

Meditations of Sion

***“Blessed is the man
whom thou
choosest, and
causest to
approach unto
thee, that he may
dwell in thy courts:
we shall be
satisfied with the
goodness of thy
house, even of thy
holy temple.”
—Psalm 65:4***

THE PSALMS HAS SOME-times been called the song-book of the church. Many of these, including Psalm 65, are dedicated to the “Chief Musician,” for him to set to music, whom we may identify today as our Lord Jesus, the Chief Musician of God’s spiritual temple. By his teachings and example, he has revealed the harmony of these exquisite melodies, these spiritual songs composed by David, the sweet singer of Israel, and others of his line.

The Psalms are peculiarly one of the devotional parts of the Word of God. They indicate the manner in which we may address God with suitable language, and in a proper attitude of reverence. In the Psalms, we have revealed all aspects of the many and various experiences of the Christian life, and appropriate language suggested for every occasion. The 65th Psalm presently under consideration

expresses some of the sentiments of the Lord's people living at the close of the Gospel Age. These, in particular, have been blessed by the great outpouring of truth during this Harvest period, and hence are able to contemplate the outworking of the various features of God's great plan of salvation.

In the first verse of this psalm, David declares, "Praise waiteth for thee, O God, in Sion." Sion is one of the names representatively given to the Gospel Age footstep followers of Christ. This class, with Jesus as their head, will compose the heavenly phase of the kingdom. Israel as a nation was, in some respects, typical of the Gospel Age "Sion" class, but there were no sons of God, and no spiritual Sion during the days of the psalmist. While this psalm reflects much that was true of David and of Israel, yet primarily in it the psalmist is speaking prophetically of the time when the Sion class of the present age would be brought into being, and would begin to praise God by showing forth the excellencies of the Heavenly Father's character and plan.—Ps. 139:14-16

SION BEGINS HER WORK

In its application to the followers of Christ, the prophecy of Psalm 65 began to be fulfilled at Pentecost. There this class began to be developed, and it was then that a kind of praise began to ascend to God such as had never been heard from the typical Sion, the house of servants. This is even more forcefully suggested by the *Marginal Translation* of verse one: "Praise is silent for thee, O God, in Sion."

"Unto thee shall the vow be performed," continues David. This speaks of the vow or covenant entered

into by all the Sion class. In another psalm, David outlines this vow, saying, “Gather my saints together unto me; those that have made a covenant with me by sacrifice.” (Ps. 50:5) This is the vow of full consecration entered into and faithfully performed by all who qualify as members of the Christ, the Sion class of the Gospel Age.

“O thou that hearest prayer, unto thee shall all flesh come,” continues the psalmist. (chap. 65:2) One of the things Jesus made plain to his disciples was that through him they were to have access to the Father in prayer. (John 14:13) We further learn that later, through the glorified Christ—the true temple of God—all flesh will approach God in prayer. That will be during the time of the kingdom, for Isaiah wrote, “Mine house shall be called an house of prayer for all people.”—Isa. 56:7

In the third verse of our lesson, the psalmist, speaking as if one of the spiritual Sion class, refers to the experiences of the consecrated in the narrow way, saying, “Iniquities prevail against me.” This reminds us of the words of our Master: “Men . . . shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake.” (Matt. 5:11) These statements point out the truth that God’s people often appear as evildoers in the eyes of the world. However, in due time their characters will be vindicated. Although they are not perfect according to the flesh, David says, continuing in verse three, “As for our transgressions, thou shalt purge them away [cover them].”

The elect quality of the spiritual Sion class is brought to our attention in the fourth verse. These words, quoted in the opening text of this article, show that it is indeed a great blessing to be chosen

of God. When we think of the numbers who have not been called to be of this special class, as well as the hosts who have lived and died in ignorance of the glad tidings of salvation, we realize that we have been greatly favored to receive the invitation to the High Calling of God in Christ Jesus.

Additionally, as we recall how much by nature we were in bondage to sin, and how earthly interests, temporal affairs, business, etc., held us in subjection, it is very apparent that the Lord has done much for us. He has helped to free us from the binding influences of these things, giving us, by his providences, the time and desire to investigate the truth. He has given us the grace to take the necessary steps of faith and obedience, that we may gain a relationship to him as spirit-begotten sons of God and dwell in his courts—the condition of full consecration to him.

David continues, in the words of our opening text, reminding us that this Sion class is satisfied with the goodness of God's house—his holy temple. In this harvest period of the Gospel Age, we have heard the Lord's knock, and have appreciated the proofs of his presence. We have opened the door of our heart for the Master to come in to sup with us, and are "satisfied" with these riches of his grace. Indeed, our heart's desire is to soon dwell with him in his "holy temple."

