

## Psalms 87

This evening - we're continuing our overview of the Old Testament book titled Psalms.

With this as our focus - let's open our Bibles to Psalms chapter 87 - and as we make our way to the 87th Psalm...

...I should take a moment to point out that - this is the tenth - of eleven Psalms - written by the sons of Korah.

And while it's true that the sons of Korah - were the descendants of a Levite named - Korah - who led a rebellion against Moses...

...it's also true that they were also the descendants of Levi's second son - Kohath...

...who's sons were responsible for carrying the temple furniture - as they wandered in the wilderness.

This included the Ark of the covenant - the table of showbread - the golden lampstand - the altars - and the veil.

Can you imagine the pressure - of carrying these sacred furnishings through the wilderness?

Then - after arriving in the land - and after setting up the tabernacle of meeting...

...the descendants of Kohath were responsible for maintaining the inner sanctuary of the tabernacle.

Then - during the days of David - the sons of Kohath which included the sons of Korah...

...were called upon to serve as musicians - and gatekeepers at the tabernacle - and then the temple.

And it's here in our text tonight - where we find the sons of Korah...

...proclaiming the praises of the One - Who loves the gates of that they were guarding.

As we make our way through the 87th Psalm - we're going to consider the significance of these gates that they were guarding.

And not only that - but - we will also spend our time consider the glory of Mount Zion...

...and the connection between the Mount Zion here on Earth - and the Mount Zion which is in heaven.

And with this as our focus - we will also consider a biblical case for why every born-again believer should be a Zionist.

With this as our focus - let's turn our attention to the lyrics that we find here in the 87th Psalm.

Look with me - beginning there at verse 1 - where we learn that this is...

Psa 87:1 A Psalm of the sons of Korah. A Song.

His foundation is in the holy mountains.

Psa 87:2 The LORD loves the gates of Zion

More than all the dwellings of Jacob.

Psa 87:3 Glorious things are spoken of you,

O city of God! Selah

Here in the beginning of this Psalm - we find the sons of Korah - rejoicing in the LORD - who loves the gates of Zion.

Now - that word - Zion - was translated from a Hebrew word which - according to Gesenius - means "sunny place" or "sunny mountain."

And while the root word means - parched place - or - barren wilderness...

...a derivative of the same root was used of a marker - or a monument - including a grave stone.

It's for this reason that some scholars believe that the Hebrew word for Zion...

...can be translated as "indication" or "marking."

In order to further grasp the meaning of this word - it'll help you to know we find the term "Zion" more than 150 times in the Old Testament.

The first mention is found in 2nd Samuel chapter 5 - it's beginning at verse 6 - where we learn that...

2Sa 5:6 ...the king and his men went to Jerusalem against the Jebusites, the inhabitants of the land, who spoke to David, saying, "You shall not come in here; but the blind and the lame will repel you," thinking, "David cannot come in here."

2Sa 5:7 Nevertheless David took the stronghold of Zion (that is, the City of David).

From this - we can see that - Mount Zion was initially a Canaanite fortress - inhabited by the Jebusites.

It's for this reason that some scholars believe that the word - Zion - most likely means - fortress.

And while the stronghold of Zion came to be known as the City of David...

...over time - the name expanded geographically to encompass the entire Temple Mount area...

...followed by the broader city of Jerusalem - only to then include the land of Judah...

...and then the entire nation of Israel - including it's inhabitants.

You might also like to know that the Hebrew word - Zion - also carries with it - Messianic implications.

For example - it's in Psalm chapter 2 - beginning at verse 6 - where the Yahweh declared...

Psa 2:6 "...I have set My King  
On My holy hill of Zion."

Psa 2:7 "I will declare the decree:  
The LORD has said to Me, 'You are My Son,  
Today I have begotten You.

Psa 2:8 Ask of Me, and I will give You  
The nations for Your inheritance,  
And the ends of the earth for Your possession.

Here in this Messianic prophecy - we learn about the way that God the Father set His only begotten Son - on the holy hill of Zion.

And while this prophecy was partially fulfilled on the day when Christ Jesus was crucified on Mount Zion...

...the fulfillment of this Messianic prophecy will take place on the day...

...when the Mount Zion in Heaven will be established here on Earth...

...at the time of Christ's second coming.

And it's for this reason that every Christian should be a Zionist.

Now - before I get to far ahead of myself - let's turn our attention back to the beginning of this Psalm.

