

# Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound (Quality: Average)

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Preacher: Rowell, F Leslie (1902-1973)

[ 0 : 00 ] Now as the Lord should enable me, I would ask your attention to the 89th Psalm. And as a basis of some meditation this evening, if the Lord should help me, I would read verses 15 and 16.

Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound. They shall walk, O Lord, in the light of thy countenance. In thy name shall they rejoice all the day, and in thy righteousness shall they be exalted.

I read to you a chapter in the book of the Leviticus that perhaps to some here might seem to have no or very little connection with the words of the text.

Certainly upon the surface of the narrative, it does seem to be so. But perhaps some of you did notice as I was reading the chapter through, that God in giving instruction with regard to the religious worship of his people, the Hebrews, whilst they were in the desert, an ordinance that of course continued after they reached Canaan, and for many years prevailed not only in the temple, but also in the tabernacle, not only in the tabernacle, but also in the temple observances, the Lord did speak about a certain staff.

He told the Jews that at certain times, in what he spoke of as their holy convocations, I presume that word really means simply a gathering of the people for a specific purpose.

[ 1 : 42 ] It isn't used much, of course, in general conversation today, but if you were to go to our universities, you would know, my friends, that there were certain times in the year when the university would meet in convocation, and certain matters dealing with university affairs would have to be dealt with in that convocation.

For now the Lord commanded that there should be a gathering of his covenant people at certain periods of the year, and at those holy convocations certain matters should be attended too.

Now in that chapter also, there is reference to the seventh month. This was a month of great importance to the Hebrews. The word seventh, of course, is very significant.

It does seem, my friends, to speak of me in wonderful terms of grace. I think we can say this, that the number three is generally significant of deity.

There are three persons in the glorious trinity. And four is generally significant of humanity. And let those two be joined together. Then we see, friends, that in our dear Emmanuel, the number seven has a great significance.

[ 2 : 58 ] It was seven days that passed by in the great works of creation, and then on the seventh day, the Lord rested from all his works. He was the one, my friends, who commanded that there should be the first holy convocation of all, and the Sabbath should be observed.

But also you will find in the history of the law as given through Moses by God to his people Israel, that this same rule is there maintained.

Now not only from the seventh day, throughout the years of Israel's history, and throughout the years of the history of the true Church of Christ, the seventh day has always been significant.

But also, friends, there was the seventh month as well, in which the most remarkable things took place. Now I don't want to spend a lot of time this evening going into details here, but on two or three occasions, three occasions I believe you would find, in reading the 23rd and the 25th chapters of the Leviticus, you will find that there is the sounding of certain trumpets in that seventh month.

On the first day of the month, the commencement of all these things that the Lord ordained for the seventh month of the year, the trumpets were to be sound. What was the purpose of it?

[ 4 : 19 ] Well, my friends, it was a purpose whereby the people should hear God's will, and they should know his word. And there, obedient to it, where obedient ones were found, they gathered together and assembled themselves for the sacrifices of the Lord.

They gathered together as holy convocations. They met together in the fear of God, in obedience to him, to offer sacrifices, both of confession, of sin, of atonement, and also sacrifices of praise to the glory of their God.

And so on the first day, the trumpets were sounding. Let me assure you of this, my friends, that if you have ever known the beginning of days, well then, that day will ever be associated with the sound of a far more glorious trumpet than the one that blew up at the first day of the seventh month.

There is a trumpet that God has ordered to be sounded. I know that it is sounded by human lips, and therefore the sounding of it must in necessity be the sounding of imperfection.

But although so imperfect at the lips of men is the sounding of the gospel trumpet, the proclamation of the glad tidings of the grace of God through Jesus Christ to sinners who are held deserving and held bound.

[ 5 : 44 ] Nevertheless, my friends, although the proclamation is imperfect, nevertheless the word that is proclaimed is the perfect word of God. And therefore, right at the beginning of the year of release, the month of release, at the beginning of the great day of atonement, before anything takes place whereby mercy can be made to sinners, there is a sounding thought of the glorious word of God.

My friends, what do we know about this? We have been singing in our last hymn some very strange and yet some very, very true things. We have been singing about a divine thought.