GOD'S PROVIDENCES AWE-INSPIRING

"By terrible things [by things to be revered] in righteousness wilt thou answer us, O God of our salvation." (vs. 5) The reference here seems to be the Lord's providences in connection with the affairs

of his people, and especially the manifestation of his power on their behalf in connection with the imminent establishment of the kingdom. "Who art the confidence of all the ends of the earth, and of them that [at the present time] are afar off upon the sea"—that is, separated from the lawless masses of mankind.

There is to be a great demonstration of divine power in the day of trouble just preceding the setting up of the kingdom, when the governmental powers of the Messianic Age will be firmly established. The discontent of the lawless elements of mankind will then be stilled, and the blessings of restitution will satisfy the fondest hopes of the people. "The desire of all nations shall come," says the prophet. (Hag. 2:7) Now, however, the "earnest expectation" of humanity must await the "manifestation of the sons of God." (Rom. 8:19) It is this that the psalmist speaks of in verses six and seven: "Which by his strength setteth fast the mountains; being girded with power: Which stilleth the noise of the seas, the noise of their waves, and the tumult of the people."

"Thou makest the outgoings of the morning and evening to rejoice." (vs. 8) The outgoings of the morning and evening seem to have reference to man's days as they succeed one another. Understood symbolically, the text refers to the Gospel day of salvation, being followed by the millennial day of Christ's kingdom. The realization that we are approaching the time of this great change of dispensation causes special rejoicing among the Lord's people. "Sion heard, and was glad; and the daughters of Judah rejoiced because of thy judgments, O LORD."—Ps. 97:8

THE DAY OF VISITATION

Verse nine reads: “Thou visitest the earth, and waterest it.” Various visitations of God are brought to our attention in the Scriptures. One such, for instance, was at the close of the Jewish Age, when he sent Jesus to Israel and to the world. The Scriptures tell us concerning this that Israel knew not “the time of [their] visitation.”—Luke 19:44

At the close of the Gospel Age comes another day of visitation. Here too, the great mass of nominal spiritual Israelites are similarly unprepared for Christ’s coming, and are unable to recognize the signs of his invisible presence. Ere long, however, with the setting up of the kingdom, will come the great day of visitation to the world in general, when the long-promised blessings of life will be made available to all the families of the earth.—Gen. 12:3; 28:14; Acts 3:20,21

The river of truth, spoken of in verse nine as the “river of God,” will be full to overflowing in that day. Nourishing and strengthening “corn,”—both natural and spiritual food—will be the portion of all mankind, and will be provided as man’s experiences make him ready to receive them. The *Revised Version* reads: “Thou providest them corn, when thou hast so prepared the earth.”

Verse ten suggests how the wisdom, power, and love of God, the great Husbandman, will operate during the Millennial day, to the end that humanity will bring forth much fruit, and by fully responding to the blessings of the kingdom, attain to the complete restoration of all that was lost in Adam. We quote: “Thou waterest her furrows abundantly [giving special help to the depressed, sin-degraded

portions of humanity]; thou settlest [levelest] the ridges thereof [those classes who in that day will think themselves a little better than their fellows, will need some leveling-down experiences]: thou makest it [the hard-heartedness of man] soft with showers [the showers of God's grace and goodness]; thou blessest the springing thereof [every effort put forth to develop proper character and obey the laws of the kingdom].”—RV

“Thou has crowned the year of Thy goodness.” (Ps. 65:11—*Youngs Literal Translation*) Just as the literal year is frequently crowned with an abundant harvest, so we have every reason to expect that the work of the thousand years of Christ's kingdom will be crowned with an abundant harvest. This harvest will be that of a restored paradise, and a race of perfect human beings to inhabit it—only the few incorrigibly wicked having to be destroyed in second death. The psalmist continues, saying, “Thy paths drop fatness”—that is to say, rich blessings come to those who walk in the paths of the Lord. “All the paths of the LORD are mercy and truth unto such as keep his covenant and his testimonies.”—Ps. 25:10

“They [the rich blessings of the Lord] drop upon the pastures of the wilderness [the pastures provided for the Lord's sheep in the former wilderness of sin and death]: and the little hills [even the small nations of earth] rejoice on every side.” (Ps. 65:12) This kingdom picture of blessing is enlarged upon as the psalmist continues (vs. 13): “The pastures are clothed with flocks [the whole earth will become a pasture for the willing and obedient of humanity]; the valleys also are covered over

with corn; they shout for joy, they also sing.” This is a beautiful picture of restored humanity, singing an eternal song of praise to God for all his loving-kindness. “Let every thing that hath breath praise the LORD.”—Ps. 150:6 ■