

Psalm 132 | “Standing on the Promises”
Preached on February 9, 2025 by Pastor Matt Brown

You can turn in your Bibles to Psalm 132 today, as we are getting close to finishing out our series on the songs of ascents. *[pause]*

The songs of ascents were songs that the Israelites would sing as they approached the Temple to worship God, and the psalm this morning is all about the Temple of the Lord. *[pause]*

This psalm is unique in the songs of ascents, for while all the other psalms were smaller, with maybe a max of 9 verses, this one is 18.

And while the other psalms emphasized a longing for God, a hope in God, and things like that...

This one is almost like the worshippers are there in the Temple, reflecting upon how the Lord’s presence arrived there. *[pauseeee]*

They have seen God work, and have seen some of His promises fulfilled, and now they are standing upon the promises of God.

And by dwelling upon the history of God’s presence coming to rest in Jerusalem, it would renew Israel’s trust, hope, and love for the Lord, as they worshiped. *[pause]*

Lord willing, may He use His Word this morning to do the same in our hearts—let’s READ the psalm together. *[READ]*

“General Douglas MacArthur was a man who kept his promises. *[pause]*

During World War 2, he was forced to flee the Philippines due to the Axis powers advancing. *[pause]*

Deeply disappointed, he issued a statement to the press in which he promised his men and the people of the Philippines, ‘I shall return.’ *[pause]*

The promise would become his mantra during the next two and a half years, and he would repeat it often in public appearances.

And on October 20, 1944, a few hours after his troops landed, MacArthur waded ashore onto the Philippine Island of Leyte (LAY-TEE). *[pause]*

That day, he made a radio broadcast in which he declared, ‘People of the Philippines, I have returned!’¹ *[pause]*

Don’t you love it when people actually follow through on their promises and keep their word, like General MacArthur? *[pause]*

¹ <https://illustrationideas.bible/promises/>

It brings us joy and encourages us to see that.

But sadly, the truth is that we live in a world full of broken promises. *[pause]*

In a world filled with broken things, broken promises are also heaped on top of that pile. *[pause]*

We would rather see promises fulfilled, but we see promises broken as easily and as often as twigs are snapped on the ground, as you walk through a forest. *[pauseeee]*

We have had many promises broken from the mouths of politicians.

Maybe our employers have broken promises to us, and it discourages us.

Maybe friends have done so, too, or family members. *[pause]*

Broken promises are as common as death or taxes.

But if we were honest, we are not completely innocent in regards to broken promises. *[pause]*

There are probably times that we have broken promises, whether intentionally or unintentionally. *[pause]*

We said that we would be there at a certain time, but something came up, and we couldn't make it there on time. *[pause]*

We said that we would go do something, but something or another hindered our coming through. *[pauseeee]*

Amidst a world of broken promises, there's something about promises being fulfilled that lifts our spirits.

We think, "Yes! That's how it's supposed to be done!" *[pause]*

We all know that our words should be reliable, and we desire to be able to trust the words of others. *[pause]*

Well this morning, we will see a lot of promises being fulfilled, and I hope that it will lift your spirit in joy, and stir your heart in faith. *[pause]*

The first half of this psalm shows us...

I. David's Promises and Their Fulfillment. (1–10)

In verses 1–10, we hear about David's intention to bring the Ark of the Lord to Jerusalem, and how it truly *did* happen. *[pause]*

Remember that the Ark represented God's presence among the people. *[pauseeee]*

Now before we get into the details, I want us to think about *why* finding a place for God's presence was so important to Israel. *[pause]*

For the longest time, God's presence was with Israel in the portable tabernacle...

Wherever they went, the Lord went with them, seen most clearly in the Ark of the Covenant being moved around. *[pauseeee]*

While moving around with them was great, God had promised a land to them, where they could settle down. *[pause]*

We all long for that, don't we?

No one enjoys constantly being on the move, and never settling down.

Well God promised a land, and under Joshua, they finally entered it. *[pause]*

But while the people were settled down, the Tabernacle wasn't really in a final resting place, so to say.

It wasn't until David that it was finally brought into Jerusalem, where it was meant to be. *[pauseee]*

You see, this was important to Israel because once God's tabernacle was in place, it's like it would signify that God's presence was settled down with them in the promised land. *[pause]*

It would mean that God was there ruling, and that all would be well.

