

Walking about Zion ... Towers; Bulwarks; Palaces.

(ii) (Quality: Very good)

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Preacher: Hyde, Leslie S B (1916-2001)

- [0 : 00] As the Lord may help me, I will again direct your attention to Psalm 48, verses 12 and 13. Psalm 48, verses 12 and 13.
- Walk about Zion, and go round about her, tell the towers thereof, mark ye well her bulwarks, consider her palaces, that ye may tell it to the generation following.
- Walk about Zion, and go round about her, tell the towers thereof, mark ye well her bulwarks, consider her palaces, that ye may tell it to the generation following.
- In these verses, we have five commandments, or directions, bringing us to the purpose that these things are to be done, that ye may tell it to the generation following.
- This morning, we considered the first of these three, the first three of these, walk about Zion, and go round about her, and tell the towers thereof.
- [1 : 32] This occupation will only be attractive to those that are born again of the Spirit.
- Ever bearing in mind that the natural mind is enmity against God, and we cannot know anything of the things of the Spirit of God, hence, this will be, to them, an unattractive occupation.
- But to the people of God, it could well be, it should well be, the joy and rejoicing of their heart. Zion is that place where the Church of God is gathered together.
- They are not only gathered together, perhaps, as we may see them in the flesh, but above all, they are gathered together in the Spirit.
- One of the significations of the true people of Zion is to be found in the unity of the Spirit, and the endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.
- [2 : 59] We may be aware, and some may not be slow to draw our attention to the fact that there are divisions in the Christian Church.
- Divisions, for the most part, come from those that are proud of heart, and they do not come from those who are of a humble mind.
- The Word of God is clear in order that peace may be preserved. Proverbs 22, we read, Cast out the scorner, and contention shall go out.
- Yea, strife and reproach shall cease. A lack of attention to some of these important instructions in the Word of God is often responsible for the continuance of division.
- The scorners are those which, for through the pride of their heart, will look down upon the poor and the needy.
- [4 : 22] And since the people of God are essentially made to feel their poverty of spirit, then there may well be those who will introduce contention into church circles because they are not of a humble spirit, neither are they aware of the poverty of spirit which the people of God know.

Whilst we may know the poverty of spirit, this only goes to make room for the riches of Christ. Now, in walking about Zion and going round about her and telling the tales thereof will be the one long and uninterrupted story of the riches of Christ.

We noticed this morning though perhaps lamely the riches of Christ as king is residing in Zion the city of the great king.

In Zion we noticed also that until the praise waiteth of thee, O God, in Zion and this can only be the result of the riches of the grace of God being communicated.

We shall not praise God without grace certainly not such praise as is acceptable to God even the Father the Son and the Holy Spirit.

[6 : 28] The praise which is acceptable with them with the eternal God is that which is the result of communicated grace so that such worship is a worshipping of the heart.

Now as we walk about Zion and see some of the beauties of Zion and behold the king of Zion then praise must surely come forth.

In the Lord's teaching he says yes but the greater than Solomon was here is here and the queen of Sheba when she came to the court of King Solomon she was astounded at what she saw.

Solomon told her all her questions and when the queen of Sheba had seen all Solomon's wisdom and the house that he had built and the meat of his table and the sitting of his servants and the attendance of his ministers and their apparel and his cupbearers and his ascent by which he went up unto the house of the Lord there was no more spirit in her and she said to the king it was a true report that I heard in mine own land of thy act and of thy wisdom how be it I believe not the words until I came and mine eyes had seen it behold the half was not told me thy wisdom and prosperity exceeded the fame which I heard and if this sight of the glory of Solomon has such an effect upon the queen of

Sheba what shall be the effect upon those that are brought into a real experience as they walk about Zion and find that the king in Zion is approachable and yet there is no presumptuous approaching but he is willing to listen to their cries to consider their complaints to look into their affairs to deal wonderfully and to pay their debts and overrule all things for their good now praise waiteth for thee outside of Zion well we are but wondrous but brought by the spirit of

[9 : 40] God into Zion and we do not necessarily mean as I said this morning that this should be particular congregations it would be contrary to the scripture to say that all congregations were amongst the living in Jerusalem it is not for us to do the sorting out except to take the precious from the vial according to the scriptures but God is able to make manifest those that are his and that making manifest is that it has the effect of joining heart to heart now in walking about