The effect of the word of God when it comes with divine power and purpose into a sinner's heart. That effect whereby, although they have been determined to refuse and reject everything that the word of God commands, every command that the Lord has laid upon his creatures, determined to go on in their ways of sin and rebellion, yet the word of God reaches forth to them and lays divine arrest upon their spirit so that, my dear friends, they know the power of the quickening word of God.

May I ask you whether you have known something you live? Be sure of this, my friends. What dear John Kent wrote in that hymn is not inconsistent with the teaching of the word of God.

The Lord Jesus Christ, on one occasion, received a strange visitor and a strange hour. He was a man who knew so much. He was the most accomplished religious lawyer of his day and he came by life to Jesus Christ.

[ 7 : 27 ] And when he gave, of course, my friends, he gave Christ the usual courtesy of the age. We know that thou art a great man and thou hast a great mission and so on.

We could interpret it like that, you see. And the Lord just puts it all aside. Puts it all aside. It is almost as though the Lord says, and I feel, my friends, something in my heart about this.

Don't let's deal with triviality. We've got souls that will live to all eternity. There is heaven and heaven at the end of the journey. Don't let's deal with triviality.

He comes right to the point of the whole matter. And friends, he said to that man that night, and he still speaks to us through his word, some of us, and me, has he ever spoken to you and said, ye must be born again.

Oh, don't forget the importance of the application of the word ye, you see. It is you and me, my friends, you see. Not only the man who came by night and knocked at the door, no, he spoke to him, but he still speaks through his word and he said, ye must be born again.

[ 8 : 36 ] You say, well, what can I do about it? My dear friends, are you anxious about it? That's the thing. Are you really concerned about it? Is the matter of any real moment for your soul?

Does it cause you some concern tonight as to whether you know anything at all about the new birth? Is it like the apostle says concerning the effect of the new birth that old things have passed away and old things have become new?

Do you know yourself as you never knew yourself before? Do you know something of the holiness and authority of God as you never knew it before? Do you know the word of the living God and his power and in your soul as you never knew it before?

And do you know the value of Jesus Christ that you never knew it before? All things have passed away and all things have become new. And yes, as time goes on, you'll find the wonderful newness of these things.

You will indeed. Some people have said, well, I should have thought that after you've been learning about Jesus Christ for 40 or 50 years, Mr. Ralph, and I hope it's quite that length of time, that you'll get a bit tired if you know you're over and over the same thing again.

[ 9 : 41 ] Ah! My dear friends, if you're learning a human science, you can do that. You can go over the same things again. And some person may say sometimes, well, I've got the limit of my knowledge and I shan't be able to get any more.

Nobody else can teach me anything. Ah! But it's not like that with God. And I, friends, if the Lord takes you into his own school, replaces you under his own blessed tuition, you'll never find there's anything vainly what he teaches you.

You'll never, my friends, go to him and say, I'm tired of being taught like this. The devil will tempt you to think like that. But the, my friends, not the quickenest of them.

Now all things have passed goodbye and all things have become new. And they're still passing away. The old things, the things that you didn't discover of rebellion and sin within your heart and nature in those early days, they're still being manifested to you.

And what adversity, friends, to find an increasing loathing against them in the heart and all things have become new. Some fresh discovery of Christ, something you haven't seen of him in his mercy and love and wisdom and sovereignty in past days.

[ 10 : 52 ] The mystery of the pathway that you have to dread gradually unfolding before your view. Still some very dark things that you don't understand, but all, friends, the willingness of the heart to accord with that word.

He's too wise to earn and too good to be unkind. All things are passing away and all things are becoming new. And of course, friends, when it comes to the place that our dear friend, this is out of the region, you know, the old things are passing away.

They are. They are passing away. The wonderful thing at the end to have the Lord so present with the soul, so manifest to the heart of a poor sinner, friends, that there they could look upon him that they are pierced and whilst they mourn deeply because it was their sin that inflicted those wounds upon Christ, nevertheless, they can rejoice in the hope of the glory of God that's been granted to them.

well, there, of course, is the holy convocation, the sounding of the trumpet, the word is heard, the quickening power is known.

But then, the word goes on in the book of the Leviticus to speak about the tenth day. It's a very important day, friends, it's the tenth day of the seventh month.