Look with me again - beginning there at verse 1 - where the Sons of Korah declared...

Psa 87:1 His foundation is in the holy mountains.

Psa 87:2 The LORD loves the gates of Zion  
More than all the dwellings of Jacob.

Psa 87:3 Glorious things are spoken of you,  
O city of God! Selah

As we take a closer look at these verses - we must not fail to notice that the LORD Who loves the gates of Zion...

...is the same LORD Who established His foundation upon the holy mountains.

Unfortunately - there is no mention of which holy mountains serve as the foundation of the LORD.

And the possibilities aren't lacking.

This includes the Mount of Beatitudes - where Jesus delivered the Sermon on the Mount...

...and there's the Mount of Transfiguration - where Jesus revealed His divine glory to Peter, James, and John.

There's Mount Ararat - where Noah's Ark rested after the global flood.

And there's Mount Sinai - where the Lord gave Moses the 10 commandments.

There's Mount Gerizim - which is the mount of blessing - and Mount Ebal which was the mount of cursing.

There's Mount Carmel - where the prophet Elijah defeated the 450 prophets of Baal...

...and there's the Mountain of God - where Lucifer served as an anointed cherub before he fell.

Clearly - there is no shortage of significant mountains in the Bible.

As we consider the context - it seems to me that - the sons of Korah were actually referring to...

...the seven mountain peaks that surround the ancient City of Jerusalem.

This includes Mount Scopus - the Mount of Olives - and the Mount of Corruption...

...which stretch east of the City itself.

Then there's Mount Ophel - and Mount Moriah - which is the original Mount Zion.

This of course is the location of today's Temple Mount.

And then there's Mount Acra - which is the peak upon which the Roman Fortress Antonia was built.

And last but not least - there's the Modern Mount Zion - where the traditional Upper Room is located.

These are the seven mountains that surround the city of Jerusalem.

And it seems to me that these are the mountains that serve as the foundations of the Lord

In order to make my case - let's take another look - beginning there at verse 1 - where the Sons of Korah declared...

Psa 87:1 His foundation is in the holy mountains.

Psa 87:2 The LORD loves the gates of Zion

More than all the dwellings of Jacob.

Now - as we consider the historic context - this reference to the gates of Zion is probably pointing to...

...the original gates of the Old City of Jerusalem - which include...

...the Jaffa Gate - the Damascus Gate - the Eastern Gate and the Zion Gate.

We should also notice that the sons of Korah compared the LORD's love for the gates of Zion...

...to the lesser love that He had - for all the dwellings of Jacob.

And it's for this reason that the scholars who created the New Living Translation rendered verse 2 in this way...

Psa 87:2      He loves the city of Jerusalem  
more than any other city in Israel.

That's right - the God of Israel loves Jerusalem more  
than all of the cities in the land of Israel.

And the reason why is because - the city on  
Mount Zion - is the city of God.

Let's consider how the sons of Korah explained it here in this Psalm - it's  
there in verse 3 where they declared...

Psa 87:3      Glorious things are spoken of you,  
O city of God! Selah

Here in this verse - we find the sons of Korah referring to Jerusalem  
as the city of God.

And you might be interested to know that - this is actually the  
second time that these descendants of Korah...

...referred to the city of Jerusalem in this way.

As a matter of fact - it's in the 46th Psalm - beginning at verse 4 - where  
they declared...

Psa 46:4      There is a river whose streams shall make glad the city of  
God,

The holy place of the tabernacle of the Most High.

Psa 46:5      God is in the midst of her, she shall not be moved;

God shall help her, just at the break of dawn.

Psa 46:6      The nations raged, the kingdoms were moved;

He uttered His voice, the earth melted.

Psa 46:7      The LORD of hosts is with us;

The God of Jacob is our refuge. Selah

Here in this Psalm - we find the sons of Korah - referring to Jerusalem as the city of God.

And as we add it all up - what we learn is that the 7 mountains that surround Jerusalem are the foundations of the LORD.

Not only that - but - He also loves the city of Jerusalem more than any other city in Israel.

And the reason why is because - this is the place where the Lord has put His name.

This was precisely the promise that the Lord presented to David - when He declared...

2Ch 6:6 "I have chosen Jerusalem, that My name may be there, and I have chosen David to be over My people Israel."

As we consider this promise that the Lord made to David - you might like to know that the mountains around Jerusalem...

