

~ASCENTS (78)

- The **Hebrew** expression *Shir ham-ma-`alohth'*, forming the superscription for 15 psalms (**Psalms Chapters 120-134**), is variously translated as A Song of degrees (**KJ**), A gradual canticle (**Psalms Chapters 119-133**), A Song of the Stairsteps (**Psalms Chapter 120-Sup**), A Song of, or, for the Ascents (**AT, RS**). Four of these psalms are attributed to David and one to Solomon. The exact meaning of the superscription is a subject of discussion.
- Some suggest that the phrase refers to the exalted contents of these psalms, though there seems to be little reason thus to elevate them above the other inspired psalms. Most commentators believe the title derives from the use of these psalms by the Israelite worshipers when traveling or ascending to the lofty city of Jerusalem situated high in the mountains of Judah as they joyfully attended the three great annual festivals there.
- But to the place that Yehowah your God will choose out of all your tribes to place his name there, to have it reside, you will seek, and there you must come. (**Deuteronomy 12:5**)
- And there you must bring your burnt offerings and your sacrifices and your tenth parts and the contribution of your hand and your vow offerings and your voluntary offerings and the firstborn one's of your herd and of your flock. (**Deuteronomy 12:6**)
- And there you must eat before Yehowah your God and rejoice in every undertaking of yours, you and your households, because Yehowah your God has blessed you. (**Deuteronomy 12:7**)
- Three times in the year every male of yours should appear before Yehowah your God in the place that he will choose, in the festival of the unfermented cakes and in the festival of weeks and in the festival of booths, and none should appear before Yehowah empty-handed. (**Deuteronomy 16:16**)
- These things I will remember, and I will pour out my soul within me. For I used to pass along with the throng, I used to walk slowly before them to the house of God, with the voice of a joyful cry and thanksgiving, of a crowd celebrating a festival. (**Psalms 42:4**)

- You people will come to have a song like that in the night that one sanctifies oneself for a festival, and rejoicing of heart like that of one walking with a flute to enter into the mountain of Yehowah, to the Rock of Israel. (**Isaiah 30:29**)
- The **Hebrew** word *ma-`alah* is used in a similar way at;
- For on the first day of the first month he himself appointed the **going up** from Babylon, and on the first day of the fifth month he came to Jerusalem, according to the good hand of his God upon him. (**Ezra 7:9**)
- **When referring to the going up of the Israelites from Babylon to Jerusalem after the exile. The expressions in;**
 - I rejoiced when they were saying to me; To the house of Yehowah let us go. (**Psalms 122:1**)
 - Our feet proved to be standing within your gates, O Jerusalem. (**Psalms 122:2**)
 - Jerusalem is one that is built like a city that has been joined together in oneness. (**Psalms 122:3**)
 - To which the tribes have gone up, the tribes of Yah, as a reminder to Israel to give thanks to the name of Yehowah. (**Psalms 122:4**)
- **Lend themselves well to this view, while the content of the other psalms of this group is of such varied nature as to leave the matter still uncertain.**