[ 12 : 13 ] When you get home, you read all over the day and see the importance of that day. On that day, there is to be a holy convocation and there are two things that are to be observed on that day.

I'm not suggesting, friends, that there is any Jew that could ever do it without the aid of God and yet it was a command to them. Don't forget that. There may be things that you and I can never do without the aid of God and yet they are the command of the Lord.

What a mercy they are. You say, well, if I can't comply with the commands of God, what is the use of issuing the command? With the word of a king there is power. Yours is the helplessness.

But, my friends, what about divine aid and grace and strength? Don't think that a false sinner is helpless before the command of God if the purpose of the Lord is bound up with the command to your soul.

My word shall not return to be void, but it shall accomplish the thing where to I am pleased to send it. Oh, don't forget the commands of God's law and the commands of God's love are not ineffective because of the helplessness of man.

[ 13 : 23 ] Nay, my friends, they're not. Nay, the word of the holy law of God can convince of sin. The utmost rebel that is there prevailed or thought he has prevailed against God and his work and also, friends, the commands of love.

Oh, how effective they can become in the heart of the causes. Well, here, the trumpet is to sail on the tent done. And what is to be done?

The people are, first of all, to afflict their souls and then they are to rest. Two things, of course, seem to be absolutely contradictory, don't they?

For a person to afflict their soul and then to find rest. But there's one thing, correct, that intervenes and that is the atonement. You say, what is the atonement?

Well, by the view, of course, my friends, it was the taking of a lamb to a sacrifice and the killing of the sacrifice and the catching of the blood and the sprinkling of the blood.

[ 14 : 25 ] It was the die of the atonement. And, of course, in between, there is the atonement. Now, what is this affliction of soul? You say, well, I expect, really, what happened to the Jews was that they fasted that day?

They didn't have any food. Well, of course, that may have been the outward symbolism of it. But, my friend, the affliction of soul is more than, you know, going without food on the pride.

You're making up your mind on Shrove Tuesday to have a real good feed so that for 40 days you'll be able to fast a little bit and keep off certain kinds of food.

That is the affliction of soul, my friends. First, if you go without meat on Friday and eat some fish, but they're not afflicting their soul, a person can come to chapel on the right day and bow before God and even eat some crocodile tears, but they don't afflict their soul.

No. And I'll tell you, my friends, the person who knows some affliction of soul, the person who is convicted within their soul of their sinfulness, of their rebellion against God, of their dreadful strength as a sinner in the sight of the Most High, God.

[ 15 : 34 ] And there, my friends, they know a broken and a contrite heart before their God. And there is deep reflection as well. And that is, when the eye is open to see the only hope of their salvation, through the bleeding Son of God, the one who has loved as never man loved and gave himself instead of his people an offering for their sin.

all friends. I only quote it to those near old folk around the home this evening in that word, where the prophet of old says, they shall weep for him, the one, as a man weepeth for his only son.

I'll see a bit of that in one time. Remember, my friends, a tear dropping out of the eye of a dear man that you and I knew well who used to work when he spoke about the death of his own son during the last war.

How he went out one night and upon the unomany never came home again and they never heard any more about it. A man weeping for his only son. And here is a more intense weeping.

My dear friend, our sons are precious to us. Their presence is our joy, their absence is our sorrow. But what is Christ to us? What is Christ to us?

[ 16 : 56 ] Here David, as he's weeping over his own son, O Absalom, Absalom, would that I have died for thee, O Absalom? You see, but oh, my friends, David knew what it was to weep more bitterly than that as he wept over his sin and he wept concerning that hope of mercy through Jesus Christ.

I, Abraham says, the dear Lord, he rejoiced to see my day, he rejoiced that he was glad. Yes, but don't forget, before you come to the gladness, you come to the affliction of soul.

And there, the one who is afflicted of soul is led to what? The atonement. Oh, that's where the purpose of it is. So the dear apostle is speaking about the holy law of God.

You know, the very thing we were reading this evening in the book of Leviticus, that's the setting forth of the law of God. But of course, it's more than that. It speaks of all those moral commands.

And what does he say about the law? He says, the law is a schoolmaster to bring me to Christ. And that's what God uses his law for his word.

