



A Roadmap for Going Further Up, Further In!

Lesson 1 • Psalms of Ascents

The Psalms of Ascent A Roadmap for Going Further Up & Further In on Our Journey to Joy!

We are going to look at seven characteristics of these 15 songs and each one will give us different perspective of their majestic purpose! Think of these **seven characteristics** as **seven "turnouts"** where we will stop on our journey in order to look at the same thing from a different perspective!

Turnout #1 The TITLE of the Songs

A Song of Ascents: Further Up and Further In!

The Problem: What are these psalms leading us to ascend? What are the "Goings Up"?

The Options:

1. Ascending in **Literary Style**: *Ascending style of rhythm and poetry in some of the songs?*
2. Ascending on **Physical Steps**: *Ascending the 15 steps from the Court of Women to the Court of Israel by Levitical singers?*
3. Ascending Out of **National Suffering**: *Ascending back to Jerusalem from exile in Babylon?*
4. Ascending Up to **Spiritual Worship**: *Ascending up to Jerusalem to worship in the presence of God on the Temple Mount!*

NLT Paraphrase = "A song for pilgrims ascending to Jerusalem."

Turnout #2 The THEME of the Songs

A Journey to Joy in God Presence with God's People in God's Place!

1. For Israel under the Old Covenant the journey to joy was focused on God's **PROMISE!**
His Presence would dwell with His People (Israel and Gentile Converts) **in His Place** (Temple in Jerusalem) **under His Chosen Person** (the Messiah) **by His Mighty Power** (the Spirit) **for His Purpose** (His glory and the good of all peoples)!

"I will establish My covenant between Me and you and your descendants after you throughout their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you and to your descendants after you. I will give to you and to your descendants after you, the land of your sojournings, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; and I will be their God." Genesis 17:7-8

God spoke further to Moses and said to him, "I am the LORD; and I appeared to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, as God Almighty, but by My name, LORD, I did not make Myself known to them. I also established My covenant with them, to give them the land of Canaan, the land in which they sojourned... Say, therefore, to the sons of Israel, 'I am the LORD, and I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians... I will also redeem you with an outstretched arm and with great judgments. Then I will take you for My people, and I will be your God; and you shall know that I am the LORD your God, who brought you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians. I will bring you to the land which I swore to give to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and I will give it to you for a possession; I am the LORD.'" Exodus 6:2-8

"You will live in the land that I gave to your forefathers; so you will be My people, and I will be your God." Ezekiel 36:28

2. For the Church under the New Covenant the journey to joy is focused on God's **PARTIAL FULFILLMENT** of His Promise in Christ's first coming!
His Presence is dwelling with His People (Jew and Gentile in Christ) **in His Place** (the Temple is now His Body in the Universal Church, the Local Church, and the Individual Believer) **under His Chosen Person** (Jesus the Messiah and Son of David) **by His Mighty Power** (the Indwelling Holy Spirit) **for His Purpose** (His glory and the good of all peoples)!
3. For both Israel and the Church our journey to joy is focused on God's **FINAL FULFILLMENT** of all He has promised!
The Book of Revelation is simply the record of God finally and completely FULFILLING His PROMISE in Christ's Second Coming!

Turnout #3 The TIME of the Songs

Three annual festivals in the life of Israel as a people and anytime they wanted to personally worship the Lord!

“Three times in a year all your males shall appear before the Lord your God in the place which He chooses, at the Feast of Unleavened Bread and at the Feast of Weeks and at the Feast of Booths, and they shall not appear before the LORD empty-handed.” Deuteronomy 16:16

The Seasons of the Songs

1. The Spring journey to Jerusalem for the celebration of God's **REDEMPTION** of His people!
Feast of Passover, Unleavened Bread, and First Fruits (Exodus 12:14; Leviticus 23:11)
2. The Summer journey to Jerusalem for the celebration of God's **REVELATION** to His people!
Feast of Weeks/Pentecost (Exodus 23:16)
3. The Fall journey to Jerusalem for the celebration of God's **RECONCILIATION** with His people!
Feast of Ingathering, Booths/Tabernacles, New Year, and the Day of Atonement (Exodus 34:22)

The Journey to Joy Under God's Gracious, Sovereign Rule: A Tour of Songs

Turnout #4 The TYPES of the Songs

There are songs for every season in the life of a Christ follower!

1. Songs of **LAMENT** (120; 123; 126)
2. Songs of **THANKSGIVING** (120; 124)
3. Songs of **BLESSING** (121)
4. Songs of **ZION** (122; 132)
5. Songs of **CONFIDENT TRUST** (125; 129; 131)
6. Songs of **WISDOM** (127; 128; 133)
7. Songs of **BROKEN FORGIVENESS (PENITENTIAL)** (130)
8. Songs of **ROYAL KINGSHIP** (132)
9. Songs of **VENGEANCE/CURSING (IMPRECATORY)** (129)
10. Songs of **WORSHIP** (134)

Turnout #5 The TOPICS of the Songs

There are songs for every step in life and every stage of life!

These Songs Cover Every Step in Life

SONG	TOPIC	SONG	TOPIC
120	Pursuing Peace	128	Discovering Blessedness
121	Seeking Help	129	Overcoming Abuse
122	Prizing Community	130	Confessing Sin
123	Handling Opposition	131	Cultivating Hope
124	Facing Danger	132	Nurturing Faith
125	Finding Security	133	Maintaining Unity
126	Experiencing Joy	134	Worshipping God
127	Avoiding Worry	<i>A Journey to Joy in God's Presence with God's People in God's Place!</i>	

Topics suggested by J. Stephen Yuille

These Songs Cover Every Stage of Life

Our Spiritual Journey Includes Every Stage of Life				
Individual/Single life	Married Life	Family Life	Work Life	Community Life

Turnout #6 The TRAVELERS of the Songs

1. **INDIVIDUALS** who are looking forward to being in God's presence.
2. **FAMILIES** who are seeking to raise a godly legacy.
3. **PEOPLE OF GOD (ISRAEL + CHURCH)** who are doing life together in community as a witness to the world.
4. **ENEMIES OF GOD** who are in opposition to God, His Son the King, and His beloved subjects.

Remember...

1. The journey to joy *is* personal **but never** private—we travel in community and arrive at community in God's glorious presence!
2. The journey to joy *involves* families **but never** without the family of families—the people of God gathered in local churches!
3. The journey to joy **will be** successful **but never** without a struggle and opposition—keep on keeping on to the end!

Turnout #7 The TRIUMPH of the Songs through the Tension of Testing

The journey to joy *is* a present reality **but never** with total fulfillment this side of the New Jerusalem in the New Creation.

Persevere to Triumphantly Pass the Test on the Journey to Joy

1. Don't lose your **JOY** with Christ on this journey.
2. Don't lose your **FOCUS** on Christ on this journey.
3. Don't lose your **HOPE** in Christ on this journey.

Application for Going Further Up, Further In

- Which "turnout" do you need most right now? Where have you spent most of your time? What "turnout" was a place you have never stopped before on your journey to joy in God's presence?
- Choose a reading plan for journeying through the Songs of Ascents this summer with your family and/or someone else in our class.