

Psalm 125 – The Security of the Pilgrims:-

This Psalm emphasises the confidence of the faithful in Israel. Like the preceding Psalm it was probably not designed as a pilgrim song but has been included in the collection. The actual use in Pilgrimages is seen in the reference to *'the mountains around Jerusalem'* which come into view after a long and arduous journey.

Verses 1 – 3 – A Statement of Confidence:- *'They that trust . . as the mountains are round about Jerusalem so is the Lord round about His people. . . .'* The presence of God is symbolised by the hills round about Jerusalem. Remember Elisha at the siege of Dothan – read the story in 2 Kings chapter 6, verses 15 – 17. With an unbelieving Government a general departure from the faith would occur, even among the righteous. The danger of apostasy is always present.

Verses 4 – 5 – A prayer for favour:- *'do good O Lord'* the Psalmist prays for God's favour upon the faithful, whom he identifies with the good and upright. In contrast to those individuals the unfaithful are abandoned to their just fate. The Psalm ends with a simple prayer for Israel.

Psalm 126 – The Restoration of the Pilgrims:- Although the obvious reference is to the return from the Exile in Babylon the conditions are not those experienced in the post-exilic society. The Psalmist deals with the expected ideal conditions and with the disillusionment experienced for many years. (The history is given in the Books of Nehemiah and Ezra).

Verses 1 – 3 – The Ideal of Restoration:- The ideal of a glorious restoration was too good to be true. When the 'Edict of Cyrus' was read there was jubilation among some of the exiled Jews. Singing, laughter and praise to the Lord God.

Verses 4 – 6 – The Plea for Fulfilment:- The beautiful ideal of the Restoration envisioned by the prophets and sung about by the exiles was not fully realised by those who returned to their homeland. Conditions were anything but glorious and ideal. Read Haggai chapter 1, verses 7 – 13. Therefore the plea is now made for the completion of the ideal. Just as the farmer sows seed in anxiety and rejoices at a good harvest so Israel will realise the Restoration ideal.

With the coming of the Messiah, Our Lord Jesus Christ, the final phase of the Restoration has begun. The Book of Revelation gives a picture of the New Jerusalem where God's presence will forever dwell. Read chapters 21 and 22 of the Book of Revelation for a vision of the New Jerusalem which was promised to the People of God so long ago.

1) Last night I lay a-sleeping
There came a dream so fair,
I stood in old Jerusalem
Beside the temple there.
I heard the children singing,
And ever as they sang,
Methought the voice of angels
From heav'n in answer rang.
Jerusalem! Jerusalem!
Lift up your gates and sing,
Hosanna in the highest!
Hosanna to your King!

2) And then methought my dream was chang'd,
The streets no longer rang,
Hush'd were the glad Hosannas
The little children sang.
The sun grew dark with mystery,
The morn was cold and chill,
As the shadow of a cross arose
Upon a lonely hill.
Jerusalem! Jerusalem!
Hark! How the angels sing,
Hosanna in the highest!
Hosanna to your King!

3) And once again the scene was chang'd;
New earth there seemed to be;
I saw the Holy City
Beside the tideless sea;
The light of God was on its streets,
The gates were open wide,
And all who would might enter,
And no one was denied.

3 cont.) No need of moon or stars by night,
Or sun to shine by day;
It was the new Jerusalem
That would not pass away.
Jerusalem! Jerusalem!
Sing for the night is o'er!
Hosanna in the highest!
Hosanna for evermore! F. E. Weatherly !848 - 1929