[ 18 : 19 ] All those convicting things that make me know the kind of sinner and rebel that I am. It's the law that is the schoolmaster. He will condemn many.

They have never looked to Christ and seen any hope in him. Nothing desirable about him. But my dear friends, to those who have been brought by the Spirit to look away from themselves and all that they are and what they can do for their salvation, all their self-righteousness, their Phariseism, and their pride, looking right away from the door and counting these things but as building rags in the sight of God and looking unto Jesus.

Ah, looking unto Jesus. The law then becomes a schoolmaster to bring you to Christ. My friends, it's a wonderful thing to come to Christ.

But it's a wonderful thing to know that you've been brought to Christ. Look at that. Oh, it's a wonderful thing to say. There are many persons in this country today, I haven't any doubt, that will say, well, I did come to Christ.

I made up my mind to go to him. Well, friends, I hope you know something beyond that. If not, the mind you've made up yesterday may be altered tomorrow. But if the Spirit of the living God has brought you to Christ, my friend, that's unchangeable.

[ 19 : 42 ] That's unchangeable. I speak it with all offense, your friends. I do indeed. I want you to know and I want to know more abundantly the work of the Holy Ghost within my soul.

I've often quoted that passage of the word to you. He that can't be done a good work in you will perform me down to the dying of Jesus Christ. Right.

And so, friends, on the tenth day they come not only to affliction of soul but also to a place of sacrifice. And now, says Moses, as he's instructed the people of Israel, you can now rest.

You can now rest. No, sir, the hard work that die. You can now rest. Now, keep on resting. Keep on resting. Everything is put right. There's no barrier in the line.

All the fences are down. You see, that's what it really means, my friends. All they're all down. All men. The atonement has been made. Listen to those words that we were singing round at the homes tonight.

[ 20 : 45 ] It is finished. It is finished. Oh, yes, a finished one. Fagus tells us, of course, my friends, that we must add a lot to it.

We must take this pilgrimage and make this confession and perform this penance. And so we must go on. You see, adding to this sacrifice of Christ, the existence of the bar of hands and the cross.

Who will you hear? Christ? Or some human mediator appointed by man and not by God? If you listen to the one who says, it is finished and hope in him alone.

Or will you, my friends, try to mix up in his perfect work, the polluted work of your own hands or of your own heart? Oh, friends, I would, that you might not remain in bondage and that you might not come again into bondage.

The Galatians were doing this. The apostle writes to them in haste and in love and devotion to their soul. He says, I must write to you. I'm anxious for you. You did run well in ways of liberty and freedom in approach to God through Jesus Christ.

[ 21 : 52 ] But now, oh, you did run. Well, but what does hinder you? Ah, my friends, he knew what was hindering. They were turning back to the old things of working out of their own salvation by their own efforts and adding of something to Christ.

Oh, say these Jewish people, we won't hesitate, we won't hinder you from speaking about Jesus Christ, but, you know, you ought to have all your babies circumcised first and you really ought to keep all the feasts and all the ordinances and all the holy convocations.

Now, says the apostle, they've all been fulfilled in Christ. He's the fulfillment of the Lord for his people's sake and now, there's no barrier in the way. Let them draw near to him and go just as they are and plead for his mercy.

Oh, that's it. Oh, the wonder of this, they can rest now, they can rest now. You say, I come, I haven't got any rest and I think that everything is full of trouble and distress and I'm completely uneasy and I don't feel as though I've got any rest in place at all.

Well, friends, don't forget what I said precedes it, you know. Don't forget. There's a blowing of a trumpet and there's an afflicting of the soul and there is a sacrifice that has been made.

[ 23 : 15 ] Of course, the third thing is the only important thing. The blowing of the trumpet heralds the sacrifice that shall be made. The affliction of the soul is a herald of the great sympathy that shall be found in Jesus Christ.

But here's the great thing, Christ has been lifted up upon the accursed tree. Christ has died for sinners and for sins not his own but the sins of his people and he's put them away by the offering of himself.

Ah, friends, there's a secret of rest. Go to him, poor trouble, distract himself. Tell the Lord just what is in your heart.

How you can find no rest or peace at all or your coming and going to chapel doesn't suffice it. And, oh, friends, what does the Lord say? Because there, these poor sinners have to go to him in this state.

