

Psalm 122 A Thin Place

There are certain places where God speaks clearly. Do you have a place like this?

“A Thin Place” - The ancient Celtic Christian believed there were places in our world where the distance between heaven and Earth collapsed. It was easier to encounter God and experience His presence there (more than any other place).

The Thin Place is what the Psalmist was expressing in Psalm 122:1, when he said, *“I rejoiced with those who said to me, “Let us go to the house of the Lord.”*

Exodus 23:14-17 – God taught the Israelites to gather three times a year in Jerusalem to pray and worship God.

They would come from all over Israel. Over time, they developed songs to sing on their walk. Since Jerusalem was at the tip of Mt. Zion, 2,700 ft. up, they had to walk uphill to get there. So, they called these songs, “The Psalms of Ascent.”

There are 15 Psalms of Ascent, all in one clump, Psalms 120-134. Psalm 122 is a psalm of triumph. Why is the theme triumph? Because *trust was placed in the right person, in the right place, with the right people, for the right purposes.*

To begin, we must discover how Psalms 120 and 121 set the table for 122.

In Psalm 120, we see that it’s getting towards the season of one of the feasts. The people are thinking about how hard life is. The people of God are falsely accused consistently. They understand how hard it is to live in the world and not be a part of it. They feel far from home.

In Psalm 121, they know there’s a place where they can meet with God – a thin place (Vs 1-2). God will help them and protect them on their way to Jerusalem. And that encounter is going to make all the difference.

So, they start walking, and they walk, until they finally arrive. This is the story of Psalm 122.

V.1 – David knows about this place where God dwells richly. He knows, when he gets there, he’s going to meet with God and God’s people, and he will be inspired and encouraged. Just the thought of this gets him excited! Compare David’s attitude to your attitude when Sunday morning comes around. Coming to morning worship can be either a chore or a delight. Our attitude towards God will determine our view of worship.)

V. 2 – *We are here!*

V. 3 – *The walls are well-built!*

V. 4 – *This is where my people, my tribes, meet!*

V. 5 – *Jerusalem is the place where authority is! If this place can thrive, the whole world will thrive!* (For any society to thrive, the church in its midst must thrive. As the church goes, so goes the society in which it finds itself.)

V. 6 - *Pray for the peace of Jerusalem.* Then David gives a blessing: *May those who love you be secure; may there be peace within your walls, and security within your citadels.*

The word for “peace” is *shalom*.

The word for “security” is *shalwa*.

—*Shalom means, “complete well-being inside you.”*

—*Shalwa means, “security around you.”*

David is praying for peace inside the hearts of the people of Jerusalem, and peace around the physical city of Jerusalem. (When you go to the house of the Lord, you get peace inside you and peace around you.)

After experiencing the House of the Lord, David concludes the Psalm with, *I feel so good right now, I'm not going to worry about myself anymore. I'm going to do something for others. Specifically, I will pursue your prosperity.*

(David says, this is what happens when you go to the house of the Lord. That's what happens when you go to church. At least, that is what should happen. Your eyes turn from focusing on yourself to focusing on others. It's not about you, anymore; it's about God and others.)

What did David find out about Thin Places:

1. *When I'm in trouble, or when we are in trouble, we need to go to the Thin Place. (Psalm 120)*

2. *Once you've been to the Thin Place, you know where the Thin Place is. (Psalm 121)*

He's going to church! Once you've been at this thin place, you don't forget. You've heard from God there, met with God there. It's a place where heaven comes close to earth.

3. *Location matters. (Psalm 122)*

God is everywhere, so you can meet with Him anywhere, but we are in bodies, and where our bodies are located makes a difference to us. Your location matters and some locations are better for encountering God than others.

That's part of why so many of us get depressed when we are locked up at home.

We were made for church. We were made to gather with others in sacred spaces to worship and experience God.

God inhabits the praise of His people, and we give Him praise here. You can worship the Lord anywhere, but places where people meet to do so are usually thinner places because God's Spirit dwells deeply in them.

4. *Together matters. (Psalm 122:1-4)*

Hebrews 10:24-25: *And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching.*

When we meet, we do it as a tribe or family. God knows the power of diversity, and the power of togetherness.

Friends, you and I need the church. We need the house of the Lord. We desperately need a Thin Place. Everybody needs a Thin Place. Everyone needs a place to encounter God amid God's people!

Application

1. **Don't take Bethel for granted.** Come as often as you can and come ready to encounter God.

2. **Don't take the people of Bethel for granted.** We're your tribe. Everybody needs a tribe.

God's power is present when we get together.

3. **Pray about a few friends you can invite to join you here at Bethel.**

With this...

4. **If you have a personal Thin Place in your life, spend some time there this coming week.**

Pray, meditate, and meet with God. But if you don't have one, or cannot think of one, spend some time this coming week mapping out some spots you think could work.