

WHEN THE LORD VISITS HIS CITY

Meeting God in the Psalms: Psalm 87

October 10, 2021

*He has set his foundation on the holy mountain;
the Lord loves the gates of Zion more than all the dwellings of Jacob.
Glorious things are said of you, O city of God*
Psalm 87:1-2 (with help from John Newton)

Psalm 87: God's love for his "city"

Of the Sons of Korah. A psalm. A song.

- ¹ *He has set his foundation on the holy mountain;*
² *the LORD loves the gates of Zion
more than all the dwellings of Jacob.*
³ *Glorious things are said of you,
O city of God:* *Selah*
⁴ *"I will record Rahab and Babylon
among those who acknowledge me—
Philistia too, and Tyre, along with Cush—
and will say, 'This one was born in Zion.' "*
⁵ *Indeed, of Zion it will be said,
"This one and that one were born in her,
and the Most High himself will establish her."*
⁶ *The LORD will write in the register of the peoples:
"This one was born in Zion."* *Selah*
⁷ *As they make music they will sing,
"All my fountains are in you." [NIV]*

1. "Glorious Things of Thee Are Spoken" is a celebration of God's presence: We are the "Thee"
2. The Lord's "foundation" turns our attention back to creation
3. The key question is one of identity: Where am I registered?
4. Psalm 87 helps close out Book IV, encouraging the people of God to remember God's promises (see the chart below)

Who are the gates?

¹ *He has set his foundation on the holy mountain;*
² *the LORD loves the gates of Zion*
more than all the dwellings of Jacob.
³ *Glorious things are said of you,*
O city of God: Selah
Psalm 87:1-2 (see Revelation 21:9-21)

1. Gates are important, the very center of the life of the community
2. Zion is where to look for God at work, where his “choosing” love is evident (see Romans 9:1-29)
3. It seems to Pastor Fakkema that it is God who is speaking these “glorious things” of his church

The surprise mission of the people of God

⁴ *“I will record Rahab and Babylon*
among those who acknowledge me—
Philistia too, and Tyre, along with Cush—
and will say, ‘This one was born in Zion.’ ”
⁵ *Indeed, of Zion it will be said,*
“This one and that one were born in her,
and the Most High himself will establish her.”
⁶ *The LORD will write in the register of the peoples:*
“This one was born in Zion.” Selah
Psalm 87:4-6

1. We would never expect *Rahab* and *Babylon* to be invited inside the “gates”
2. “Acknowledging God” is a beautiful way to think about a new relationship with God
3. We accept *Philistia* like we accept one “native-born”

³³ “*When an alien lives with you in your land, do not mistreat him.* ³⁴ *The alien living with you must be treated as one of your native-born. Love him as yourself, for you were aliens in Egypt.*
Leviticus 19:33 (see also Romans 15:7-9)

Being the gates

⁷ *As they make music they will sing,
“All my fountains are in you.”*

Psalm 87:7

1. “Fountains” ARE the blessing, the evidence of God’s Spirit flowing out of us Philistines

¹³ *Jesus answered, “Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again, ¹⁴ but whoever drinks the water I give him will never thirst. Indeed, the water I give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life.”*

John 4:13-14

2. “Fountains” are now and eschatological – the purpose of the church and the future of the church

¹⁷ *For the Lamb at the center of the throne will be their shepherd;
he will lead them to springs of living water.
And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes.”*