Zion there is an internal experience of feeling joined and this is one of the great mysteries because an old person can be joined to a child and the child can understand the language of the old through the spiritual perception which is given to each which is given to both and so with the same delight though separated by years both may walk about Zion and go round about her till the tales thereof beholding the glory of Christ in all these things well coming to the next verse mark ye well heard bulwarks consider her palaces the meaning of the word bulwarks appears to be entrenchments in which case it brings out attention to the foundation of

Zion to the psalmist this was of the utmost importance because he said if the foundations be removed what must the righteous do so then may we mark well the bulwarks upon which Zion is laid first of all everlasting love oh mark ye well do we sit down and ponder these points a lot is lost to us if we do not meditate upon these things some have the mistaken idea that meditation must be reserved for those that preach but if

God should give you the spirit of meditation I venture to say that you will be more profited through the ministry of the word because in your meditation you will have profited yourself now what a subject for meditation the unchanging and everlasting love of God and to feel that this is a foundation upon which the church is built now the everlasting love of God is seen in the face of Jesus Christ it is the everlasting love of the Father of the Son and of the eternal spirit they are all bound together and referred to by

John in his epistle like this God is love now is there any forcefulness in this your soul there is such a distinction between receiving what is quite true in the letter of it and having the experience and a close intimation that this is true oh for God to demonstrate how true this is by communion that you may enjoy with him from time to time sometimes a passage of scripture can drop upon the mind and it enlarges and you cannot say this is my remarkable intellect it enlarges and your soul is humble and you behold the glory of

[15 : 21] Christ the glory of the father in Christ and the riches of his grace as your eyes are opened behold this great bulwark again of everlasting love love loved before all time began we love him because he first loved us now sometimes we come under some powerful changes we understand what one good man has said but my love is cold and faint now if love isn't warmed it will die the love of many waxed as cold this is what we are seeing in the last days which are now and love is virtually gone out even natural love to a large extent but we love him because he first loved us so that the love with which we love

God is not a natural love but it's a love which comes from God and returns to him and that never dies because it has the quality of eternity in it everlasting love and that everlasting love will show to us that we are loved of the father loved of the son and loved of the holy ghost all the blasts and coldness that may assail us as we travel through this wilderness on this earth it can destroy the things of this earth but it cannot destroy the things of heaven and though you may sometimes be afraid that your love is so cold that it will cease to exist yet because it is bound up with the eternal love of

God it will revive again and as you walk about Zion and go round about her telling the towers thereof there is also marking well her bulwarks her foundations but also her defenses and the everlasting love of God is certainly one of the defenses of the church of God the love of God expressed upon Calvary has induced one to pen the lines I may my fierce accuser face and tell him thou hast died a clear evidence of everlasting love mark ye well her bulwarks and then closely associated with this we may consider everlasting kindness referred to perhaps in the scriptures everlasting loving kindness now you see if we are blessed with the grace of

God we must know something about God's loving kindness because it should be our experience every day the loving kindness of God and you know that doesn't change we are sometimes hot and sometimes cold we vary from day to day we may be calm then we are in a great turmoil and the everlasting loving kindness of God is just the same now have we experienced the loving kindness of God when Satan should come in like a flood when temptation should abound when it should be suggested that because of our lack of control of our hastiness of our foolishness and other things that may be your besetting sin yet here is the bulwark apart of that will prevent your soul dropping into hell here is the foundation on which you may found your faith everlasting loving kindness of God and then in the next place the everlasting faithfulness of God the psalmist tells us he will not alter the thing that has gone out of his mouth now you see we can meet people sometimes who will tell you that you can be saved today and lost tomorrow now that is a doctrine of the devils if my if his children forsake my law and walk not in my judgments if they break my statutes and keep not my commandments then will

I visit their transgression with the rod and their iniquity with stripes nevertheless my loving kindness will I not utterly take from him nor suffer my faithfulness to fail and here again we may reflect upon our own behavior over the years some of it is seen a good deal of it is not seen by others but is known by us and when we consider it it is all calculated to provoke God but he is faithful and he cannot suffer his faithfulness to fail that faithfulness is contained and supported and bound together in the covenant of grace and that covenant can never break though earth should to her sense a shake and here is stability perhaps we may regard the bulwark itself as having this embracing binding the covenant the everlasting love of

[23 : 06] God the everlasting loving kindness of God and the everlasting faithfulness of God all bound together in the everlasting covenant of God mark ye well heard the works now when Satan may come in on various pretexts with subtle suggestions all calculated to cast you down and to bring you to despair may we ever turn and mark well our defenses and mark well the foundations upon which our hope is laid this covenant stands forever sure truly it was this that held on

