

## God's Favor Bestowed on Jerusalem

### Psalm 87

#### Outline

1-7 | God's favor bestowed on Jerusalem

#### Reflections

There is something to be said for traveling to different locations but also for returning home. Traveling, especially to a foreign country, can be exciting. There are many exotic locations to visit that offer amazing sights and experiences. But at the same time, there are also the many blessings of returning to your home country, state, city—your home.

I believe that is part of what the psalmist is writing about in this psalm. He had a sense of pride in being a citizen of Jerusalem, the city where God's temple was and the capital of His chosen people. Compared to other cities, even though God is omnipresent, He had chosen Jerusalem as His dwelling place.

The psalmist lists some of the surrounding nations that have all had dominion over Jerusalem at different times in its history, yet it is still God's city that is greater. The people who were born in these other nations are special, as we are all created in God's image. Those who are born in Jerusalem are seen as especially blessed in the eyes of the psalmist.

We have to remember that the psalmist is writing while under the Mosaic covenant, which was focused on the Israelites as being God's chosen people. But if we look, there are numerous places where God expected the Israelites to be like a spiritual magnet which would attract and draw people to worship God. They were to be "city on a hill" as described by Jesus, a city shining the light of God's love to all nations.<sup>1</sup>

**Genesis 12:3 NASB** And I will bless those who bless you, And the one who curses you I will curse. And in you all the families of the earth will be blessed."

**Exodus 19:5-6 NASB** 'Now then, if you will indeed obey My voice and keep My covenant, then you shall be My own possession among all the peoples, for all the earth is Mine; 6 and you shall be to Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.' These are the words that you shall speak to the sons of Israel."

**Isaiah 49:6 NASB** He says, "It is too small a thing that You should be My Servant To raise up the tribes of Jacob and to restore the preserved ones of Israel; I will also make You a light of the nations So that My salvation may reach to the end of the earth."

There is nothing necessarily wrong with national pride or patriotism *per se*. As a US citizen, I believe that we have been blessed by God even though we seem to be moving further and further away from the Christian principles our nation was originally founded on.

However, we also have to remember that as Christians, we have dual citizenship. Not only are we citizens of whatever our home country is, whether by birth or by choice, but we are also citizens of God's holy nation, the New Jerusalem, whose King is Jesus! We should be just as patriotic and have a sense of national pride in our citizenship in heaven. You have been blessed by God to have been granted citizenship in His holy city through faith in Jesus.

While our spiritual citizenship will have its ultimate expression in heaven, it is also experienced in the

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1 Evans, Eli T. "A Shining City on a Hill." *Bible Study Magazine* 7.6 (2015): 26-27. Print.

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present through the church, which is not limited to any one place or city. But just like God's first chosen people, the Jews, now we are to be the beacon of light that draws people out of the darkness of sin and despair into the warm glow of God's love and forgiveness.

Lord God, help us to be shining lights that draw people to You as we proclaim the many blessings of being apart of Your great city, the church. May Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven, in Jesus' name. Amen.

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*Key Words:* Old Testament, Wisdom, Psalms, Jerusalem, Citizenship

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