-and-only *true* God, Yehovah (i.e. YHVH). That's why he called upon Israel to acknowledge *where* their *only* true help came from. For, of a truth, had not the Lord (YHVH) been 'for' Israel (on their side), they would have been destroyed as a nation. For there were many other nations - both great in number and strength - who came against them throughout their history. Thus, Israel's history *proves* that reliance on God *was their only hope* against powerful enemies (ex: Exodus 12:41; 14:28-29; Deut 4:37-38, etc.). And this should give us *great* comfort for the soon coming 'great tribulation' we face today (Mth 24:21). For, of a truth, we (like Israel of old) are totally helpless *without* the protection (and intercession, Rom 8:26-31) of our Lord (and Savior) Jesus Christ! And then **Psalm 125** had the subject/title of "***Blessing, and Peace, in Zion***" (as it was in Psalm 122) because Hezekiah spoke of the blessings, and peace, those who trust in the Lord (YHVH) will have; *especially* when they live in Zion (Jerusalem) after Jesus Christ returns to earth to depose the wicked ones *and* give them (His faithful followers) *eternal* life and the authority to rule the world (*with* Him). So, in the end, peace *will* be upon Israel (yea, upon all faithful Christians). And, *until* then, the Lord (YHVH) will *always* protect His faithful servants, just as the mountains protect God's favorite city (Ezek 16) Jerusalem.

And then, **Psalm 126** began the *third* 'group' in this series of 'Song of Degrees'. And it had the subject/title of "***Distress***" (as it was in Psalms 120 and 123) because it spoke of the 'captivity' the southern kingdom of Judah was in when the Assryians invaded them. And while Jerusalem was not ever conquered (nor did they surrender, as the other fenced cities did), the Assryians *were* threatening to besiege it. Yet, the Lord (YHVH) freed the *entire* southern kingdom of Judah, from their 'captivity' to the Assryians, when He killed off 165,000 of the Assyrian army *in just one night*! And that's why it felt like a 'dream come true' to them; for they were not only *amazed* the Assryians had left, but also that they left *so* quickly! And that's why they were *incredibly* elated. Yet, they did *not* forget to thank the Lord (YHVH) for His mighty deliverance. And then, **Psalm 127** was the *second* song of this *third* 'group' in this series of 'Song of Degrees'. And it was the *only* one written by Solomon. And Hezekiah put one of Solomon's songs into this section (of "Song of Degrees") because it fit the subject (his situation and feelings) so well. And it had the subject/title of "***Trust in Yehovah***" because it taught us (as Psalm 121 and 124 did) some of the reasons *why* we should trust in the one-and-only *true* God, Yehovah (i.e. YHVH). That's why Solomon pointed out that, *all* our hard work in life (whether we're building, or trying to protect what we've got) is 'in vain' (i.e. *totally* **useless**) if God is *not* blessing our efforts! And he also pointed out that, when we do trust the Lord (YHVH) He will bless us with children, who not only will care for (and help us with things) was we age, but will also help defend us when we need it. So, a strong family is *very* valuable; and this applies to the Christian family as well. And then **Psalm 128** was the *third* song in the *third* 'group' in this series of 'Song of Degrees' and was written by Hezekiah. Thus, the subject/title was "***Deliverance***, ***Blessing, and Peace, in Zion***" (as it was in Psalm 122 and 125) because it taught us of the kind of deliverance, blessings and peace that those who fear (and revere) the Lord (YHVH), and walk in His ways, will have. For, not only will they be happy (have peace of mind) but they'll also get to enjoy the fruit of

their labor (as the blessings in Deut 28 and Lev 26 point out). And their family life will also be blessed, as well as their nation. So, while this Psalm was directed to those who lived in Jerusalem (Zion), it truly is a timeless truth for all ages; and thus, it's even *prophetical* of the kind of deliverance, blessings, and peace we (who fear God and walk in His ways) *will* receive when Jesus Christ finally returns to the earth.