...create three valleys that converge on the southern side of the city.

And in this way - they create the Hebrew letter - Shin - which is frequently used as symbol for Shaddai.

And Shaddai is a Hebrew word that refers to God Almighty.

What this means is that - God literally used the foundations of the mountains surrounding Jerusalem...

...to place His name on the city that He loves - more than any other city.

And with that being the case - we shouldn't be surprised to learn that...

...the Lord God of Israel is preparing a New Jerusalem -  
for those who trust in Him.

Let's consider how the Lord Jesus explained it - in Revelation chapter 3  
it's beginning at verse 11 - where He declared...

Rev 3:11 "Behold, I am coming quickly! Hold fast what you have,  
that no one may take your crown.

Rev 3:12 "He who overcomes, I will make him a pillar in the temple  
of My God, and he shall go out no more. I will write on him the name  
of My God and the name of the city of My God, the New Jerusalem,  
which comes down out of heaven from My God. And I will write on him  
My new name.

Rev 3:13 "He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to  
the churches."'

Here in this letter that Christ Jesus sent to the church in Philadelphia  
the Lord prophetically pointed to the day...

...when the city of God - which is the New Jerusalem - will  
descend from Heaven - to the Earth.

And it's at that point in time when the nations of the world  
will gather together...

...in order to worship the King of kings.

Let's consider how the sons of Korah put it - here in our text tonight.

Let's pick up our study of the 87th Psalm - - look with me beginning there at  
verse 4 - where the Psalmist declared...

Psa 87:4 "I will make mention of Rahab and Babylon to those who know  
Me; Behold, O Philistia and Tyre, with Ethiopia:  
'This one was born there.'"

Psa 87:5 And of Zion it will be said,  
"This one and that one were born in her;  
And the Most High Himself shall establish her."

Psa 87:6 The LORD will record, When He registers  
the peoples: "This one was born there." Selah

Here in these verses - we find the sons of Korah - describing the days when the nations of the Earth will together in Zion.

This seems to be the fulfillment - of the prophecy that King David presented in the previous Psalm.

It's there in Psalm 86 - beginning at verse 9 - where David declared...

Psa 86:9        All nations whom You have made  
Shall come and worship before You, O Lord,  
And shall glorify Your name.

Psa 86:10      For You are great, and do wondrous things;  
You alone are God.

King David was prophetically pointing to the days - when the nations of the Earth...

...will gather together in the New Jerusalem - in order to worship the King of kings.

And it's here in our text tonight - where we find the sons of Korah...

...providing us with more details about the day of the Lord.

I like the way that the scholars who created the New Living Translation rendered verse 4 - 5 - and 6 - here's how they put it...

Psa 87:4    I will count Egypt and Babylon among those who know me  
- also Philistia and Tyre, and even distant Ethiopia.

They have all become citizens of Jerusalem!

Psa 87:5    Regarding Jerusalem it will be said,  
"Everyone enjoys the rights of citizenship there."

And the Most High will personally bless this city.

Psa 87:6    When the LORD registers the nations, he will say,  
"They have all become citizens of Jerusalem." Interlude

From this - we can see that - everyone will become a citizen of Zion in Christ's Millennial Kingdom.

And just to be clear - this does not mean that we will all become Jews...

...no - instead - the descendants of Jacob will still be the nation of Israel...

...and the Gentiles nations will become citizens of Zion - by the grace of God.

To make my case - let's consider the vision the apostle John presented in Revelation 14 - it's beginning at verse 1 - where he declared...

Rev 14:1 Then I looked, and behold, a Lamb standing on Mount Zion, and with Him one hundred and forty-four thousand, having His Father's name written on their foreheads.

Rev 14:2 And I heard a voice from heaven, like the voice of many waters, and like the voice of loud thunder. And I heard the sound of harpists playing their harps.

Rev 14:3 They sang as it were a new song before the throne, before the four living creatures, and the elders; and no one could learn that song except the hundred and forty-four thousand who were redeemed from the earth.

Rev 14:4 These are the ones who were not defiled with women, for they are virgins. These are the ones who follow the Lamb wherever He goes. These were redeemed from among men, being firstfruits to God and to the Lamb.

Rev 14:5 And in their mouth was found no deceit, for they are without fault before the throne of God.

Here in these verses - we find the apostle John - describing this vision of the Lamb - which is the Lord Jesus.