They would also have a permanent, central place for worship. *[pause]*

No wonder David wanted to bring the dwelling place into a permanent place in Jerusalem! *[pauseeee]*

We find in verse 1 of David's "hardships" in finding a place for the Lord.

He took efforts and pains in making sure that the presence of God had a place. *[pause]*

In fact, he was so determined that he made a vow to find a place for the Lord's dwelling to be.

He vowed to not even sleep until he found that place. *[pause]*

Talk about determination, focus, and effort!

He was intent on this mission, and wouldn't give up. *[pauseeee]*

David's example shows us that we should be determined and commit to the things of the Lord. *[pause]*

We live in a day and age where no one wants to commit to *anything*. *[pause]*

People do not want to commit to saying that they will come to an event or party. *[pause]*

People do not want to commit to a job, and stay there a for a while. *[pause]*

People do not want to commit to a church, or commit to serving in a certain ministry. *[pause]*

So many individuals always and ever want their options open for time and eternity, so that they can back out at any time that they feel something is inconvenient. *[pause]*

This ought not to be—we should be people who commit to things, *especially* things of the Lord! *[pause]*

We should have the mindset of David, and dedicate our time and effort towards something, not just flippantly do things. *[pauseeee]*

David did this because he knew that the Lord was truly “the Mighty One of Jacob.” *[pause]*

When you assuredly know and believe who God is, how could you put in half-efforts or be uncommitted to Him? *[pause]*

If there’s anything that we should be committed to, it should be the things of the Lord!

We are serving the Mighty One of Jacob, and we are doing things that impact eternity! *[pauseeee]*

We find that David came through in his commitment and fulfilled his vow—he actually did bring the Ark into Jerusalem.

That’s why in verse 6 it says, “Behold, we heard of it in Ephrathah; we found it in the fields of Jaar.” *[pause]*

Jaar is another name for Kiriath-jearim...

If you remember, the Philistines actually captured and held onto the Ark of the Covenant for a while, but it caused disaster among them, so they gave it back to Israel.² *[pause]*

Eventually, it ends up in Kiriath-jearim for a while.³

But years later, David says to the people, “Let us bring again the ark of our God to us, for we did not seek it in the days of Saul.”⁴ *[pause]*

So he gathers the people, and goes and gets the Ark, but while transporting it, he does not follow God’s Law, and Uzzah puts out his hand to stop the Ark from falling and is struck down.⁵ *[pause]*

² See 1 Samuel 4–6.

³ See 1 Samuel 7:1–2.

⁴ 1 Chronicles 13:3.

⁵ See 2 Samuel 6:6–7.

David then refuses to keep taking the Ark to Jerusalem, but eventually comes and gets it again, after he sees the man's house being blessed, who was watching over the Ark. *[pause]*

He then brings the Ark into Jerusalem with great rejoicing.⁶ *[pauseeee]*

Truly, David “endured” a lot in order to bring the Ark into its resting place.

He was committed to do it, but he also *sacrificed a lot* for it. *[pause]*

His sacrifice didn't stop with his efforts in bringing the Ark into Jerusalem, for we find later that he wanted to build a Temple for the Lord. *[pause]*

Although that was a great desire, the Lord said that actually Solomon would build it.

But that news didn't hamper David's drive, for although David didn't build the Temple, he was determined to provide a lot of the money and materials for it. *[pause]*

David says in 1 Chronicles 22:14, “*With great pains I have provided for the house of the Lord 100,000 talents of gold, a million talents of silver, and bronze and iron beyond weighing, for there is so much of it; timber and stone, too, I have provided.*”⁷ *[pause]*

David sacrificed much to find a place for the Lord's dwelling, nothing could cool off his red-hot desire for it. *[pauseeee]*

What was it that made David sacrifice so much?

It was because the Lord was the first priority in his life. *[pause]*

The Lord's honor, glory, and renown were before his own.