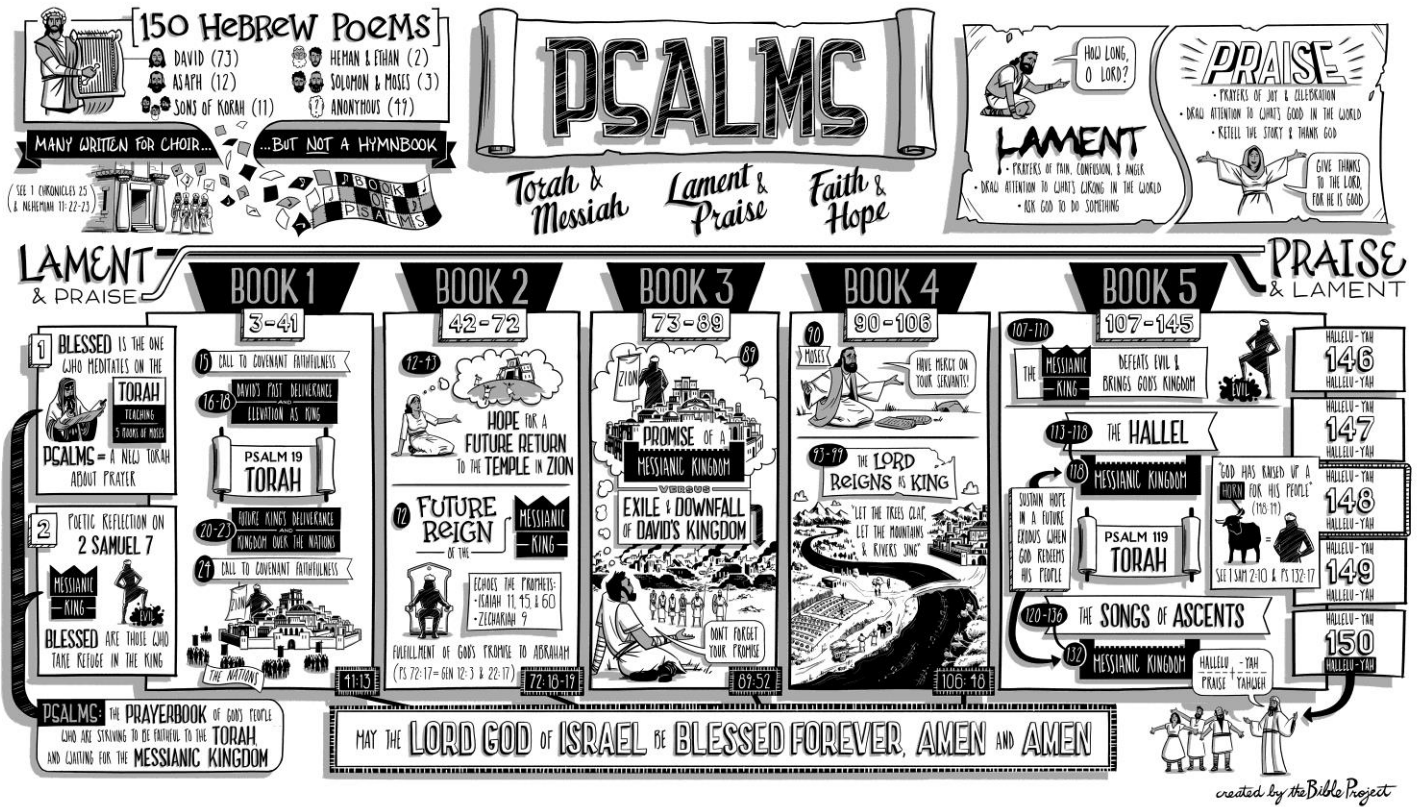
Revelation 7:17, the hope of the Tribulation church (see also Revelation 21:6 and 22:1-5)

3. The gates of this city are designed to be open!

-- God, not me, is responsible for who comes in

-- Our job is to call those who enter the gates to acknowledge the LORD of this city

-- Our celebration must include witness, story and testimony



Resources for the Psalms

Please be sure to have a copy of the [Bible Project's poster](#) on the Psalms.

I appreciate the [bibestudytools.com](#) study of Psalm 87 in the "Christ-Centered Exposition Commentary" series. I've attached this study to my notes.

Dr. [Ron Allen has a wonderful study](#) of Psalm 87 in "Biblioteca Sacra".

James E. Smith's *Wisdom Literature and Psalms* (College Press, 1995) has been a very helpful resource.

The *Expositor's Bible Commentary* (Zondervan, 1991) has a helpful commentary on the Psalms.

I can see Dr. Ron Allen's influence in the study notes on the Psalms in the *Nelson Study Bible* (Thomas Nelson, 1997). This is a NKJV text Bible which gives a wonderful new translation to read.