

The King: His Victory, His Coronation, His Palaces

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Psalms 45, 46, 47, 48.

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An atmosphere of great enthusiasm and triumph pervades the whole of Psalm 45, which is made all the more striking by the sudden transition from the gloom of depression and defeat which pervades the whole of Psalm 44. In that Psalm, the heart of the Psalmist pours forth its confusion and its cries. In this, it overflows with a good matter. The Divine hand has, as it were, drawn aside the curtain and revealed THE KING. As HE steps upon the scene every cry is hushed, and every heart is turned to praise.

A vision of the coming King burst on the writer of this Psalm, whether David or another of the prophets, and he at once found no difficulty in voicing his feelings. His heart simply bubbled up with its glorious theme, and his tongue became as the pen of a ready writer. It is just the same for us today, though we are not inspired as he was. Let Christ fill faith's vision, and our spirits are moved, our tongues are free.

For the Psalmist it was a vision of Christ, riding in splendour at His second advent. We too may rejoice at this sight in faith and hope, while we have something of a more intimate nature which seems to go beyond it. In Revelation 4 the glory of God in creation comes before us, and all is as clear and as cool as the crystal sea which is before the throne. But in Revelation 5 there appears in the midst of the throne "a Lamb as it had been slain," and all creation is moved to fervent adoration. Both love and praise begin to burn with a most vehement flame. Nothing moves our hearts quite so much as the sight of the Suffering One who died to redeem us. Still the contemplation of Him in that glory, which presently is publicly to be His, is very moving to us also.

The first thing that impressed the Psalmist was His *personal* excellence. He eclipses the sons of men. He is the vessel of Divine grace, which is poured into His lips, that it may flow forth from thence. He is the One on whom the blessing of God rests, and who is the source of all blessing for others. We know, in the light of the New Testament, why He is fairer than the sons of men. It is not because He is the finest specimen of Adam's race, but because He is not of the first Adam at all. He is "the last Adam," the Head of a new race. He is "the second Man . . . the Lord from heaven" (1 Cor. 15: 45-47).

This fact at once reveals that He stands absolutely alone in His excellence. He is not the first among many who are more or less His equals: He is the altogether incomparable One.

Then, in vision, the Psalmist sees this incomparable One take to Himself His great power, and ride forth that He may be displayed in majestic splendour. Nothing stands before Him. He rides prosperously, "because of truth and meekness and righteousness;" that is, in order that truth, meekness and righteousness may be established in the earth. Truth stands in opposition to that which is false and unreal — to the devil's lie: meekness in opposition to pride and self-sufficiency: righteousness in opposition to all that is lawless, and out of right relations with God. If truth is manifested man must of necessity take his true place in meekness before God, and thus the rights of God be fully established. He who rides forth in majesty to bring these things to pass is Himself the Righteous One. He is the Truth. He is meek and lowly in heart.

To accomplish this *He acts in judgment*. The prophet tells us that, "When Thy judgments are in

the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness" (Isa. 26: 9). Also he added, "Let favour be shewed to the wicked, yet will he not learn righteousness," and that is being abundantly verified at the present moment. The next age is to be ushered in by very sore judgments, and hence in this Psalm the Messiah is seen girding His sword upon His thigh, and sending His arrows into the heart of the King's enemies. The Psalmist is permitted to have a glimpse of the scene more fully described in Revelation 19, when the Rider on the white horse comes forth to tread the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. As a result of these judgments *the throne of God is permanently established* amongst men, and a sceptre of uprightness is wielded.

The Son of God is addressed in verse 6. This is hardly apparent as we read the Psalm, but is made very clear by the inspired quotation of the verse in Hebrews 1: 8. The deity of "the King" is plainly stated, for He is Son, and it is to "the Son" that these words are uttered. In His throne the throne of God is established in the earth.

