

PSALM 48

THE SONG OF ZION

This composition is a song of thanksgiving, almost like Psalm 47. Here the Psalmist praises Jehovah and magnifies and extols His works, because He had so marvelously defended the city of Jerusalem against her neighboring nations and their tyrant-kings. He had often delivered her when she was besieged by the most bitter and most powerful enemies; those enemies were driven back in a wonderful manner, and put to open shame. He had saved her from infinite perils and destructions, in defiance of the very gates of hell; He had preserved the city, the Temple, the Word, and the worship of God. But more especially, the Psalmist is here celebrating the truth of God; for He faithfully fulfills His promises! "According to thy name," says he, "so is thy glory, and so are thy works unto the ends of the earth." In other words: "According as You have promised us, 'I will be your God'; and according as we have believed that Word – so have You allowed us to experience the fulfillment of it. You have been with us, and delivered and defended us; our city and our Temple stand in the midst of enemies, as if in the midst of flames – preserved and unhurt!" As we sing this Psalm, let us rejoice that the Lord is pleased to preserve His children and His Gospel against the roaring and hatred of the kings and rulers of this world – for although they do not cease from attacking them by violence and craft, with all their might; yet they shall perish and be covered with shame, while the Gospel and its followers remain unhurt and unhindered. It is very proper and fitting, then, for the citizens of the spiritual Jerusalem to praise the name of their God. Happy is the kingdom, the city, the family, and the heart in which God is great; and in which, He is All in all!

Nothing in nature can better represent the overthrow of heathenism by the Spirit of the Gospel, than the wreck of a fleet of ships in a storm (verse 7). And in light of these wonderful works of God, His people are to praise Him for His glorious and gracious appearances for them (verses 8-14). Let our faith in the Word of God be hereby confirmed! Let our hope of the stability of the

Overview of the Psalm, adapted from Charles Spurgeon:

It would be idle dogmatically to attribute this song to any particular event of Jewish history. Its author and date are unknown. It records the withdrawal of certain confederate kings from Jerusalem – their courage failing them before even striking a blow. The mention of the ships of Tarshish may allow us to conjecture that the Psalm was written in connection with the overthrow of Ammon, Moab, and Edom in the reign of King Jehoshaphat; and if the reader will turn to 2 Chronicles 20 – and note especially verses 19, 25, and 36 – he will probably accept the suggestion.

Verses 1-3 are in honor of the Lord and the city dedicated to His worship. From verses 4-8, the song records the confusion of Zion's foes – ascribing all the praise to God. Verses 9-11 extol Zion and avow Jehovah to be her God forevermore!



Church be encouraged. Let our minds be filled with good thoughts of the Lord. All the streams of mercy that flow down to us must be traced to the fountain of His loving-kindness (verse 9). Let us give God the glory of the great things He has done for us. Let us observe the beauty, strength, and safety of all His sons and daughters. Let all the members of the Church take comfort from what the Lord does for her. Consider her strength! See her founded upon Christ the Rock, fortified by Divine power, and guarded

by Him Who neither slumbers nor sleeps. See how His precious ordinances are her palaces, and His precious promises are her bulwarks. Let us be encouraged thereby, and tell the good news to others. This God, Who has done such great things for us, is unchangeable in His love and care for us. He will lead us and keep us, even to the last. He will guide us and set us above the reach of death, so that it shall not do us any real hurt; and He will lead us to a life in which there shall be no more death!

Lord Jesus, we praise You as the glorious King in Zion! We thank You for being the Glory, Guide, Protector, and Salvation of all Your redeemed sons and daughters. We pray for grace to enjoy the privileges of the citizens of Zion, and to bow our knees, our hearts, and our whole souls in dutiful obedience, love, and affection for You, O King! Amen.