

Psalm 87 • This one was born in Zion

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Psalm 87. It's simply titled, A Psalm of the Sons of Korah. It's a very short Psalm. Speaks of Zion as the spiritual birthplace of God's people. And this Psalm is one of those interesting Psalms that connects us with other passages in the Bible that tell us that God's people extend far beyond the borders of Israel.

Look at verse 1, it says,

"On the holy mount stands the city he founded;

2 the LORD loves the gates of Zion more than all the dwelling places of Jacob.

3 Glorious things of you are spoken, O city of God." (ESV)

And so the very first 3 verses make reference to the city of God. Speaking of the gates of Zion. Talking about how God founded it and loves it.

And then now, here's where it gets interesting in verse 4.

"Among those who know me (and this is like Zion speaking, if Zion personified. He says,) Among those who know me I mention Rahab (Now Rahab is Egypt, okay.) and Babylon; (Babylon! Are you kidding? He says,) behold, Philistia (that refers to the land of the Philistines. They were perennial enemies of Israel. I mean a thorn in their side; of) Tyre, with Cush—"

Tyre and Sidon were totally pagan nations. Jezebel came out of there, Tyre and Sidon. That's... We call those the Phoenician cities. And Cush, which is essentially Ethiopia, although the borders have changed since biblical times.

But look at what these people say. Look at what they're saying,

"5 "This one was born there," they say."

"This one was born there,..." In other words, born in Zion. Here you are, hearing about Zion, the city of God and it begins to list all these nations that surrounded Israel. And that were often their violent enemies. And yet God makes a promise here in this Psalm, that even among those nations, there would

be those who would be born in Zion, or would know the Lord and have a true relationship with God. Listen, this idea of being born in Zion is the same as what you and I would talk about being born again. That's what it's referring to.

In the Old Testament they didn't really understand the concept of born again spiritually like we do. Because the Old Testament was a physical approach to God's kingdom. God's kingdom was Israel. Zion was His capital city, if you will. His throne. Right? So it was a physical approach. So to be born in Zion means to be a one of the children of God.

You and I don't think of things geographically because that's not how God is working now. He's working through the body of Christ. It's through a spiritual thing. And we are born again by the Spirit, right, when we come to faith in Jesus and put our trust in His finished work on the cross.

But I want you to see what God is saying here about all these nations that are going to be part of the kingdom of God in the end.

Look at verse 5, it says,

"And of Zion it shall be said, 'This one and that one were born in her'; for the Most High himself will establish her."

6 The LORD records as he registers the peoples, (saying) "This one was born there."

Notice that the Lord is registering. And that is... That recording is later in the Bible referred to as the Book of Life in the Book of Revelation.

And he says as he ends the Psalm that,

"7 Singers and dancers alike say, (and this is what they're singing and saying in their dancing and songs,) 'All my springs are in you.'" It's a song sung by the people.

What we are seeing here is a reminder in the Psalms of something that is given to us several times throughout the Word of God. And that is the fact, prophetically, that Jerusalem is one day going to be a place of great blessing to all peoples. And it's going to be a spiritual home to the nations of the earth.

I know, you think of that now and you go, Jerusalem? It's a city of controversy today. Because what's going on in Jerusalem right now is biblically speaking,

the trampling of the Gentiles upon the courts of God. And good grief, there's a mosque where the temple ought to be. And so this trampling goes on.

And there's always fighting. And if you go to Israel, there's people walking around with guns. I mean, soldiers to keep the peace because it's a... Everybody knows it's a tinderbox that could ignite at any time.

People go to Israel and they're well, I'm going to take my life in my hands and go visit Israel. You never know, they might start getting bombed anytime. And it happens. I mean, good grief! It happens.

So when you think of this prophetically, you're thinking like, wow! That's really interesting. The Bible says, one day that Jerusalem is going to be a city of great blessing for all the nations of the earth. For all the nations of the earth.

Listen, the nations of the earth are one day going to stream to Jerusalem. How do we know that? Let me show you a passage from Isaiah chapter two.

Isaiah 2:2-3 (ESV)

It shall come to pass in the latter days that the mountain of the house of the LORD shall be established as the highest of the mountains, and shall be lifted up above the hills; and all the nations shall flow to it, and many peoples shall come, and say: "Come, let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob, that he may teach us his ways and that we may walk in his paths." For out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem.

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This is spoken prophetically. And by the way, this passage in Isaiah, is one of several prophetic passages that speak of the future of Jerusalem as the center of the earth one day. When is this all going to happen? Well, it is describing a time that we refer to as the, Millennial Kingdom.

And the Millennial Kingdom is a period of 1,000 years. The Bible tells us that will take place after the Great Tribulation, which comes upon the earth. Which is the time of the outpouring of God's wrath upon unbelievers.

And the Tribulation period will be followed by the Millennial Kingdom, which will be a time of unprecedented peace and blessing when Jesus Himself will return to this earth, which He does at the end of the Tribulation period to fight for Israel. And He will rule and reign from Zion, from Jerusalem. And that's what will make it more special.

And this is all spoken prophetically in the Book of Revelation. Let me end by putting this one on the screen for you. John writes,

Revelation 20:1-3 (ESV)

Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven, holding in his hand key to the bottomless pit and a great chain. And he seized the dragon, that ancient serpent, who is the devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years, and threw him into the pit, and shut it and sealed it over him, so that he might not deceive the nations any longer, until the thousand years were ended. After that he must be released for a little while.

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This passage speaks of how this time of unprecedented peace comes about. You have two key things that are happening: Jesus comes back to rule and reign; and Satan is bound and put away into a pit for a period of 1,000 years, during that period that we call the Millennial Kingdom. After which, he will be released for one final work of deception.

But anyway, so that's what this Psalm is referring to. And it's cool to see prophecy that is not yet fulfilled, even spoken of in the Psalms.