

Psalm

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Date: 17 August 1975

Preacher: Crowter, David (1931-2000)

- [0 : 00] I will venture to speak from the word found in Psalm 122, in verse 8.
- The 122nd Psalm, the 8th verse.
- For my brethren and companions' sakes, I will now say, Peace be within thee.
- There was no city in the whole earth for the Jews to be compared with the city of Jerusalem.
- How those who understood by the teaching of the Spirit, those things that were set forth at Jerusalem, or how they delighted in this city.
- [1 : 18] In David, we read of how he rejoiced. In one of these psalms it speaks of his great concern before Jerusalem.
- How he says, he would not, he says, I will not give sleep to mine eyes or slumber to mine eyelids until I find out a place for the Lord and habitation for the mighty God of Jacob.
- How he loved this place. And to see Daniel in Babylon, hundreds of miles away from the city of Jerusalem, in that place of such worldly splendour, opening his windows three times a day toward Jerusalem and praying before her peace and prosperity.
- You see, Nehemiah, morning, night and day for four months because of what he had heard, that the walls of Jerusalem were yet broken down and the inhabitants in great distress.
- How these godly men loved this place, this city. There was none other like it. And let us go further.
- [2 : 52] See the Saviour himself, as he looked down upon that city, how he wept over it.
- He said, O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, that Achilles the prophets and stonest those that come unto thee.
- How often would I have gathered thy children together, as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not?
- O if thou hadst but known in this thy day that these things are hid from thy eyes. What was so special about Jerusalem?
- There were several things we might look upon. And first, the Lord himself had chosen this city. As David says in one of these psalms, the Lord hath chosen Zion, which was a part of the city.
- [4 : 03] He hath desired it. Of all these cities of the earth, the Lord hath chosen this one. Not the great cities that were so renowned amongst men, but this particular place.
- It was God's own choice. From all the towns and cities of the earth, he had said, I have put my name there.
- He had said, in effect now, this city is mine. I've chosen it from all those of the earth to be my own. And then also, there was the worship of God, which was established there.
- As we know, the children of Israel, three times a year, made their journey up to the house of God.

and sang such psalms as these, the songs of degrees, as they went up to the city. The worship of God was centered here.

[5 : 17] Every sacrifice was so expressive of the one sacrifice to be offered for sins forever in this very city by the Saviour himself.

Every sacrifice must be offered there. And there they sang together the songs of Zion, these psalms, how they delighted to sing the praises of God.

Those who were concerned in these things, no doubt, some of their joy was not of a spiritual nature, but there were those who did have a holy delight in the worship of God, which he himself had appointed and established at Jerusalem.

And also, the Jews delighted in this city because the Christ, the Messiah, who was to come, was here set forth in his glory and beauty.

There at Jerusalem, as they went up to the city, they might hope and expect to learn more of him because everything in that temple spoke vividly of what he was to accomplish.

[6 : 53] There were those sacrifices continually offered. Lambs without blemish were offered upon the altar.

then they might learn more as they saw the high priest in his garments of beauty and purity, so expressive of the mediator who was to come and his spiritual glory.

And there in the temple was the bread of the presence. And so speaking of that one who was to say, I am the bread of life, he that cometh to me shall never hunger, and he that believeth on me shall never thirst.

there was the gold candlestick constantly shedding forth its light. As he himself was to say later, I am the light of the world.

He that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life. There was the veil expressing his perfect humanity that was to be rent in death.

[8 : 25] There was the holy ark of the covenant with the tables of the law, the speaking of the Lord Jesus Christ, the ark of salvation, the only hope and resting place of his people.

Everything here has spoke in a vivid terms, in a vivid way, impressing their hearts with the truth that God had set forth at Jerusalem.

And indeed, there also God himself dwells in that holy of holies that only the high priest might enter and he only once a year, not without blood, with that cloud of incense from his censer.

In that holiest place there was a cloud overshadowing the mercy seat. God himself was there in that sacred, that glorious cloud, the bright cloud of his presence.

He had said here, will I dwell? This is my rest, for I have desired it. God was in this city in a special way, in a way of grace.

[10 : 01] That cloud over the mercy seat. Now, surely it is no wonder for those who had their hearts directed to these things in faith and love, however dimly they might realise the meaning of them, surely it is no wonder that they love this place.

God had put his name here, he had revealed his grace, he himself dwelt in this temple. But it is not upon my mind to say very much concerning the Jews themselves, although it is very interesting and instructive and important to follow their history even to this day.

These things had a significance for us to follow in the gospel dispensation because that church of Jerusalem, that temple there, was typical of the house of God today.

There God had appointed that his house should be built by Solomon in that glorious way. in which it was accomplished.