But if verse 6 states His deity, verse 7 no less definitely presents His humanity. Having become Man, He is the perfect Man. God is His God: He is the lover of righteousness and the hater of wickedness. Moreover He has "fellows," or "companions," and amongst them He stands *supreme in His gladness*. He is not only more fair than the sons of men, but more glad than all His companions. And this is fitting, for in the days of His flesh He suffered more than any.

It is wonderful indeed that He should have "fellows" at all, for He had none in the days of His flesh. Then He was the single "corn of wheat," (John 12: 24) abiding alone. Here we view Him in the day of His triumph and glory, and the "fellows" are by His side, sharing in His gladness, though in a lesser degree. And it is still more wonderful when we remember that He is saluted as "the Man that is My Fellow, saith the Lord of Hosts" (Zech. 13: 7). He is Jehovah's Fellow in His Manhood, as much as He was in His pre-incarnate estate. Yet He associates others with Himself, who in His risen life become His fellows. A true Mediator He is indeed!

We may also place verse 7, in our minds, alongside verse 22 of Psalm 22, where the Lord is said to praise in the midst of "the congregation." This, when quoted in Hebrews 2, becomes "the church." Verse 7 is quoted in Hebrews 1: 9, and the word translated, "fellows," there is translated "partakers," in Hebrews 3: 14. Darby's New Translation renders the two passages thus: "God, Thy God, has anointed Thee with oil of gladness above Thy companions . . . For we are become companions of the Christ . . ." So again we find how an Old Testament scripture has such as ourselves in view.

We may summarize, then, the first seven verses of this Psalm by saying that they set before us in prophetic vision the King in His beauty. We can perceive His personal excellence, His glorious appearing, His execution of judgment, His righteous kingdom established, and Himself crowned with supreme gladness in the midst of His glad companions. And we have the happy assurance that when the glad day arrives we shall be amongst His companions there.

The remainder of the Psalm portrays in symbolic language the blessing and glory of Israel in her cities, and even of the cities of the Gentiles, consequent upon the establishment of Messiah's righteous throne. Israel will no longer look back to her fathers and make her boast in them. She will rather (as verse 16 shows) boast in her children, who will be the princes of the earth in that day. And the Name of the once rejected Jesus will be remembered and praised for ever and ever.

We pass on to Psalm 46, and we find a very graphic picture of *the great victory* that will be achieved by the King when He comes forth in His glory. The first three verses give the confidence of the godly, when at last they see that all their help and strength and refuge is in God. The waters — symbolizing nations and peoples in tumultuous movement — may roar and the mountains — the great

established powers of the earth — may shake under the impact. This tidal wave of humanity, lashed into action by the power of Satan, is about to fling itself against the city of God.

But Jerusalem, the city of God, is "the place of the tabernacles of the most High." Faith therefore, recognizing the true character of Jerusalem, whatever may be its actual state at the moment, is full of confidence in the presence of God in her midst. At the actual moment, when the nations assemble against her like a flood, she will be defiled by the oppressions of Anti-christ, with the abomination that maketh desolate in her midst. Nevertheless she is the city of God, and faith lays hold of that fact, and expects God to manifest Himself in her midst for her deliverance. "God shall help her, and that right early."

"Right early," means, as the margin shows, "when the morning appeareth," or, "at the dawn of the morning." Faith's expectation will not be misplaced, for the dawning of the morning without clouds will take place when the King rides forth in majesty, and His right hand teaches Him terrible things in judgment. No true morning will rise upon earth's night until *that* morning appears.

Verse 6 is a very brief, but most graphic, description of God's great victory and man's utter defeat. The little verse is like a drama in four acts.

"The heathen raged." We see the nations in a state of excitement bordering on frenzy. They are full of fury and threatenings and slaughter. The opening verses of Psalm 2 have told us why they are in this raging condition. Their real animus is against God and His Christ. They desire to break their bands asunder and to cast away their cords from them.

"The kingdoms were moved." We now see the kingdoms of men in a state of flux and dissolution. Some kings are overthrown, according to Daniel 7, as "the beast" rises to his place of dominating authority. All are in a condition of change and transition.