David in his faith when he came towards the end of his journey he says though although my house be not so with God yet you've made with me an everlasting covenant ordered in all things and sure for this is all my salvation and all my desire although he make it not to grow I believe it is in Isaiah's prophecy that we read about the bulwarks of salvation and salvation is contained in the three or four points that I have mentioned it is the certainty of salvation there's no doubt about salvation you know salvation through our

Lord Jesus Christ is complete it may be that we pass through painful experiences to have this sealed upon our heart whilst we may look at the truth of it in the word of God the passage of Jonah was strange painful unusual and yet in the whole of it in the end he learnt to mount well her bulwarks as he had never been accustomed to mount them before so after he had been on his trip a woeful trip he came to speak with such clarity of voice salvation is of the

Lord sometimes we present it in these lines if ever my poor soul be saved tis Christ must be the way there may be many critics of the behavior of Jonah and there may be many critics of your behavior and you may not always understand it when you look back upon it you may say well I wish it hadn't happened but there was a blessing in it let us alone this year also there may be a blessing in it now in saying this I'm not commending you to take an evil course because you may rue the day and we should observe that though there was a blessing in the end in Jonah's pathway yet there was bitterness before it and great bitterness great bitterness mark ye well her bulwarks the rebellious

Jonah fleeing from the Lord could not take him away from the everlasting love the everlasting kindness the everlasting faithfulness of Jehovah consider her palaces a little higher up in this psalm we read God is known in her palaces for a refuge a refuge how do we need a refuge that is a hiding place a hiding place from what a hiding place from the heat of the day a hiding place from our enemies a hiding place from ourselves can we get away from ourselves is it possible that we can do this get away from ourselves it may be said

[28 : 53] I don't think it is and yet you may sometimes just for a few moments be brought to this point to consider her palaces and in considering her palaces you're caught up in the blessed refuge of your weary soul and your self your sinful self your proud self your unholy self is just forgotten consider her palaces oh there might be our more frequent experience to consider her palaces where God is known for a refuge now we read in Jeremiah that the

Lord said I will give thy life unto thee for to pray in all places with us whoever thou goest and we should remember this that when we are called by grace it is needful that we should take up our cross daily the actual meaning of taking up our cross is to have a life which is exposed to danger and this is just what that means and this is just what people the people of God experience their life is exposed to danger every day of their life people may refer to crosses in a very different way but this is the underlying meaning of the scriptures when they say take up my cross daily and follow me and if you're a follower of Jesus

Christ your life will be exposed to danger every day there are cases and there are people whose life is exposed to danger physically and naturally every day there are countries which are so at enmity with God at all that those that are wrought upon by the spirit of God to profess his great name taking up their cross means just this their life is exposed to danger but then shall we say in our land where the outside is comparatively peaceful that our lives are not exposed to danger they are indeed they are exposed to the dangers of spiritual wickedness in high places now whatever people may think the dangers emanating from spiritual wickedness in high places is far greater than the dangers which are meted out by some in physical terms those which are whose lives are in danger in these perilous days have error brought to them craftily now you see if you see error well we cannot just stand and look at it because it will encircle you and eventually if you are not alert will crush you as the boa constrictor error and how many people have had religion crushed out of them by some subtle error you can read through the pages of history church history there has not been a decade when error hasn't abounded and let us not think that it doesn't abound today consider her palaces the errors which abound are invariably directed against the person of Christ and we need to be ever so particular in considering any new statement that it does not affect or reduce the excellency of the name and glory of Christ we may say like not dead it is a little one but

Solomon reminds us take us the foxes the little foxes which spoil the tender grapes consider her palaces now once you're in a refuge once you are brought to come to Christ to learn sit at his feet and learn of him you know all error will begin to fall away and this is why it is so important for us to live near Christ the nearer we live to Christ the less opportunity error will have to abound but if we're far up from Christ we're in dangerous waters on dangerous ground because error does so abound the psalmist knew something about it he said they only consult to cast him down from his excellency all the arguments and religious circles they all emanate they all flutter around as it were the person of Christ now we shall need a great deal of grace and a great deal of watchfulness to overcome the errors which abound in order to this consider her palaces now palaces will take us back to our remarks this morning about the king the king lives in the palace so we may come here to have our difficulties and our doubts resolved are we disturbed are we afraid that we haven't believed in the true