But as the hymn expresses it, although the Jews went up three times a year to worship, we have no such lengths to go, nor wander far abroad.

[11 : 50] And wherever thy people meet today, there is a house for God. God. There is a place for worship.

There are these chapels and churches in the lands which are established for the worship of God. It is no longer centralised of Jerusalem.

them. In this gospel day there are so many places where God is worshipped, where his special presence is known and promised, where we may hope and look and seek to learn more of the Lord Jesus Christ in his glory and suitability and sufficiency for the poor dying sinners.

What is your reaction dear friends to these things? There is a house for God. we have met in the house of God.

How beautiful these words are. I was glad when they said unto me, let us go into the house of the Lord.

[13 : 25] May I ask you each dear friends, are you glad to be here? Does it make your heart glad to think of the worship of God and to gather in such a place as this, for this purpose, to give thanks unto the name of the Lord, and in that earnest hope of learning more in a spiritual way of the Lord Jesus Christ?

Are you glad? I must say that I am glad to be here. I am very glad to go to the house of God.

Perhaps you might say, well, I thought the minister ought to be burdened. well, he is. There is that heavy weight of exercise and responsibility that only the Lord's servants really appreciate.

There is that. But at the same time, there is this gladness. You may be reverent and sober and serious.

You may have a heavy load and yet be very glad to come up to the house of God. How sweet these words have been to me and how wonderful it is that just a few words of Scripture have such a sweetness in them.

[15 : 05] The psalmist says, I was glad. well, might we be glad. May I say, God forbid, that any who should come into the services of such a house of God, should not realize this, should think that we are miserable, as much indeed, that we have to mourn over.

But there is also this gladness in the hearts of those who fear God as they enter the house of God.

Can you say, I love the place, O Lord, wherein thy honour dwells, the joy of thy abode, all earthly joy, excels.

I was glad when they said unto me, let us go into the house of the Lord. The psalmist says, there are many that say, who shall show us any good?

There are many who find not much good or satisfaction in anything because they are seeing it in the wrong places. He says, Lord, lift thou up the light of thy countenance upon us.

[16 : 37] Thou hast put gladness in our hearts, more than when their wine and oil is increased. The people of this present world, those who have their portion in this life, are still glad about some things.

you can see that they are very excited and very pleased about certain things. But should not the children of God be far more glad when they meet together before worship?

As you sang that hymn at the beginning, as we sang together, Jesus is Zion's only rest. How happy.

is the man blessed who into him believes. Price, happy man. These are tidings, glad tidings of great joy for the people of God, for those who feel in their need of the Saviour and who long to hear more of him.

the Lord ground that his word this day may bring gladness to our hearts.

[18 : 02] For my brethren and companions' sakes, I will now say, peace be within thee. Is this your desire toward the house of God?

Do you desire that there may ever be peace within the walls of the sanctuary and peace in all the church of God?

As these godly men and women and children went up to the house of God of Jerusalem, this was their great desire, that there should be peace.

peace in the house of God and in the city of God. But then also, this city of Jerusalem has a more spiritual significance and meaning yet.

Jerusalem signifies in this gospel day, especially it signifies the whole church of God, that is, all true believers in the Lord Jesus Christ, all who are brought into his one great spiritual church, into the fellowship of Jesus Christ, as, according to that most expressive word that we read, but now in Christ Jesus, in him, you who once were, who sometime were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ.

[19 : 48] You've been brought, the apostle says, into this great city. You've been brought in and are being built up as stones in this spiritual temple.

and so the apostle writing to the Hebrews says to them, he says, you're not coming to Mount Zion where the law was pronounced in the such fearful ways, that way which inspired such awe into the hearts of those who heard and saw the signs of the living God.

You're not coming to Mount Sinai, you are coming to Mount Zion to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem.

He says, you're now come here, you've been brought into the heavenly Jerusalem, into the church of God. He has gathered you into this one great fellowship, brought you to be living members of the mystical body of Christ.

So John, the apostle John, saw that great city, he saw the holy city, Jerusalem, new Jerusalem descending out of heaven, having the glory of God.

[21 : 25] This is the church of God, the great company of all those who have been brought to a living faith in Jesus Christ.

Now is it your concern and regard for such? Do you say, peace be within thee? Well, there are those things, peace.

Sadly, there are many that do disturb this peace. It is not always so in the church of God, is it?

Jerusalem is built as a city that is compact together. often there are divisions and stripes, the most distressing disturbances in the church of God, which are so much, so greatly dishonouring to him.

Do you say, peace be within thee? Do you pray for the peace of Jerusalem? Well, then as we consider the word itself, there are really three parts to this subject.

[22 : 47] And taking them in the reverse order, there is the psalmist's fervent desire for Jerusalem, for the city itself, for the house of God, and for the whole church of Jesus Christ.