"He uttered His voice." Quite a simple thing, this! None of the fuss, and scheming, and elaborate arrangements which characterize men when they go forth to war! The Lord Jesus appears in His glory, and "His Name is called the Word of God." Further, "Out of His mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it He should smite the nations" (Rev. 19: 11-15). He has merely to utter His voice and His adversaries are overthrown.

"The earth melted." In these graphic words the overthrow is described. The whole earth is represented as reduced to such a state of fluidity as renders it ready to be remoulded by His mighty hand for the millennial age that He is about to introduce.

When these things come to pass Israel will indeed know that the Lord of Hosts is with them, and stripped of all their former self-confidence they will find their refuge in the God of Jacob. They will be able to address any who fear the Lord, and are the spared from among the nations, to come and see hold the great work of God in judgment, how He has desolated the seats of man's pride and, breaking all his weapons of war, has made wars to cease. By the imposition of His supreme will upon men He will quell their fighting spirit.

In view of all this the way of the saint is very simple. It is to cease from fruitless efforts to accomplish what will only be accomplished when the Lord Jesus appears in His glory. Our business is not to put the world right, but to be witnesses to our absent Lord. When He comes He will soon put the world right; and meanwhile the word to us is, "Be still, and know that I am God."

In Psalm 47 we are permitted, in the spirit of prophecy, to contemplate *the* coronation of *the* great King. All the peoples, that are found after judgment has taken its course, are invited to rejoice and

triumph. Jehovah is seen to be the Most High — His Millennial Name — as also He was seen to be in the previous Psalm; and He has proved Himself to be terrible in the judgments He has executed. Also, as a result, Israel holds the primary place on earth with the nations subdued before them, and their inheritance enjoyed as chosen of God.

The Psalmist sees God ascending the throne. God reigns over the nations. God is King of all the earth. God is gone up amid the shoutings of the redeemed. It is not now God as shrouded in the Shekinah cloud, but God revealed and well-known in the person of Jesus Christ our Lord. He is the great King, and the crown rests upon His sacred head, that once was crowned with thorns. He becomes the theme of universal praises. Once He was "the song of the drunkards" (Ps. 69: 12), now He is surrounded with those who sing "praises with understanding."

"The heathen," (ver. 8) means, as in other places, the various Gentile nations who had not the knowledge of God as Israel had. When the Lord Jesus ascends the throne, then indeed will it be said, "God reigneth over the heathen." The nations will have been subdued by judgment, but not only this, there will also be found those of the nations who have gladly received Him. In the New Translation the first part of verse 9 reads thus: "The willing-hearted of the peoples have gathered together with the people of the God of Abraham." This makes the matter pretty clear.

The people of the God of Abraham are Israel — the true Israel of God, who enter the millennial age. Then also there is going to be "a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues," who are going to stand "before the throne" (Rev. 7: 9) — "the sheep" of Matthew 25: 33. They will be in a very true sense the willing-hearted of the peoples. The "shields of the earth" which belong to God will have flung their protection around them, equally with the godly remnants of Israel, and brought them safely through the judgment to the age of glory. They, together with Israel, will clap their hands and triumph when Jesus assumes the crown. They will swell His praises, and celebrate earth's jubilee. That will be the day when "HE IS GREATLY EXALTED."

Lastly, in Psalm 48, we are given a prophetic glimpse of Jerusalem in her millennial glory, when she will be *the dwelling and palace of God on earth*.

Her excellence and beauty, as the place on earth where God manifests Himself, is celebrated in verses 1 and 2. The Jerusalem before the mind of the inspiring Spirit of God, is doubtless the one described in Ezekiel 40-48; and it is significant that this prophecy follows two chapters (Ezek. 38 and 39) which describe the final overthrow of the nations by an act of God. The temple, which will be the crown and glory of that city is described as, "the place of My throne, and the place of the soles of My feet, where I will dwell in the midst of the children of Israel for ever, and My holy Name, shall the house of Israel no more defile" (Ezek. 43: 7). It will be "the mountain of His holiness."