He says, come unto me. No barrier in the wine. No barrier in the wine. When I finish my work, I took the barriers out of the way.

[ 24 : 18 ] There may be a thousand in yourself and the devil would place another thousand in your wine and you may think that there insurmountable barriers but there is no barrier in the way that I have placed in the way.

I've taken them all out of the way. Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn of me for I am meek and lonely apart.

Oh, not a harsh master that requires you to do this and do that in order that I may receive you. If you tarry till you're better, you'll never come at all, says one about him, right?

I am meek and lowly apart and ye shall find rest for your souls for my yoke is easy and my burden is light. My friends, I'm not going to say that the way to Christ is an easy one and I'm not going to say that you won't have to go there with troubles and heavy burdens and I'm not going to say that you won't find a thousand hindrances in the way that you go but I tell you, my friends, that the barriers have been taken away by Jesus Christ and what you and I need, my friends, is the Spirit of the Lord to come upon us and reveal these things of Jesus to our soul and fill our hearts with love and faith and then, then we shall know that the barriers are down and then we shall know that there is freedom for sinners to approach unto the mercy seat just as they are without one thing outside of Jesus Christ but that isn't the end.

Forty-nine years go by and every year, friends, there's been this holy convocation in the seventh month. Blessed are the people that know the biblical self.

[ 26 : 15 ] Ah, they've known him, friends, for forty-nine years according to the record of the year and then there's another year that comes. The trumpets have got to blow again and of course it's going to happen on the tenth day.

It's all associated with the atonement. You can't have freedom, you can't have rest, you can't have liberty, sinner, outside of the blood of Jesus Christ.

It's only by his sacrifice that peace can be provided for you and there, friends, upon that year, the fiftieth year, the people gathered together on the seventh month.

the year of jubilee has come. Man has been in debt and, well, it's all ending. Man has mortgaged his land and it's all ending.

Man has been so poor that he's had to sell himself and his children into almost perpetual servitude and he's free. He's free. Man has got a bit of field down there that he harvested until he got so poor that he couldn't do it any longer and he hadn't got any more seed to put in it and so he had to sell it for somebody else and go and work for somebody else and now, friends, he's free.

[ 27 : 33 ] It's the year of jubilee. It's the year of jubilee. Blessed are the people that know the joyful sound. Liberty, freedom, that's it, liberty, freedom.

I don't know how old Mrs. Elfrey is, but you know, it certainly seems to me, my friends, that soon she's going to know the spiritual significance.

Says the Apostle Paul, as though he's speaking about the 49 years and each year in the seventh month, friends, he's afflicted his soul and there he's come to the atonement and he's resting.

Oh, he's known the experience of that through symbolically the 49 years. But now, friends, the year of puberty come. And all that of which those other things did speak is fulfilled in this blessed thing.

To be with Christ, which is far better. He's your freedom. He's your peace. Oh, he is my friend. He is the atonement of the soul.

[ 28 : 37 ] He is the one that a false sinner has borne over because they have seen their sins laid to his charge and the deep sufferings they have paid into his person. And now, I ought to be with Christ.

I love those words. You know, I often quote them. Then shall I see this face, blessed thee, and never, never see. No more occasion for sorrow.

And never, never see. And from the rivers of his place, could end those blessings. And all I know, our words and the words of Adam writers, could only poorly express the blessedness of this condition.

But my friend, it's a glorious prospect, a glorious prospect. Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound. Oh, they're really happy people.

They've got the secret of happiness. You may say to me, ah, it's all very well for you to talk like this, just because you've been and seen Mrs. Eldridge on her dying level. It may be that, of course.

[ 29 : 44 ] And you find her so changed and altered. You can talk like this about it now, but what about all those months before, and those years before, when the poor soul was in such distress and spirit, and such darkness and fear, and everything seemed to be wrong, and nothing seemed to be right.

What about all those years after it, but there's just one thing that had happened to Mrs. Eldridge, and that was years ago. Her ear was attuned to the joyful sound.

That's what it was. And nothing else but that sound could satisfy her. And if she didn't hear that sound, and it didn't come with power into her soul, and there wasn't the application of the truth concerning Jesus Christ to her poor troubled Then she was in distress and darkness, but directly it does come.