Christ is there anything that we might have read recently or heard recently about Christ and it's new well flee to the refuge to see whether it will come in with you and if it is true it will enlarge your delight in the refuge Jesus Christ it is manhood Jesus Christ in his deity Jesus Christ is a God man how many errors are bound in the present day regarding these things you see sometimes people say well I don't worry about that that's just doctrine now if you're not right here you may well find her in the end these things concerning

[37 : 32] Christ are not merely learned as we might read in the scriptures or perhaps read an excellent paper on them Christ is learned in day to day experience that Christ is God and this is an important point do you believe that Christ is God and then we should ask you how do you believe it well one says this that Christ is God I can avouch and for his people cares for I have prayed to him as such and he has heard my prayers and so it brings us to the throne of grace have we have has he given into our hearts the blessed Lord that he has heard our prayers well now look at the approaches to see how you prayed unto God is it

God in Christ have you received answers because you lent so hardly upon those final words for Jesus Christ's sake consider her palaces as the heart panteth out of the water brook so panteth my soul out of thee oh God now here is a refuge in the wilderness to find Christ as a watering place if a person is thirsty then they will die unless there's a watering place and in that sense we might consider it a refuge oh to be refreshed that we may go on our journey once again now the children of God have an experience of these things day by day they may be few and far between but nevertheless it resolves itself according to the scripture he not walked with

God no walk with God it was continual is there is that found in our heart we desire to walk with God have we ever uttered with a deep feeling sense of the truth of it oh for a closer walk with God a calm and heavenly frame a light to shine upon the road that leads me to the land now why do you want a closer walk with God the five points that we have in these two verses culminate in this that ye may tell it to the generation following so the generation going before has a great responsibility in respect to the generation following in the chapter in Joshua that we read an event had taken place which was never which never was to be forgotten and that was when the children of

Israel crossed the Jordan into the land of Canaan and twelve stones were to be taken out of the Jordan and to be set up in Gilgal and the fathers would be asked by their children what mean ye by these stones and fathers today will be asked what mean ye by these stones now we have a responsibility to tell our children what these stones mean going to the book of Samuel we read an occasion when he took a stone and he set it up between Mispa and Shem and he called it

Ebenezer saying hitherto hath the Lord helped us and there may well be twelve stones that could be taken up out of your pathway which you could lay up and your children might say to you what mean ye by these stones what mean ye by this experience that you speak about you see friends that which will seal its home upon the heart of any person is the experience of what is said many people are satisfied by taking the textbook and teaching in the letter but a family is privileged if the teaching of truth is not only in the letter but also in the spirit maybe some of us can recall earlier days when we rejoiced in the fathers and mothers of Israel who taught us not in the letter but in the spirit because they had walked about

[43 : 24] Zion they had gone round about it they had told the towers thereof they had marked where are the bulwarks they had considered the parishes and it had been a real experience with them and they could tell to their children that Christ was precious not just biblical teaching and you know there may even be some who have had in the past godly teachers who spoke to them from their hearts and they spoke the truth giving the added effect that it was the truth now it's a great mercy if we have grace to do that tell it to the generation following what is it that we've got to tell we've got to tell the truth but not in the bare letter of it we've got to tell the truth because we believe it otherwise it ceases to be the truth why has there been such a departure from churches and chapels in the present day there's some responsibilities responsibility that may lay upon parents

I know we can say well it's the sovereignty of God but shall we not examine ourselves have we told them the truth in such a way that they know it's the truth if we've instructed them in the letter then anything in the letter in any other field can be superseded but that which is of the spirit that which we have experienced that which will enable us to say I know whom I have believed and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day now we do not know when there will be a harvest of the sowing and there have been some gracious parents and perhaps they almost despair because they seem to have made little impact upon their children do you want to sometimes see that there is truth in your approach into the throne of grace grace it's not a bad thing you know if your children should sometimes find you in your room on your knees because they'll believe that my father my mother really believes in the throne of grace really believes in kneeling down before

God really believes in what they say and what they've told me and then troubles come you may wonder why troubles come into your life why afflictions come into your life why adversities come into your life why losses come into your life and in some cases some cases loss of jobs I was at a place a little while ago tried to preach in and the husband was suddenly called to the front door he was there sometime and when he came back I said to him is everything settled he says yes my job is finished and his children stood there and his wife stood there my job is finished but his governors were kind to him in that they had given him good notice

Tennessee f what is