In her palaces God is known. As Ezekiel tells us, "The name of the city from that day shall be, The Lord is there [Jehovah-shammah]" (Ezek. 48: 35). In the first place He will be known there as a refuge, or high fortress, for Armageddon has just taken place. The kings of the earth were assembled "to the battle of that great day of God Almighty" (Rev. 16: 14). They have been utterly discomfited and broken; so much so that the spared of Israel will say, "As we have heard, so have we seen . . ." They had heard of God's great work of deliverance in the days of old (See, Ps. 44: 1) and had been grievously disappointed when they expected Him to accomplish a like deliverance through themselves. Now, when the Lord Jesus has come forth in His glory, and accomplished at one stroke, and by His mighty arm alone, a deliverance which goes beyond the highest hopes of men, they acknowledge with thankfulness that the work is done. They have seen with their own eyes all that they had heard and more than they had hoped: and the beauty of it is that in contrast to any previous deliverance, which

lasted only for a time, this deliverance abides, "God will establish it for ever."

And now God is known in her palaces in another way: not only as a refuge, but in that loving-kindness which is proper to Himself. Now will be fulfilled that prophecy of Zephaniah, which is so exceedingly beautiful that we quote it at some length: "Sing, O daughter of Zion; shout, O Israel; be glad and rejoice with all the heart, O daughter of Jerusalem. The Lord hath taken away thy judgments, He hath cast out thine enemy: the King of Israel, even the Lord, is in the midst of thee: thou shalt not see evil any more. In that day it shall be said to Jerusalem, Fear thou not: and to Zion, Let not thine hands be slack. The LORD thy God in the midst of thee is mighty; He will save, He will rejoice over thee with joy; He will rest [be silent] in His love, He will joy over thee with singing" (Zeph. 3: 14-17). The great JEHOVAH, revealed as JESUS, will be rejoicing in His redeemed people resting in His love. No wonder then that they think of His loving kindness, and are filled with His praise.

They think of His love as those brought into nearness to Him. They can say, "We have thought of Thy loving-kindness, O God, in the midst of Thy temple." Formerly they had been thinking of their own desolations and sorrows, far from the house of God in the "land of Jordan, and of the Hermonites, from the hill Mizar" (Ps. 42: 1-6). All is altered now. The King of glory has been manifested. His right arm has been victorious. He has mounted His throne and assumed His crown. Mount Zion rejoices. She has towers and bulwarks, and she has become a palace, for God is there. From her as a centre there goes forth the praise of God to the ends of the earth.

That praise is to be according to the Name of God, as verse 10 tells us: that is, the praise will be according to the way in which He will have made Himself known, it will be in keeping with it, for it will spring out of it. God will be known not only in a suffering Christ, but also in a victorious Christ. What praise will spring out of that knowledge!

We close with the last verse of Psalm 48. Here we seem to have the conclusion of the matter, as it concerned the Psalmist himself and the saints of his day — and as it concerns ourselves also. He speaks of "THIS GOD." What great depths are found here! The God who is known in this wonderful way is before us: and He "*is our God for ever and ever.*" Is it not so? We are to have the light and power of this knowledge of God. And we are not merely to have it as onlookers, for we have a vital interest in Him: He is *our* God. Nor is it a transient interest, but *for ever and ever*. All this that we have seen God to be — revealed in the victorious Christ — He is abidingly for us. We may count upon Him. We may wait patiently for Him.

The difficulties that confront us today may be very different to those contemplated in these Psalms, but our God is no different. THIS GOD is our God, right enough. And everything hinges upon that. We may be defeated. Being ignorant of Satan's devices — though we ought not to be — we may be defeated a hundred times, but the last conflict even for the church, is when the Lord intervenes. One battle, the last, lies altogether in His hands. He will break the bands of the grave for us, and meet the church as His completed body in the air, which has been the stronghold of the adversary's power.