And then **Psalm 129** began the *fourth* 'group' in this series of 'Song of Degrees'. Therefore, the subject/title was again "***Distress***" (as it was in Psalm 120, 123 and 126) because Hezekiah spoke of his many affections he had endured from his youth. Yet, he also pointed out Israel had many afflictions from the time they were a young nation to (such as captivity to Egypt). However, even though he (and Israel) had many afflictions, they did *not* prevail against him (or Israel) *because* the Lord (YHVH) helped him (and Israel, *when* they sought Him sincerely). So, he had the confidence God would help him again; for he truly was seeking, and serving, the Lord (YHVH) with his whole heart (as Psalm 119 proved). Yet, he still implored the Lord to cause all those who hate 'Zion' (i.e. the nation of Israel) to retreat empty handed *and* in great shame. And this truly *did* happen when God saved Jerusalem (yea, all of the southern kingdom of Judah) by nearly annihilating the Asriyan army in *just one night*! And then **Psalm 130** was the *second* song in the *fourth* 'group' in this series of 'Song of Degrees'. Therefore, the subject/title was (yet again) "***Trust in Yehovah***" (as it was in Psalm 121, 124 and 127) because it taught us *how* important it is to *trust in* God's promises, especially to help us in our times of troubles. And, even though we all sin (even when we try not to, Rom 3:23) our Heavenly Father *has* provided a way for us to find forgiveness from Him. And that forgiveness rests upon our *trusting* that the blood His Son (Jesus Christ) shed for us is the *only* thing that can atone for our sins and redeem our soul (Eph 1:7; Col 1:14; Heb 9:12-15, etc.). And further, we've also got to trust in our Heavenly Father when we call upon Him for help, *knowing* our Heavenly Father is *full of mercy* to those who *do* repent for their sins and are *earnestly* trying to obey Him. And then **Psalm 131** was *third* song in the *fourth* 'group' in this series of 'Song of Degrees'. And that's why the subject/title was (yet again) "***Deliverance***, ***Blessing, and Peace, in Zion***" (as it was in Psalm 122, 125 and 128). For it taught us how trusting in the Lord (YHVH) *always* brings deliverance, blessings and peace to our life – *whoever* we are and *wherever* we live! And that's why David pointed out he wasn't haughty hearted nor high minded; nor did he try to 'make a name' for himself ,or work to promote himself above all others. Rather, he behaved himself as a weaned child; which means he was content, trusting, and calm *even* while waiting to accept *whatever* the Lord (YHVH) had in store. And he also encouraged Israel to be this way too; for he well knew God *would* be faithful to His promises to deliver, bless and give peace to Israel *when* they trusted (and obeyed) Him.

And now we come to **Psalm 132**, which is the *first* song in the *fifth* 'group' in this series of 'Song of Degrees'. And that's why the subject/title is (yet again) "***Distress***" (as it was in Psalm 120, 123 and 126). Further, this song is (yet again) written by Hezekiah himself (Isa 38:20) …

Psalm 132
A Song of degrees.

So, this Psalm (song) begins with the same subtitle as the last few. And, as we learned, the word '**song**' here is ***shiyr*** (#7892), which means (not surprisingly) ***a song***; abstractly, ***singing***. And this is *different* than the word '**Psalm**', which is the Hebrew word *mizmowr* (#4210), and means ***instrumental music***; by implication, ***a poem set to notes***. So, you could think of the Psalm as *a form of meditating* (like a poem) and the Song as *something to be sung*. And then the word '**degrees**' here means ***elevation***, i.e. ***the act*** (literally, a journey to a higher place, figuratively, a thought arising), or (concretely) ***the condition*** (literally, ***a step*** or grade-mark, figuratively, a superiority of station); and, specifically ***a climactic progression*** (in certain Psalms) (#4609). So, this is why most scholars think that '**degrees**' simply means ***a step***. And (as we've learned previously), in the case of these fifteen 'Song of Degrees", it's *referring to* the 'steps' (or the "degrees") on the sundial of Ahaz, by which the shadow of the sun went *backward* in the days of his son, Hezekiah. And this was done, as a sign from the Lord (YHVH), that he *would* recover from his sickness (2 Kings 20:8-11; Isa 38:7-8). And so, this 132nd Psalm is yet another *one of the ten* songs Hezekiah *promised* in Isa 38:20...

AMEN.