The house of the Lord was more important than his own wants or comforts. *[pauseeee]*

Are you willing to sacrifice for the Lord? *[pause]*

Our whole lives ought to really be “living sacrifices” for Him.⁸

Too often, we see certain things in our own lives as “mine”, and other things as the Lord's, but everything we possess is really the Lord's, and we should lay it at His feet. *[pause]*

Are you willing to sacrifice your time for the Lord? *[pause]*

What about your money? What about your energy?

Are there any “untouchable” things in your life that you say, “Lord, you can have all of this other stuff, but not this”? *[pause]*

⁶ See 2 Samuel 6:8–15.

⁷ See also 1 Chronicles 29:1ff.

⁸ A reference to Romans 12:1.

See that the Lord is worthy of everything, and so everything should be at His disposal and ready to be used for Him. *[pauseeee]*

When you get to verses 8–10, we see the requests of the people, as they bring the Ark to Jerusalem.

They say, “Arise, O Lord, and go to your resting place, you and the ark of your might. Let your priests be clothed with righteousness, and let your saints shout for joy...

For the sake of your servant David, do not turn away the face of your anointed one.” *[pause]*

They basically ask for God’s presence and favor, and ask that the Lord would help the people to rightly worship Him.

And interestingly, these are the same words that Solomon prays at the dedication of the Temple.⁹ *[pauseeee]*

The Lord’s presence coming to Jerusalem was not just an empty thing, but it meant something to them.

They wanted God’s presence, power, and favor to always be upon them. *[pauseeee]*

As we think about this psalm and bring it over into our day, as New Testament Christians, we don’t have to travel to Jerusalem to experience the presence, power, and favor of the Lord.

[pause]

Aren’t you thankful for that?

Rather, we can rejoice because Jesus’ work has obtained for us the presence, power, and favor of God forever. *[pause]*

Like David, but way better, Jesus endured many hardships in his mission of bringing God’s presence to dwell with us. *[pause]*

He humbly came and dwelt among humanity, and then after His death, resurrection, and ascension, He sent the Spirit to dwell within us forever. *[pause]*

Even more than David, He was perfectly and fully committed to the Father, and sacrificed His very own life for this mission.

Now—because of Jesus, we are “clothed with righteousness” and we can “shout for joy”. *[pause]*

Never will the Lord turn away from us, for the Anointed One, Jesus, took our place and we are united with Him through faith. *[pause]*

⁹ See 2 Chronicles 6:41–42.

For the sake of Christ, He will never forsake us.

So instead of saying to the Lord, “Remember David,” we can say, “Remember Christ and all that He did for us,” and we can know that the Father always will! *[pauseeee]*

Speaking of the Lord, it’s the Lord’s promises and their fulfillments that we see next...

II. The Lord’s Promises and Their Fulfillment. (11–18)

After telling us about what David swore to do and did for the Lord—now the second half of the psalm shows us what the Lord swore to do and would do for David. *[pause]*

The psalm’s truth and structure reflects what happened when the Lord gave David the promise that he did in 2 Samuel 7. *[pause]*

Remember that’s when David was determined to build a house for the Lord, but the Lord responds by telling David that he won’t build it.

Rather, the Lord would build for David a house, that is, a dynasty of kings. [pause]

That’s really what we see here—we are told all about David’s efforts to make a dwelling place for the Lord, and now we see the promise of the Lord concerning David’s house reiterated. *[pausee]*

One of David’s sons would sit on the throne, and it would be a forever kingdom.

Yes, if any of his descendents doesn’t obey the covenant, then they will lose that privilege, but the Lord would not turn back on His promise of a Davidic king reigning forever. *[pause]*

Zion would be His permanent dwelling, for that’s what the Lord desires.

The people will be blessed and satisfied.

The priests would be clothed with salvation, and the saints rejoice. [pause]

Truly, a horn would sprout for David, which points to ruling power.

And a crown will shine on his head, but his enemies? They will experience shame. [pauseeeee]

What a promise!

Imagine being David and hearing of such marvelous, grand, eternal promises about your family line! [pauseeee]

That’s what the Lord promised, and guess what?

