

EIGHTY-SEVENTH PSALM

(Discourse below by Oscar Magnuson from the 1911 Convention Report, Page 177.)

“His foundation is in the holy mountains. The Lord loveth the gates of Zion more than all the dwellings of Jacob. Glorious things are spoken of thee, O city of God. I will make mention of Rahab and Babylon to them that know me: behold Philistia, and Tyre, with Ethiopia: this man was born there. And of Zion it shall be said, this and that man was born in her; and the highest himself shall establish her. The Lord shall count, when he writeth up the people, that this man was born there. As well the singers as the players on instruments shall be there; all my springs are in thee.”

This is a Psalm of seven verses, and you remember that seven represents perfection; so we can say it is a perfect Psalm, and it also illustrates perfectly God’s great plan. There are certain statements made here of a certain class. He is not telling these to everyone, but he says to them that know me, I will tell these things. So we are knowing the Lord in the sense of appreciating his wonderful plan and character, and that his plan is in harmony with his attributes. This secret is for us. The secret of the Lord is with them that reverence him, and he will show them his covenant. I am sure we are all rejoicing this morning that we are accounted worthy to know something about this plan which God has in store for not only the church but also for the whole world of mankind.

God tells here of something that is on a foundation. “His foundation is in the holy mountains.” We understand he is referring first of all to the typical city of Jerusalem, and then to the antitypical one, the heavenly Jerusalem. The first Jerusalem was built upon four mountains, or two mountains and two hills, and we understand that these mountains represent, in the antitype, the four attributes of God. Just as the literal city was built on the four mountain tops, just so this antitypical city is founded upon or in harmony with God’s attributes of justice, wisdom, love and power. “As the mountains are round about Jerusalem, so the Lord is round about his people from this time forth even forever.” And we realize everything connected with this heavenly government is indeed founded upon his attributes, in perfect alignment with justice, with the foundation of his throne. And there is also wonderful wisdom displayed, and wonderful love in connection with it, as we realize the wonderful love the heavenly Father has bestowed upon us that we should be called the sons of God. Furthermore that he has permitted us to live in the most wonderful time of the Gospel age—the harvest time. We used to think about the time when the Apostles and those who had opportunities to hear the Lord, and say, “How glad we would have been if we had been permitted to see the wonderful things that those were permitted to see at that time, and to hear the wonderful words that came from him who spake as never man spake.” But now we have the great and wonderful privilege and opportunity of living in the very culmination of these wonderful things at the end of this age when our dear Lord is present the second time, and how glad we are that we can see

the unfolding of these things which are due to be understood, and understand not only the fact but also the philosophy. How glad we are that we are permitted to know some of these things!

After speaking about this literal Jerusalem, and how it was built, and then referring to the antitypical one, it says, “The Lord loveth the gates of Zion more than all the dwellings of Jacob.” No doubt the Lord loved the literal Israel very much, and he did guide them in all their affairs, but I am sure he was more glad when the antitypical Zion, the church, had its commencement on the day of Pentecost. No doubt the heavenly Father was glad that the time had come when that class would make its appearance, and we are glad also. And God loved the gates of Zion, or the opportunity of becoming members of that heavenly class, more than all the typical features of all Israel.

“Glorious things are spoken of thee, O city of God.” If we begin to talk about things concerning this class we would have to be here a good while longer. We have been now a month, practically, on the road, and we are not yet through talking about the glorious things which have been spoken about this class. All the promises are centered in that class. They will be the dispensers of the blessings coming to the whole world of mankind. Just think of what a wonderful thing that will be! We realize it is a wonderful blessing to have opportunities to serve others. We have had privileges along that line. It is more blessed to give than to receive, and I am sure our heavenly Father will get the greatest pleasure in having the opportunity to bestow the divine nature upon this class, and all there will be pertaining to it. So, for the joy that was set before our Lord, he endured the cross and despised the shame. The same thing is set before us. What was the joy set before him? We might mention four particular points that were set before him:

(1) The joy of doing the Father’s will. I am sure that was the greatest joy our Lord had, that he was permitted to do the will of the heavenly Father, although it cost him something this time to do his will, for it meant humbling himself and taking a lower nature, that of a man, and even further than that, becoming obedient to death, yea, the ignominious death of the cross. But he said, “I delight to do the heavenly Father's will.” That was part of the joy set before him.

(2) And further, it was the joy of redeeming the race from under the curse, the condemnation of death; it was his privilege; he had to purchase it in order to hold it; it was gradually getting out of his possession. Of course everything was created by him, and for him, still the heavenly Father planned it so that he had to die in order to hold it. That was indeed a great joy to think that he could redeem mankind from death.

(3) Further, also, the joy of having something additional to anything that had ever been introduced—a new creation. And that surely gave him great joy. No wonder he prayed not only for those disciples but also for those who should believe on him through their

word all down through the Gospel age. So we, if we are of this class, are included in our dear Master's prayer.

(4) And also the joy of having the divine nature, and being much more able to dispense the blessing to the world of mankind.