Then it does come. Well, of course, she is in the position of the word of our text when it says, Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound. They shall walk, O Lord, in the light of thy count.

I'll tell you where they may be. They may have been in prison for a long time, but the Lord says, they shall. They shall walk, O Lord, in the light of thy count. Tell you something else they may be.

[ 31 : 01 ] They may have been held captive by giant despair, like John Bunyan describes those two who got there. The friends, the word is still true. They shall walk, O Lord, in the light of thy count.

You can go on and specify all the various things and experiences through which these people have to pass. The friends, their ear has been a tune in the joyful sound.

They know it. They know it. It's not something that heard from a distance. It isn't the tinkling sounds and bells or something that have been run by human hands. It isn't just simply the coming and going into a chapel or a church.

They know the blessedness of the word of the everlasting gospel. It's suitable to them. It's their need. They cry for it. They seek the Lord's blessing in them.

The last friends are they can walk in the light of his covenant. Blessed is the people. They're not all sorts of people but they are a people.

[ 32 : 06 ] That's it. They are not divided all over the place by this thing and the other thing and this dogma and the other dogma. That isn't it. My dear friend, let me assure you this.

Whilst I haven't got any room at all for present-day ecumenicalism because it's just simply an attempt to unite that which will never be truly united, nevertheless, I do know this thing.



The people of the living God, these blessed people are united in one in Jesus Christ. Blessed is the people, not our is, it's that one, one in Christ.

Blessed is the people that know the joy he's had. If you want to know the true humanity, my friends, you'll find always in Christ. I hope you'll find it between one another in him.

I hope your love to him and your need of him and his suitability to your need will be the secret of your union one to another. Nothing less than this will really suffice.

[ 33 : 08 ] A lot of people, my friends, can be united over a tea date. As long as they go to an anniversary and drink a cup of tea together, they call it fellowship. People, I want to be, you know, just comical, I'm not, friends.

but it just simply shows you where religion has gone to today. It shows you the debasing of the term that we use in the word of God today. True fellowship is something more than that, it's union in Christ to one another.

That's a spiritual union, spiritual. A mourning with those that mourn, a rejoicing with those that do rejoice. Blessed, blessed is the people that know the joyful sound.

They shall walk, O Lord, in the light of thy camp. I don't know what you think about God's shells or his wills, but this I do know, friends, there will never be over.

God will never say, I made a mistake when I said shell then. He'll never allow any power of man or the devil to overthrow his shells and wills.

[ 34 : 17 ] Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound. They shall walk, O Lord, in the light of I. I don't know whether some of you have discovered some nice places to have a walk.

You get a little bit of liberty, of course, you don't go walking around the slums of Leicester that have all been knocked out and there seems to rubble, there isn't much to look at today. You don't take the walks there.

But you go out in the country and find a place you know where the trees are budding out and the flowers are coming out and so on. You think that's a delightful walk. Let me assure you of this, my friend, you haven't tasted what real joy is yet, but that's all you know.

they shall walk, they shall walk, O Lord, in the light of thy countenance. Go a little further. You may in your walking, my friends, have had a dear friend with you.

You may really have enjoyed your conversation with that friend. It's a wonderful thing to have a good friend by your side, a person you can trust. Give God thanks for that if you've got one.

[ 35 : 27 ] But my dear friends, it isn't to be compare with this. They shall walk, O Lord, in the light of thy countenance. Another thought that comes to my mind, friends, it's a simple one, but you'll understand what I mean.

They don't want to scamper through it. The walk can't be too long if they're walking together in the light of the Lord's countenance. Some people, of course, they're glad to get the walk over.

If you're getting old, my friends, you don't want to walk quite the way so long as it used to be. But in spiritual matters, don't forget what the word says, though the outward man decays and yet walks have to be shorter, the inward man is renewed day by day.

You won't scamper through the walk, no, but they shall walk and continue to walk and enjoy the walking and rejoice in the walking as they walk in the light of the Lord's countenance.

The Lord add his blessing. Amen. And Thank you.

[ 36 : 58 ] Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. May grace of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship and communion of the Holy Spirit, rest upon and abide with us now and evermore. Amen.