

Dear Heavenly Father,

### *Praise*

“You know when I sit down and when I rise up; you discern my thoughts from afar. For you formed my inward parts; you knitted me together in my mother’s womb. I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made. Wonderful are your works; my soul knows it very well” (Ps 139:2, 13–14). You know me through and through, and you love me! Praise the LORD!

### *Today in Your Word*

Today you shared with me more of David’s psalms. Several of them are part of a collection of fifteen psalms (120–134) which all have the title, “A Song of Ascents.” It is likely that these songs were sung by those who traveled up the mountain to Jerusalem for the three annual festivals. As such they are pilgrim songs, songs which express anticipation and joy at the thought of worshiping you. Psalm 122 proclaims the pilgrim’s eagerness to reach Jerusalem: “I was glad when they said to me, ‘Let us go to the house of the LORD.’” Upon arrival, the pilgrim offered a prayer for the peace of the city: “Peace be within your walls and security within your towers!” How appropriate it is to pray for the safety and security of the place where I have the freedom to worship you! Psalm 124 reflects on the many dangers Israel faced over the years by those who wanted to destroy them: “Blessed be the LORD, who has not given us as prey to their teeth! Our help is in the name of the LORD, who made heaven and earth.” This teaches me to remember your help in the past and rest on your promise for the future. Psalm 131 speaks of the pilgrim who rejects pride and presumption and quiets his soul before you: “Like a weaned child is my soul within me.” What a beautiful picture of the contentment that is found when I fully surrender to your will. Psalm 133 celebrates the fellowship of the saints: “Behold, how good and pleasant it is when brothers dwell in unity!” This reminds me how important it is to complete the joy of Christ by being of the same mind with my fellow believers (Phil 2:2).

### *Reflection*

The “Song of Ascents” psalms challenge my perspective on church attendance. Am I glad at the thought of going to your house for worship? Do I take time to prepare my heart to seek you?

### *Request*

“Search me, O God, and know my heart! Try me and know my thoughts! And see if there be any grievous way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting!” (Ps 139:23–24).

### *Thanksgiving*

“I give you thanks, O LORD, with my whole heart; I bow down toward your holy temple and give thanks to your name for your steadfast love and your faithfulness” (Ps 138:1–2).

In Jesus’ name, Amen.

*Suggested Hymn:* “[Search Me, O God](#)” – James E. Orr.

*Meditation Verse:* Psalm 140:13.