These were the joys set before the Lord, and the very same joys are set before the church. We also have part in these wonderful things, and the joy and the delight of doing the heavenly Father's will. So if that is our desire, whatever it may cost, then we will have the same joy, though it will cost us self-sacrifice, but that is nothing to compare with the glory that is set before us. After reading what the apostle said about the light afflictions he had, and then enumerating what they were I wondered where our afflictions come in. If he called them light afflictions when he was beaten with rods and flogged, and cast into prison, so he was feeling real glad when he was feeling real bad physically, and rejoicing in the privilege of suffering for the Lord's sake, we ought to be able to come to the condition where we could say also, "I have learned in whatever state I am, therewith to be content." And only by learning these things in the school of Christ are we able to rejoice. Not that these things feel good in themselves, but because of the wonderful things they work out for us—a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; and also that we have opportunity and privilege not in the ransom, but in the ransoming—in the delivering of this poor world of mankind from under condemnation and death. If we suffer with him we shall also reign with him, if we be dead with him we also shall live with him, and it is only to those that these promises went out. And also being the bride will be a part of our joy, and I am sure the bride and bridegroom will have a grand glorious time together. Sometimes they say to us, "Why don't you folks go down to the slums and try to convert the world?" Why, we have not the time. Wait until the espousal is over, after the marriage is over, and we will take care of that then. Now we are lost in one another's love and it is right that it should be so.

Now to this class he says, "I will make mention of Rahab and Babylon to them that know me: behold Philistia and Tyre, with Ethiopia, this man was born there." Rahab, in this Psalm, is the name for Egypt, and the Lord has told us what he is going to do with Egypt, the world. Instead of roasting and toasting them through eternity, he has wonderful blessings in store for them, and we are the only ones the Lord has permitted to know about these things. It is peculiar that the more we tell it to those who have not the hearing ear, the less they understand it; it is a great secret. Therefore to those who know his character he has told what he is going to do with the world. He says, "I have wonderful blessings for them, and restitution to human perfection."

Then it speaks about Babylon. He says, "I will tell you about that." Instead of being what they call Christendom—Christ's kingdom, the gate to God—he calls it confusion. Now we surely see this confusion. Everybody in it says he is right but all others are

wrong. That is the condition they are in everywhere. Ask them what they believe, and none of them in any denomination can tell what they believe. They have to do like one did in Jackson, Michigan. He was a Presbyterian, and said he did not know what he believed, so he went to the public library and got a whole armload of Presbyterian books. When asked what he got them for, he answered, "I wanted to find out what I believed." That has been the condition of all of us. We were never able to give a reason for the hope in us. Certainly we never knew God's secrets; it was all confusion, and it was not the gate to God.

It also speaks about Philistia. Now the word "Philistia" means "wanderer," and Philistia was the one that was constantly plaguing the children of Israel. The herdsmen of Israel had dug wells for themselves and for their cattle and the Philistines filled their wells with stones and rubbish so that they could not get water for themselves or their cattle. Now we realize that the antitypical Philistines, the higher critics, are filling the Word of God with traditions to such an extent that the poor people cannot get anything out of it—neither water for themselves nor for anybody else. Now we realize that only those who come into present truth get rid of those theories which are indeed keeping them from getting the water from the well, the Word of the Lord.

And it speaks about Tyre, the strong ones, the mighty ones, the influential class. And what is going to become of them? They are going to lose their influence by and by. Those that are leaders of the people today, and influential ones, will soon lose that and we can see now that they are beginning to lose more and more of their influence and standing with the people, religiously and otherwise.

And it mentions Ethiopia. You remember the Queen of Sheba came from the ends of the earth, from Ethiopia. We understand that this refers to the heathen nations, those who have never heard the Word of the Lord. That is what we have heard when we have gone from place to place colportaging, "What is God going to do with the heathen?" They tell us God is going to save them by ignorance, but we realize that the Bible tells us a different story—that he is going to justify them by faith or give them an opportunity to hear the Gospel so that they might believe, because without faith it is impossible to please God, and they must also believe that he is and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him. So we realize they are also going to get an opportunity.

It says, "This man was born there." Now it speaks about the time when everybody is inquiring, "What about this one, and that one, and the other one?" Suppose now we were living in the Millennial age, when the kingdom is set up, and they began to inquire, "Now what about this one, and that one, and the other one? Where is our father? Where is our mother? Where is our brother?" They used to tell us how everybody was going to be roasted and toasted except those who belong to the church. Now at that time they will say, "Why are you here? We have been paying mass money for you." They find

themselves on the earth as well as the popes, priests and cardinals. “Now, how is it that we are here? You said we were going to purgatory, and after a while go to heaven. How is it that both you and I are here?” The secret of the matter is, they were born in Babylon. Wherever they were born, that is where they appear. Had they been born in Zion they would not have appeared here. We find that all who are born in Babylon will appear right on earth, and not appear anywhere else. And those that are born in Zion, it will be said of them, “They were very peculiar, they were going around preaching no hell and everything else, Where is this one?” Why, you do not expect to see him here? Why, he was born in Zion, and therefore he is not appearing here on earth. So if we be of that class that is born in Zion, they will inquire about us, because it is going to be said, “This man was born there.” Somebody has got to tell it. So we realize that our Master’s name was cast broadcast over the world, everybody knows about him, or will know sometime. Well now do you suppose that our dear Lord’s bride is not to be known? Surely every member of that glorious company is going to be known, and we should not wonder at all that the information would be given through the earthly phase of the kingdom, because that is where they are going to inquire. No doubt then the Urim and Thumim will come in and the instruction or information which was then give in type will there be so fulfilled in the antitype. They will know where everyone belongs.

It says, “The Lord shall count, when he writeth up the people, that this man was born there.” He will not forget anybody. “As well the singers as players on instruments shall be there; all my springs are in thee.” We are the singers and the players now if we are harping on the harp—and you know that is what they are always accusing us of. They say that we are always harping on the Bible. We are glad that all such will be found in that class; and I trust you and I will be found there.