And He's standing there on Mount Zion - with one hundred and forty-four thousand Israelites - from the tribes of Israel.

And in order to properly identify this group of people...

...we should take a moment to consider the details that John presented - in the book of Revelation.

Hold your place here in the book of Psalms - and let's turn in our Bibles to Revelation chapter 7.

And as we make our way to the 7th chapter of Revelation - I should take a moment to point out that...

...John saw an angel ascending from the east - having the seal of the living God.

And with it - he sealed One hundred and forty-four thousand servants from the tribes of Israel...

...before the seventh seal was opened.

With this in mind - let's consider the account found here in Revelation 7 - look with me beginning there at verse 4 - where John declared...

Rev 7:4 And I heard the number of those who were sealed. One hundred and forty-four thousand of all the tribes of the children of Israel were sealed:

Rev 7:5 of the tribe of Judah  
twelve thousand were sealed;  
of the tribe of Reuben  
twelve thousand were sealed;  
of the tribe of Gad

twelve thousand were sealed;  
Rev 7:6 of the tribe of Asher  
twelve thousand were sealed;  
of the tribe of Naphtali  
twelve thousand were sealed;

of the tribe of Manasseh  
twelve thousand were sealed;  
Rev 7:7 of the tribe of Simeon  
twelve thousand were sealed;  
of the tribe of Levi  
twelve thousand were sealed;  
of the tribe of Issachar

twelve thousand were sealed;  
Rev 7:8 of the tribe of Zebulun  
twelve thousand were sealed;  
of the tribe of Joseph  
twelve thousand were sealed;  
of the tribe of Benjamin  
twelve thousand were sealed.

Here in these verses - we find an angel placing the seal of God upon the foreheads of one hundred and forty-four thousand Israelites.

The only tribe missing is the tribe of Dan - and while we aren't told why...

...there are several speculations that include the apostasy of idolatry...

...as well as an association with the anti-Christ.

Regardless of the reason - what we can say for sure is that the so-called - "missing tribes of Israel" - conspiracy is debunked.

And not only that - but - we can also be certain that - those who insist that the church has replaced Israel...

...have failed to properly interpret the Book of Revelation.

To further prove my point - let's consider the next paragraph of this prophecy - look with me there at verse 9 - where John declared...

Rev 7:9 After these things I looked, and behold, a great multitude which no one could number, of all nations, tribes, peoples, and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, with palm branches in their hands,  
Rev 7:10 and crying out with a loud voice, saying, "Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!"

Here in these verses - we find the apostle John - describing his vision of the church in heaven - standing before the throne.

This of course is after the rapture of the church - - and before the seventh seal is opened...

...and the seven angels begin to blow the trumpet judgments.

To sum it up with simplicity - - the church will be caught up in the rapture - and then...

...the Lord will prepare to seal and send one hundred and forty-four thousand Israelites...

...who will proclaim the gospel message of our Messiah - during the time of tribulation.

And as the time of tribulation continues to ramp up...

...the Deliverer will come out of Zion - and save the children of Israel...

...as they look upon Him - Whom their forefathers pierced.

I like the way that Paul put it - in Romans chapter 11 - it's beginning at verse 25 - where he declared...

Rom 11:25 For I do not desire, brethren, that you should be ignorant of this mystery, lest you should be wise in your own opinion, that blindness in part has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in.

Rom 11:26 And so all Israel will be saved, as it is written:

“The Deliverer will come out of Zion,  
And He will turn away ungodliness from Jacob;

Rom 11:27 For this is My covenant with them,  
When I take away their sins.”

Rom 11:28 Concerning the gospel they are enemies for your sake, but concerning the election they are beloved for the sake of the fathers.

Rom 11:29 For the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable.

Christian - listen - the Lord isn't finished with the nation of Israel.

And this is not to suggest that there is a different plan of salvation for the descendants of Jacob.

No - instead - the Lord is using the Gentiles to provoke them to jealousy...

...as He prepares them for the time of tribulation.

After the church is raptured from the Earth - that's when the Lord will empower one hundred and forty-four thousand Israelites...

...to proclaim the gospel message of our Messiah - throughout the world.

And then - as the armies of the world surround the land of Israel for the battle of Armageddon...

...that's when the Deliverer will come out of Zion - and save the children of Israel.