Peace be within thee was his desire. And then there is the open declaration that he made.

He says, I will now say peace be within thee. And then there is the particular reason which he gives for saying this, for my brethren and companions' sakes.

First then we have the declaration, the desire, the fervent prayer of the psalmist toward Jerusalem.

Peace be within thee. It is of course very notice, noteworthy that the name of Jerusalem means possession of peace.

[24 : 11] It is the meaning, the literal meaning of this name, possession of peace. And yet as we think of the city itself, how little real peace over the centuries has there been there.

Oh, how much of strife and conflict, siege after siege, the city has been destroyed and rebuilt and then destroyed and built again and divided.

Oh, how much, even to this day, how much distress and conflict has there been at Jerusalem? And why is this?

The sad truth is very evident. It is because of the sin of the people. Sin has marred the peace of Jerusalem.

Hardly any other city in the world can compare with it for the number of attacks and sieges it has known because of the special sins of the Jewish nation, their idolatry, their unbelief, their constant disobedience and disregard before the laws of God.

[25 : 47] And so, of course, we see in the world much that is distressing to those who love peace. Those like the psalmist who saw much in Jerusalem to cause distress and realized how much conflict there was, would pray all the more for the peace of Jerusalem.

As the psalmist in one of these psalms says, and surely all who fear God have this spirit, he says, I am for peace.

My great desire and concern is for peace. My soul hath long dwelt with him that hateth peace. I am for peace, but when I speak, they are for war.

Those who fear God will seek peace and pursue it. They will be such as the psalmist.

I am for peace. As far as that peace is right and just, in every respect, in every level of peace, then we should desire it.

[27 : 15] We should desire peace amongst the nations of the earth, peace between man and man, peace in the homes and families of this land, peace between bodies of men, peace in the church of God, the peace of God which passeth all understanding in our own hearts.

Dear friends, do you love peace? Well, how are these things to be? As we look around us, of course, we are conscious that many do desire peace in some way and are distressed because of the great conflict and violence that so much prevails in the earth.

How can it ever be different? We must start in the individual way. Let us look at it from this point of view first.

God himself is the God of peace. He is not the God of confusion, but of peace. The strife and conflict and distress and divisions in the earth are not from him.

They come from the great adversary. Satan is constantly going through the earth as we read, the stirring up strife and trouble.

[28 : 53] Either directly or indirectly, this is his doing. All the trouble and strife in the world is because of his activity.

But we constantly read, and more in this way than in any other. This title is ascribed to God in the epistles more than any of the others, that God is the God of peace.

He delights in true peace, and how much he has done to provide peace amongst men, and how much still, even in the natural way, how much cause we have to thank God for such peace as there is.

But what I want to say is this, particularly, that if we are to have peace, it must come from the God of peace. peace. Because of the activity of the evil one, because of the ruin of the fall, the sinfulness of our own hearts, it is God alone who gives real peace.

If there is to be peace in Jerusalem, then we must seek him for it. Pray for the peace of Jerusalem. God is the God of peace, and it is to him we must look for this great blessing.

[30 : 32] But it is first of all to be known in a personal way. We read of those in their natural state, all who are far off from God in this way, that the way of peace they have not known.

This is one of the descriptions ascribed to them the way of peace they have not known. And if they have not known what true spiritual peace is, then how will they ever seek it?

How can you desire and long and pray for anything of which you have no knowledge? For this is really the spiritual peace that the psalmist is seeking for?

Do you know the way of peace? Beautiful, that expression and the desire of Zacharias there when he saw that the Lord Jesus had come into this world as a babe, that he might direct, that God would direct their feet into the way of peace.

What is the way of peace? It is expressed very much in those epistles such as in the chapter that we read. There is only one way of peace.

[32 : 02] By nature we are alienated from God by wicked works. peace. There is a great barrier that sin has made between our souls and God.

The carnal mind is enmity against God. We are rebels, we are at peace with hell and with God we are at war by nature.

But there is peace to be known through the Saviour's sacrifice. As it is expressed in those epistles that he having made peace by the blood of his cross was the way in which peace was made between man and God.

There was the true spiritual peace offering made and only offering by which man can be reconciled and brought into a state of friendship and peace with God.

It is through the blood of his cross. It is by the Saviour's sacrifice for sins that the Apostle says he is our peace who has made both one broken down the middle wall of partition between us.

[33 : 38] The Saviour did that amazing work, performed and accomplished it perfectly. Not only did he make peace between God and man, but in so doing he broke down that middle wall of partition, an enmity, that was so strong between Jew and Gentile, so that both were brought into the early church without any disagreement, that the bitter enmity between them was resolved.

this is, first of all, a personal matter. The Apostle having spoken of the way of peace in his epistle to the Romans, that God has set forth the Lord Jesus Christ to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, he says concerning himself and those which were with him, he says that he now enjoyed the peace of God, being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Dear friends, do you know the way of peace? Have you this morning in your hearts? Any knowledge of this, any experience of the peace of God, which passeth all understanding?

