



WORKSHEET 12: SONGS OF ASCENT

- 1) How many psalms are in the Songs of Ascent [1]
 - a. There are 15 Psalms in the Songs of Ascent.

- 2) In your own words, give 4 potential meanings for the term “Song of Ascents” [8]
 - a. The journey of going up from Babylon to Jerusalem.
 - b. Songs used by the pilgrims while going up to Jerusalem.
 - c. Songs that were sang while going into the temple.
 - d. There is an escalation, going up from verse to verse in some of the Songs of Ascent, this may have given these psalms that name.

- 3) What is the most important *leitmotif* that unifies Psalm 121 [1]

The word “keep”. God as a keeper.

- 4) How does the Mishnah explain the meaning of the term, “Song of Ascents” [1]

The Mishnah explains the term Song of Ascents as the fifteen steps leading from the court of the women to the temple. The steps correspond to the songs, in those steps the Levites used to sing psalms.

- 5) Describe two potential factors that unify the Songs of Ascent as a collection [4]

One potential factor is their brevity another one is their concern with Zion.

- 6) Explain what the term “pre-exilic” means? [2]

Pre-exilic means before the exile of the people of Israel to Babylon.

- 7) Name two pre-exilic Songs of Ascent [2]

- a. Psalm 122
- b. Psalm 132

- 8) Is God ever portrayed as being asleep in the Old Testament. Explain your answer [2]



Yes, it is called the sleeping deity motif. We find this in verses like Isaiah 51:9 and Psalm 35:23. But it is not literal, because God has not done anything about their situation, they call him as if God was asleep in order to awake him to do something.

- 9) What is the basic content of 2Sam 7, and which of the Songs of Ascent reflect that content? [3]

2 Samuel 7 refers to the covenant of God with king David: “When your days are over and you rest with your ancestors, I will raise up your offspring to succeed you, your own flesh and blood, and I will establish his kingdom (v.12)

this covenant is mentioned in Psalm 132:

The Lord swore an oath to David,
a sure oath he will not revoke:
“One of your own descendants

I will place on your throne. (v.11)

- 10) Write down a verse from the songs of Ascent that uses an anthropomorphism [2]¹

Lord, hear my voice.
Let your ears be attentive
to my cry for mercy. (Ps.130:2)

- 11) How many books are in the Psalter [1]

There are 5 books in the psalter.

- 12) Write down from your own imagination, a chiasmic bi-cola [2]

Oh dear Lord, give me wisdom
Fill me with your understanding my loving King.

- 13) Write down one verse from Psalm 121 that uses a merismus that is split between two cola [2]

My help comes from the Lord
Who made heaven and earth. (Psalm 121:2)

¹ Always use one line per colon when you are asked to write down a verse from scripture, or to write your own verse.