

“Unity in The Family of God” Psalm 133

Context: Treasury of David- TITLE. *A Song of Degrees of David.* We see no reason for depriving David of the authorship of this sparkling sonnet. He knew by experience the bitterness occasioned by divisions in families, and was well prepared to celebrate in choicest Psalmody the blessing of unity for which he sighed. Among the "songs of degrees", this hymn has certainly attained unto a good degree, and even in common literature it is frequently quoted for its perfume and dew. In this Psalm there is no wry word, all is "sweetness and light",—a notable ascent from Psalm 110 with which the Pilgrims set out. That is full of war and lamentation, but this sings of peace and pleasantness. The visitors to Zion were about to return, and this may have been their hymn of joy because they had seen such union among the tribes who had gathered at the common altar. The previous Psalm, which sings of the covenant, had also revealed the center of Israel's unity in the Lord's anointed and the promises made to him. No wonder that brethren dwell in unity when God dwells among them, and finds his rest in them. Our translators have given to this Psalm an admirable explanatory heading, "The benefit of the communion of saints." These good men often hit off the meaning of a passage in a few words

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This is the fourteenth of the so-called Pilgrim Songs, or Songs of Ascents. The superscription attributes the Psalm to David, but that superscription was omitted by the **RSV**, perhaps indicating some reluctance on the part of translators to accept David's authorship. A tiny thing such as this points to the weakness of that version. Leupold accepted the Davidic authorship, pointing out that, "The evidence against it is not convincing."^[1] Such things as the existence of Aramaisms in the text, often relied upon by the late-daters of Biblical books, are utterly worthless as evidence of date, as we have repeatedly emphasized.

Mitchell Dahood pointed out that, "Although wanting in the Targum and in some manuscripts of the **LXX**, the attribution of this Psalm to David is sustained in the Psalms Scroll of Qumran Cave 11."^[2] These are commonly described as the "Dead Sea Scrolls, and are discussed in Vol. IV of James A. Sanders book, *Discoveries in the Judean Desert of Jordan* (Oxford University Press, 1965).

In this light there is no excuse whatever for denying David as the author here.

As for the occasion, there are several guesses; but the most reasonable one, to us, is that of Matthew Henry. "Some conjecture that David penned this psalm upon the occasion of the union of all the Twelve Tribes when they met unanimously to make him king."^[3]

Introduction: The devastation that has occurred in the house of God is overwhelming. The accomplishments of pride and arrogance are pitiful. Brothers, it ought not to be so. We have been a bad witness to the lost and a source of God's ire because of hatred and bickering. The children of love have fought a fight but it is not the *good fight*. Church splits and brotherly arguments have dotted the landscape of Christendom. The pain I feel most in my heart today is from the hurt of sheep that left the flock in a huff. Oh how human nature has raised personal preference to an all-time high. We have robbed ourselves of the dew of Hermon and the oil from Aaron's anointing because of selfish ambition and pride.

We have lost the virtues of this psalm in our anger and fighting... *pleasant, together, precious, dew, blessing and life*. When the God of heaven has left His home on high to rescue the perishing and care for the dying, we stand at odds with the people around us who are cut from the same cloth. What does the NT say about the matter?

Col 3:12-14

12 Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. 13 Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. 14 And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity.

NIV

Luke 11:4

4 Forgive us our sins,
for we also forgive everyone who sins against us.

NIV

Phil 2:1-11

If you have any encouragement from being united with Christ, if any comfort from his love, if any fellowship with the Spirit, if any

tenderness and compassion, 2 then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and purpose. 3 Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves. 4 Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others.

5 Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus:

6 Who, being in very nature God,
did not consider equality with God something to be grasped,
7 but made himself nothing,
taking the very nature of a servant,
being made in human likeness.

8 And being found in appearance as a man,
he humbled himself
and became obedient to death —
even death on a cross!

9 Therefore God exalted him to the highest place
and gave him the name that is above every name,
10 that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow,
in heaven and on earth and under the earth,
11 and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord,
to the glory of God the Father.

NIV

Verse 1: The two Hebrew words *good* and *pleasant* are all you can imagine and even more of a blessing. They are translated as beautiful, bountiful, good, pleasant, fair, cheerful, loving, merry, and many more. When God's people are in unity it is awesome. Satan's number one goal is to upset the apple cart. The Devil likes dissension.

The two words that form the phrase *together* and *unity* refers to being *alike* in the *same place*. That's what Paul says for us to do in

Philippians. Be of the same mind. Be like minded. And better yet, have the mind of Christ.

Illustration: WBC the first two years.

Verse 2: The oil refers to the blessings of healing and the Holy Spirit. I can imagine the anointing ceremony was a beautiful sight. The oil running down and showing that the man of God was fully covered in the blessings of God and the power of the Spirit. The healing balm of the precious Spirit represented by the oil.

Verse 3: The poetry in this verse is amazing. You can sense and feel the dew falling upon us in holiness. Mount Zion, the capital of God's people being blessed. The blessings of God coming from on high like the dew that distills into precious water from Mount Hermon. Has it not made its way to us? Has He not poured the oil of healing into your soul. Unity is a powerful block of blessing.

What can be more precious to us than life eternal? Has not Jesus become the dew from heaven to us all? We have been given life forevermore.