The only way of peace is through the Saviour's precious blood. heart. And then if we do know this in our own hearts, we will be sure to see that others may know it too, and that in the church of God this blessed peace may be known more and more.

And so the apostles writing to the churches prayers. In almost every one of the epistles they start with such words as those, grace unto you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

[36 : 05] They were so concerned for the peace of God in the churches that there should be peace. every time they write they say this, grace unto you and peace.

And then at the end of their epistles we read the same, so frequently in that epistle to the Ephesians the apostle ends by saying, peace be to the brethren and love with faith.

He was never tired of seeking for peace and praying for peace in Jerusalem amongst the people of God, in the house of God, in the church of God.

Having described in that second epistle, the second chapter to the Ephesians, having described the way of peace, he goes on to say in the other chapters concerning it, endeavouring, says that you all, with all lowliness and meekness, each esteem other better than himself, endeavouring to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace, as though he would urge upon them and exhort them to do all that they could to keep, to maintain that spirit of union, of unity, in the bond of God's peace.

And so, if we know what this peace is, we shall desire that there shall be a true spiritual lasting peace amongst the people of God, in the church of God, in individual churches, in all the churches of God, where his name is established, those places where he is so chosen to reveal himself, where his worship is continued and maintained in a true spirit of faith and love, where the Lord Jesus Christ is revealed and where he is sought in such places.

[38 : 37] Oh, may there be this peace. Peace be within thee. Now, dear friends, is this your desire? Does your heart go along with these expressions?

Pray for the peace of Jerusalem. They shall prosper that love thee. Peace be within thy walls, and prosperity within thy palaces.

For my brethren and companions' sakes, I will now say, peace be within thee. We know what the peace of God is in our own hearts.

We shall not be amongst those who delight in strife, and chisms, in divisions, in conflict, peace. This peace, of course, is not what is sometimes called peace at any price.

It's not peace at the expense of truth, but peace with truth. These so go together. It's not to sacrifice principle, not to sacrifice the truth of God, in the pretense of maintaining peace, but it is that true spirit of peace which is founded upon the truth.

[40 : 06] If those come together who love the same truths, and who delight in them, as long as their hearts are towards the great prince of peace, then there will be no falling out amongst them.

Peace be within thee. Is this your desire? Now this is a very beautiful and very encouraging desire, if it is in our hearts, peace.

Because the Lord himself so commends this, he so constantly in his word bids his people to seek for peace.

He says follow peace with all men, and holiness without which no man shall see the Lord. If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably, with all men.

And so on. There are many expressions that you follow after the things that make for peace, those things whereby one may edify another.

[41 : 23] Now the Lord's blessing rests upon such desires as this, and upon those whom he has blessed with such desires.

As we have it expressed here, they shall prosper that love thee. In seeking the prosperity and the peace of Jerusalem, we shall find that our own hearts enjoy this peace, and this prosperity in a greater measure.

Here is the promise of God, that they shall prosper who love the church of God, and who seek her good. As our hymn expresses it, the man that seeks thy peace and wishes thy increase, a thousand blessings on him rests.

Is this in your hearts, I say, dear friends, peace? It is greatly commended in the sight of God. It is much to his mind and will that his people should desire and seek for this holy, this heavenly peace.

And so he has said in the words of the Saviour himself, blessed are the peacemakers, that they shall be called the children of God.

[42 : 58] In this they are behaving and showing themselves to be true children of God, in that they are seeking his peace, that it may reign in the church, it may be within Jerusalem.

Is this, dear friends, in our hearts this morning? May it be so today. May we know in our own souls, the peace of God which passes all understanding.

And oh may we be amongst those who love peace and who constantly seek peace. For my brethren and companions' sakes I will now say peace be within thee.

Amen. Amen. God willing, Mr.

Crowther will preach this evening, Mr. Humberstone on Thursday evening, Mr. Moody next Lord's Day, prayer meeting on Monday evening, collections this day are for the support of this cause.

[44 : 19] God willing, Mr. Crowther will give an address this afternoon in the schoolroom. Friends of all ages are welcome. Our concluding hymn 1061 tune rest 211 Lord, I believe a rest remains to all thy people known, a rest where pure enjoyment reigns, and thou art loved alone.

1061 one. iram tale hymn hymn hymn Hinden Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you.

[48 : 43] Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

May thy name be praised and honoured. In the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Saviour, the love of God the Father, the fellowship Fellowship and communion of God the Holy Spirit be with us all. Amen.