

THRU THE BIBLE EXPOSITION

Psalms: God's Nurture Of The Inner Man In The Life Of Faith

LXXXVII: Anticipating God's Messianic Kingdom Securities Amid This Life's Insecurities (Psalm 87:1-7)

I. Introduction

- A. Contemplating the blessings of Christ's coming Messianic Kingdom provides us believers who face trials in this life a welcome hope, a pause that refreshes the spirit.
- B. Psalm 87:1-7 offers such a contemplation, and we view it for our insight and edification:

II. Anticipating God's Messianic Kingdom Securities Amid This Life's Insecurities, Psalm 87:1-7.

- A. The introductory remarks of this psalm comprise the first part of verse one in the Hebrew text (Kittel, Biblia Hebraica, p. 1051), so we stay with the numbering system of the English Bible for clarity with this lesson.
- B. We thus translate Psalm 87:1-7 as follows:
 - 1. "His foundation is on the holy mountains," Psalm 87:1.
 - 2. "Jahweh loves the gates of Zion more than all the dwellings of Jacob," Psalm 87:2.
 - 3. "Glorious things are spoken of you, O City of Elohim. Selah." (Psalm 87:3)
 - 4. "I will record Rahab (Egypt, cf. Isaiah 30:7) and Babylon among those who acknowledge Me -- Philistia and Tyre, along with Cush -- and [they] will say, 'This [one] was born there [in Zion]!'" (Psalm 87:4)
 - 5. "And of Zion it will be said, 'This nobleman ('*ish*, Ibid.; Robert B. Girdlestone, Syns. of the O. T., 1973, p. 45-50) and that nobleman ('*ish* again) were born in her, and the Most High, He (emph. pron.) will establish her," Psalm 87:5.
 - 6. "Jahweh will write in the register of the peoples, 'This [one] was born there [in Zion]. Selah!'" (Psa. 87:6)
 - 7. "As singers and players [of instruments make music, they will sing], 'All my springs are in you.'" (v. 7)
- C. We note significant observations and applications regarding this psalm (as follows):
 - 1. It is difficult to comprehend the historical context for this psalm's origination, but H. C. Leupold (Expos. of the Psalms, 1974, p. 622 makes a reasonable case for the context to be the era of Hezekiah when God delivered Jerusalem from the Assyrian army by supernaturally slaying 185,000 enemy soldiers overnight, and when many Gentile nations responded by bringing gifts to Jerusalem in celebration of this deliverance. (2 Chron. 32:22-23) Evidences in favor of this view are that at that time as in this psalm at verse 4, Egypt was called Rahab (Isaiah 30:7), Babylon was a contact for Judah and there is no reference to Assyria.
 - 2. Accordingly, this psalm can be used as an encouragement to rely on God's promises of stability and purpose in times in our lives when we face threats to our security: the day when Gentiles will no longer threaten Jerusalem, but will become famous for their having been born in her in the Messianic Kingdom was an encouraging truth for the sons of Korah who authored this psalm to contemplate (cf. introduction).
 - 3. By way of application, then, dwelling on our future blessings in the coming Messianic Kingdom of Christ and the eternal state acts to counter the depressing effects of the trials of this life, making us function as people of "hope" as Scripture at Romans 5:1-5 directs.
 - 4. One significant reverse of misfortune for Israel in the Messianic Kingdom will be the lack of today's anti-semitism: Gentiles from Egypt, Babylon, Philistia, Tyre and Ethiopia, Gentiles of varying ethnicities and races will exalt those who had been born in Jerusalem, and noblemen who had been born in her would be exalted simply because they will have been born there! Those who will enter the Kingdom will all be believers in Christ, be they Jew or Gentile, which explains this positive reversal of attitude toward the Jew!
 - 5. The reference in v. 1-2 of God's love for the gates of Zion on the holy mountains more than all Jacob's dwellings alludes to God's special focus on the temple site, Ibid., p. 623. It was on this site, Mount Moriah (2 Chron. 3:1), that Abraham once offered up Isaac (Genesis 22:1-14), what thus recalls God's Abrahamic Covenant to bless the world through Abraham's seed, Jesus Christ. (Genesis 12:1-3; Galatians 3:13-16)

Lesson: *The psalmist focused on the future Messianic blessings of Jerusalem when it will be exalted among the world's believing Gentile nations amid great honor and blessing for Israel as apparent encouragement amid trials to the contrary that God's people face in this current life.*

Application: *(1) May we focus on the blessings of the coming Messianic Kingdom of Christ and the eternal state for encouragement amid trials to the contrary in this life. (2) May we find our security in the God of Abraham Who has not forgotten His Abrahamic Covenant by which we and the world of believers will find eternal blessing.*