When the Lord promises something, He comes through! [pause]

“In 1994, a 67-year-old carpenter named Russell Herman died in Marion, Illinois. *[pause]*

In his last will and testament he left the following: \$2.4 billion to a nearby town, \$2.4 billion to the city of East St. Louis, and \$1.5 billion for projects in southeastern Illinois. *[pause]*

But that's not all, in a final act of unprecedented generosity, he left \$6 trillion to the Federal Reserve to pay off the national debt. *[pause]*

There was only one problem: at the time of his death, the only thing Mr. Herman actually owned was a 1983 Oldsmobile!"¹⁰ *[pauseeee]*

Aren't you thankful that God isn't like that?

He doesn't make big promises that He can't back, rather, He makes huge promises that He always fulfills. *[pauseeeee]*

Verses 13–18 are really answers to the people's requests in verses 8–10. *[pause]*

They asked that God would go to His resting place, and He said that Zion would be His resting place forever. *[pause]*

They asked that God would let his priests be clothed with righteousness and his saints shout for joy, and He said that they will. *[pause]*

And they asked that he not turn away the face of His anointed one, and he promised a horn would sprout for David.

God is a promise-keeping God, you can rely upon His Word! *[pause]*

Do you trust His promises? *[pauseeeee]*

Now let's think specifically as to how the Lord has fulfilled or will fulfill these promises in verses 11–18 in light of Jesus. *[pause]*

We are told of a Davidic King, who would reign forever in victory—this is none other than Jesus Christ.

For in Luke 1, the angel tells Mary about Jesus, and says, "...The Lord God will give to him the throne of his father David, and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end."¹¹ *[pause]*

Sounds a lot like what the Lord promised here.

No wonder the New Testament writers emphasized Jesus' descent from David—He is that promised Davidic King, who would reign forever in victory. *[pauseeee]*

¹⁰ <https://www.keepbelieving.com/sermon/standing-on-the-promises-of-god/>

¹¹ Luke 1:32b–33.

The King has come, has accomplished the victory to secure eternal redemption, and will come again to reign on the earth!

Have you submitted to King Jesus in your heart through faith? *[pause]*

Jesus is truly the Head, the Ruler, the Leader—God has determined to rule through Christ over His people, but do we submit all of our lives to Him?

Know that He rules not as a mean tyrant, but He rules in love and grace, shepherding us along in mercy. *[pauseeee]*

Jesus' life and work is proof that the Lord's Word came true and will eventually *fully* come true.

The Davidic descendent, who would reign, came. *[pause]*

He is King, and will show off His kingship in its fullest manifestation when He comes again.

His enemies will be put to shame, and His crown will shine someday. *[pauseeee]*

Aren't you thankful for being under the Lordship of Jesus Christ?

When you trust in Him, you are on the winning side, and it was all promised by God all the way back in David's time, and reiterated in this psalm. *[pauseeee]*

As we look around us, we can often feel like we are on the losing side, and that evil will triumph.

Do not believe it—rather, trust the promises of God, knowing that the Davidic King will come and rule over all. *[pause]*

Jesus' first coming and work is our proof of victory.

Trust Him and hope even in the darkest days, and when evil looms, knowing that the end is sure. *[pauseeee]*

How else is God fulfilling or will fulfill His promises here?

Well in verses 13–14, He speaks of Zion being His dwelling place forever. *[pause]*

Just think of what that's teaching us: it's teaching us that God desires to be among His people forever. *[pause]*

What a great God that we serve!

He doesn't want us as degraded subjects, who He keeps at a distance—rather, He draws near, and wants us to experience His loving presence! *[pause]*

He's a Lord, who desires to be near to us.

We are weak, frail sinners, yet He demonstrates His grace in that He comes to us in love.
[pauseeee]

He has shown that in the Tabernacle and then the Temple in the Old Testament...

But then He also showed that amazingly in Jesus, who is said to have “tabernacled”¹² among us when He came to earth. [pause]

That’s not the end, for Jesus promised to always be with us, and He is with us through the Spirit!
[pause]

He has not left us, but dwells within.

And now the church is said to be the Temple of God.¹³

And in some special way, as we worship together, we are really coming to “the heavenly Jerusalem.”¹⁴

And someday the New Jerusalem will come down out of Heaven, and it says in Revelation...

“Behold, the dwelling place of God is with man. He will dwell with them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them as their God.”¹⁵ [pauseeee]

What a joyous truth to dwell upon—God dwells with us forever!