It's in Zechariah chapter 12 - where the Prophet Zechariah described that day - it's beginning at verse 7 - where he declared...

Zec 12:7 "The LORD will save the tents of Judah first, so that the glory of the house of David and the glory of the inhabitants of Jerusalem shall not become greater than that of Judah.

Zec 12:8 "In that day the LORD will defend the inhabitants of Jerusalem; the one who is feeble among them in that day shall be like David, and the house of David shall be like God, like the Angel of the LORD before them.

Zec 12:9 "It shall be in that day that I will seek to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem.

Zec 12:10 "And I will pour on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem the Spirit of grace and supplication; then they will look on Me whom they pierced. Yes, they will mourn for Him as one mourns for his only son, and grieve for Him as one grieves for a firstborn.

Zec 12:11 “In that day there shall be a great mourning in Jerusalem, like the mourning at Hadad Rimmon in the plain of Megiddo.

Here in this prophecy - we find the prophet Zechariah - describing the day...

...when the Lord Jesus will return - and defend the Children of Israel...

...against all of the nations that came to destroy Jerusalem.

It's at that point in time - when the Lord Jesus will prepare to establish His Millennial reign over the Earth.

And as the New Jerusalem descends into place - from heaven above...

...we can rejoice in knowing that the Earth will be filled with songs of praise...

...as believers from every tribe - tongue and nation sing the praises of our Savior.

Let's consider how the sons of Korah described it - back in the 87th Psalm.

Let's turn back to Psalm 87 - and let's take a look at the last verse - it's verse 7 - where they declared...

Psa 87:7 Both the singers and the players on instruments say, “All my springs are in you.”

As we consider this final verse - about the springs of Zion that bring joy to those who travel to Jerusalem...

...we must not forget that - every good and every perfect gift is from above...

...and comes down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow of turning.

And seeing how God is the One Who created the springs  
of Mount Zion...

...then - all praise belongs to the Fount of every  
blessing.

With this in mind - I can't help but to think about the lyrics that Pastor Robert  
Robinson wrote...

...in his famous hymn - come thou fount of every blessing.

Come, thou Fount of every blessing;  
tune my heart to sing thy grace;  
streams of mercy, never ceasing,  
call for songs of loudest praise.  
Teach me some melodious sonnet,  
sung by flaming tongues above;  
praise the mount! I'm fixed upon it,  
mount of God's unchanging love!

Wherever we are in the world - we can all stand upon the mount of  
God's unchanging love.

And it's there where we will rejoice in the fount of every  
blessing...

...which is poured out on those who trust in Jesus.

At the same time - it's also important to realize that - our God is a Zionist.

And knowing that the word - Zionist - can mean different things to  
different people...

...then - it'll help you to understand that - Zionism is based on the  
belief that...

...the descendants of Israel have the right to self-determination  
in their ancestral homeland...

...according to the Abrahamic covenant found in Genesis chapter 12.

Now - this is not to suggest that we must support every decision made by every political leader there in Israel.

What it does mean is that - we should agree with the Lord's decision - to fulfill all the promises that He made to Abraham - Isaac and Jacob.

And we should also support His prophetic plan - which includes the rebirth - and reestablishment of Israel...

...right there in the land of promise - with Jerusalem being their capitol city.

All of this is part of God's prophetic plan - which should be supported by those who trust in Jesus Christ.

Christian - listen - the Lord is the One Who made His foundation is in the holy mountains surrounding Jerusalem.

And the Lord is the One - Who loves the gates of Zion - more than all the dwellings of Jacob.

The Lord is the One Who stamped the Shin of Shaddai in the Valleys surrounding Jerusalem...

...and the Lord is the One - Who promised to save Israel - on the day when the Deliverer will come out of Zion.

And it's for this reason that those who trust in the Lord Jesus - should also love the gates of Zion.

I like the way that King David put it - in the 122nd Psalm - it's verses 6 and 7 - where he declared...

Psa 122:6 Pray for the peace of Jerusalem:

"May they prosper who love you.

Psa 122:7 Peace be within your walls,

Prosperity within your palaces."

As Christians who have been blessed by the manifold mercies of our Messiah - Jesus...

...let's pray for the peace of Jerusalem - knowing that those who love Zion - will prosper.

And let's pray for the day - when all of Israel will be saved...

...as the Deliverer of Israel - finally comes out of Zion - and establishes the throne of David...

...right there in the city of God.