



**WBC Verse for the Year 2020**

*‘The steadfast love of the LORD never ceases; his mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning; great is your faithfulness’*  
(Lamentations 3 verses 22-23)

## Psalm 87

As mentioned in our last Sunday service sheet, here is a summary on Psalm 87, with some things to reflect on.

A video of this is available online - [https://youtu.be/fOs\\_n3Eeg9I](https://youtu.be/fOs_n3Eeg9I)

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Have you ever longed to live somewhere else? Perhaps there’s a country you have loved or longed to visit. You’d give anything to be a citizen of that country. Psalm 87 reveals how we can all be citizens of somewhere out of this world!

This psalm is likely written during the Babylonian exile. It rejoices in Zion, the ‘city of God.’ It anticipates a gathering in from all nations, so that together they are citizens of God’s kingdom.

### **READ: PSALM 87 verses 1-2**

#### A loving foundation

Verse 1 reveals how it is God who sets his foundation on Zion, his ‘*holy mountain.*’ To call it ‘holy’ reminds us it is set apart by God. The fact that He is the one who sets the foundation, confirms it is secure and reliable.

It’s foundation is established by God, in love (verse 2). When it talks of ‘the gates’ it is referring to the whole city, as gates were

the place of focal points for city business.

This is the ultimate place of God’s love - ‘*more than all the dwellings of Jacob.*’ This is because it’s the place of his throne, his presence, of his rule over his people.

### **READ: PSALM 87 verses 3-6**

#### A home for the Nations

Having affirmed how Zion is founded and grounded in God’s love, the following verses reveal how this is not limited to Israel as a physical nation of God’s people, but is a dwelling which is open to be enjoyed by people from all nations.

Notice the present tense of verses 2 and 3. God’s love is for Zion (v2) and ‘*Glorious things are said*’ of this city (v3). How could that have been true during the exile, when God’s temple had been destroyed. What is more, when it is rebuilt it’s far less impressive.

So, what are these ‘Glorious things?’ Verses 4-6 reveal how they are the fact that it will be a multicultural city. One which includes people from other nations - including those which are historically hostile towards God.

Rahab is not a reference to Joshua 2, but culturally was a name synonymous with a chaotic monster. It became a derogatory term, used of Egypt. So, Egypt, along with Babylon (where God’s people are exiled) - both oppressors, enemies of God’s people. Yet, these would acknowledge God. So too inhabitants from Philistia (region of the Philistines), Tyre (a rich and self absorbed materialistic city), and Cush (a multicultural society) would identify as being ‘born in Zion.’ A new birth! A new citizenship!

These nations are reflective of Gentiles, non Jews, of all other nations. That emphasis continues over verses 5 and 6. Regardless of their natural place of birth, it will be said of Zion that ‘This one and that one were born in her.’

They are now established by God (verse 5). Their names are now recorded in His register as His people (verse 6).

What a marvellous, wonderful thing that God has done in giving new birth, new citizenship to those who were once outside of God's covenant promises. How should they respond?

**READ: PSALM 87 verses 7**

**A joyful song**

It's with a 'joyful song.' With hearts full of praise, they are making music to God, rejoicing in what he has done for them.

The reference to 'fountains' is a reminder of the refreshment, the thirst quenching, life giving water which comes from God.

They sing 'All of my fountains' - all my refreshment, all of life comes from you, O God!

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This Psalm wonderfully looks forward and anticipates the glorious restoration of the City of God. The fact that it would be a place made up of people from all nations. All enjoying their citizenship, their dwelling with God's people in the presence of God.

At the outset we are reminded, that it is God who has provided the foundation of this city (v1). It is established and grounded in his love (v2).

As we look at this in light of Jesus, we are reminded that this points forward to our identity, our citizenship which comes through Him. How because of God's love we who were once far are now brought into his family.

Take a look at passages like John 3:16, 2 Corinthians 5:17, Philippians 3:20, and Colossians 1:21-23 to remind yourself of how this is rooted in God's love. Of where it has taken you from, and of the wonderful citizenship that you now enjoy in Christ.

It further points us forward to that wonderful day when, as we are reminded in Revelation 7 verses 9-10,

*'A great multitude that no-one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and language, [will be] standing before God's throne and in front of the lamb.'*

Who with much rejoicing will be singing:

*'Salvation belongs to our God, who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb.'*

This is our identity, this is our inheritance, our goal which we look forward to because of Jesus and who we are if we trust in him.

Isn't that amazing! Let's focus on that with anticipation.

**REFLECTION**

*Spend some time re-reading the passage, and thinking about the following*

The psalmist starts with reminding us that Zion, God's City is securely grounded, established in God's love.

*How does that make you feel?*

*How does that give you confidence?*

Verses 3-6 are a reminder that those (like us) who were once far from God, hostile to him, can dwell with God as His people.

This points forward to the Church, established in Jesus.

*How should that motivate us in our witness to others?*

The psalm ends, v7 in great rejoicing, grounded in God as the source of their refreshment, their life giving water.

*Do you feel refreshed by God?*

*If not, is there something which is preventing that?*

Finally - read this psalm again. Reflect once more on those passages which remind us of how our Salvation is rooted in God's love. Which remind us of where God has taken us from, and of the wonderful citizenship we have because of Jesus.

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***These are just some thoughts.***

***What else strikes you about this passage?***