He never leaves us, but someday in the New Heavens and New Earth, we will experience His presence like never before. [pause]

No longer hindered by anything, it will be glorious! [pause]

Be thankful that the Lord who is all powerful, is also the Lord who draws near in tender care.
[pause]

The Lord who is wholly holy, is the Lord who comes to us in grace and mercy. [pause]

He has promised to dwell with us forever, and will dwell with us forever, especially in the New Jerusalem someday. [pauseeeee]

Something else in this text is the Lord promises *provision* for His people. [pause]

He commits to abundantly bless, satisfy, clothe the priests with salvation, and give joy to the saints. [pause]

¹² The Greek meaning of “dwelt” in John 1:14.

¹³ A reference to 1 Corinthians 3:16.

¹⁴ Hebrews 12:22.

¹⁵ Revelation 21:3.

How could we not think of how the Lord has provided for us through Christ when we think of this? *[pause]*

We are said to be rich in Christ,¹⁶ and our needs are said to be provided for, according to the riches of God in Christ.¹⁷ *[pause]*

As Jesus told us, “Blessed are you who are poor, for yours is the kingdom of God.”¹⁸

He satisfies us with good, and gives Himself, the bread of life, so that we shall never hunger anymore.¹⁹ *[pause]*

Truly, He has clothed us with righteousness and salvation, our hearts shout for joy!

All of these things we experience now, but someday, they will be fully realized when Christ comes again. *[pauseeee]*

God is the God of provision—He gives us what we need and more...

He doesn't just bless, but *abundantly* blesses. *[pause]*

He doesn't just provide, but *satisfies*. *[pause]*

He doesn't just clothe, but causes us to *shout for joy*. *[pauseeee]*

The Lord has made so many promises, and we are already experiencing a fulfillment of them, and we will experience them in their fullest in the end.

What a God that we serve, and this psalm reminds us that...

We can stand upon the promises of God, for just look at what He did through Christ!

You can trust the promises of God—stand upon them, Christian! *[pause]*

Just consider Jesus, and you can see the promises of God being accomplished.

Every look at Jesus is really a look at the promises of God being fulfilled. *[pauseeee]*

The Lord promised a Redeemer, and so Jesus came to provide us with forgiveness and eternal life, for He died on the cross for our sins, and then rose again.

Have you trusted in His work on the cross? *[pauseeee]*

Let's say that you are truly a believer in Christ—do you truly stand upon His promises? *[pause]*

“The Toronto Ward Museum tells us the story of a nineteenth-century man named Isapo Muxika.

¹⁶ See James 2:5.

¹⁷ See Philippians 4:19.

¹⁸ Luke 6:20.

¹⁹ A reference to John 6:35.

He is more commonly known as Crowfoot. He was the chief of the Siksika Indian tribe. *[pause]*

When the Canadian Pacific Railroad was being built and they needed to build part of it on his land, the Canadian government approached Crowfoot with an offer...

They said, "If you will give us the land we need for the railroad, you can ride it whenever and wherever you want." *[pause]*

So they made a deal.

They finished the Canadian Pacific Railroad and Crowfoot received a lifetime pass—it was put in a beautiful case. *[pause]*

Crowfoot is said to have carried that case around his neck for the rest of his life—it entitled him to go wherever he wanted where the railroad could take him.

But there was just one problem—as far as we know, Crowfoot never stepped foot on that train. *[pause]*

He had the right to travel anywhere he wanted, but he never availed himself of that right."²⁰
[pauseeee]

As a Christian, you have the promises of God, but do you make use of them? *[pause]*

We can quote them, but do we trust them?

We may frame them in picture frames, but do we believe them, and live in light of them?
[pauseeee]

Will you truly cling to, hold onto, believe in, and stand upon the promises of God? *[pause]*

May we do what that one hymn says, "Standing on the promises that cannot fail, when the howling storms of doubt and fear assail.

By the living Word of God I shall prevail, standing on the promises of God."²¹

²⁰ From the Toronto Ward Museum, submitted by Howard Harden. Found at: <https://illustrationexchange.com/illustrations?category=471>

²¹ Hymn called, "Standing on the Promises," by Russell Kelso Carter, 1886.