

May 10

Psalm 45, 47, 48 & 87

Hi everyone! I'm Lori Eccleston, Executive Assistant at Christ Community Church. Welcome to the May 10 accelerator for Project 4:4. Today we've read Psalm 45, 47, 48 and 87 and we're going to touch on the first three Psalms which we read.

Within the last year and a half, my husband and I have celebrated the weddings of both of our daughters. It has been a time of great celebration in our family. In fact, it was in this Chapel that my daughter Sara and her husband expressed their love and commitment to each other and to their Savior Jesus Christ. One of the Psalms we read today, Psalm 45, is a wedding song, and probably was composed for one of the many weddings of King Solomon, but its words clearly point beyond Solomon or any other earthly king. In the 6th and 7th verses, it is clearly the Messiah who is in view, and He is addressed as God, and His Kingdom declared to be one that will last forever and ever. His love of righteousness is given as the reason that God, His God, has set him above his companion kings.

A king above kings, whose throne will last forever, who can rightly be called God, and yet who serves God. The scholars and rabbis who wrote commentaries on Scripture called this a "Psalm of Messiah". It was originally written for the wedding of Solomon or some other ancient king, but it's talking about a more important wedding, the one described in Ephesians 5 and Revelation 19 - the wedding of Christ to His Church.

From Psalm 45 we learn of the justice and glory of Messiah's reign, which will last forever and ever. The marriage hymn is certainly suggestive of the New Testament passages which describe the relationship between Christ and the church as a marriage.

Psalm 47 is another processional Psalm clearly meant to be used at one of Israel's great feasts. Some commentaries think it was used originally in connection with the feast of tabernacles, but we know in later times it was part of the liturgy used in the synagogues on Rosh Hashanah as the worshippers climbed the steps to the temple, they sang that "God has ascended amid shouts of joy and is seated on His holy throne." The early Christians saw in it a prophetic reference to the ascension and enthronement of the Lord Jesus Christ "who ascended into heaven and is now seated at the right hand of God the Father."

There is a key statement in Psalm 48, verse 8. "As we have heard, so have we seen in the city of the Lord Almighty, in the city of our God: God makes her secure forever."

The lesson Israel had to learn, the lesson it took the exile to learn, was that she couldn't depend on any other nation, not Assyria, not Egypt, certainly not Babylon. But she could depend, if she would, upon God. He would protect her.

The security of the believer who wholly trusts in God is a major theme that binds these chapters together. Here it is in Psalm 49: "Why should I fear when evil days

come, when wicked deceivers surround me." In Psalm 50 God says, "I will deliver you and you will honor me." Friends, if our trust is in the Lord, He will be our fortress, our defender, our security. He is all we need.

Psalm 87 - the one that yielded the old hymn - is really a very startling one. First of all, I would classify it among the songs of thanksgiving for it celebrates the glories of Zion, the wonderful city of God; wonderful for one reason only - because the name and the favor of the Lord rest upon her.

What really makes this Psalm special though is the fact that the Psalmist clearly says that other nations - Gentile nations - are going to acknowledge the Lord and see themselves as integrally "connected " to Zion. Foreigners, heathens, and in particular, some that have been the historic enemies of Israel, are going somehow to begin to worship God and be "born in or into Zion". They too will become citizens of Zion.

I can't imagine what the Jews of Old Testament times must have thought about when they sang that Psalm! It would have blown them away. It would, unless they really thought about the promise of God made to Abraham that through him all the nations of the earth would be blessed.

Well that's all for today, I pray that the blessings of God will be poured out on you in the days to come!