

Series: Psalms
Title: The Rejoicing of Zion
Text: Ps 97: 6-12
Date: Jan 16, 2022
Place: SGBC, NJ

Psalm 97: 12: Rejoice in the LORD, ye righteous; and give thanks at the remembrance of HIS HOLINESS.

By Christ's HOLINESS, he established his people in righteousness when he settled judgment for us on the cross. This is how we behold the LORD reigneth! So in verses 6-7, he declares the sin of all who reject Christ. In verses 8-12 he declares the rejoicing of the Lord's people.

THE SIN OF REJECTING CHRIST

Psalm 97: 6: The heavens declare his righteousness, and all the people see his glory. 7: Confounded be all they that serve graven images, that boast themselves of idols: worship him, all ye gods.

In Romans 1, Paul said sinners are without excuse for not believing on Christ—"The heavens declare his righteousness, and all the people see his glory."

Romans 1: 20: For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, *even* his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse:

But Gentile sinners worshipped the works of their hands, the creature, themselves, idols, rather than God. They went into all manner of evil sin. "Confounded be all they that serve graven images, that boast themselves of idols: worship him, all ye gods."

But Paul was building to an important point. In Romans 2, Paul spoke to the Pharisee's. They judged Gentile idolators while the Pharisee's boasted and were confident that they had kept the law. But Paul said the Pharisees were as guilty as the heathen idolators by attempting to establish their own righteousness by the works of the law. It is not that they were outwardly doing what the Gentiles were doing. But they were guilty of the same sin in their hearts due to their sin-nature and due to trying to come to God by their law-keeping rather than Christ. It was idolatry and spiritual fornication and uncleanness the same as the Gentiles. We always condemn ourselves when we condemn others.

Romans 2: 1: Therefore thou art inexcusable, O man, whosoever thou art that judgest: for wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thyself; for thou that judgest doest the same things....13: (For not the hearers of the law *are* just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified...)

To be a doer of the law requires perfect obedience at all times. Paul is declaring that every sinner needs Christ to be our Righteousness through faith. May God give us discernment to hear his word. No sinner can keep the law in the righteousness God requires. **ONLY CHRIST IS THE DOER OF THE LAW AND GOD JUSTIFIED HIM AS HAVING DONE SO BY THE RESURRECTION FROM THE DEAD!**

Romans 3: 9: What then? are we better *than they*? No, in no wise: for we have before proved both Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under sin; 10 As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one: 11 There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God....[God gave the law]...19...that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God. 20 Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law *is* the knowledge of sin. 21 But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; 22 Even the righteousness of God *which is* by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference: 23 For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; 24: Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: [through faith in his blood]...28 Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law...31: Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid: yea, we establish the law [through faith in Christ; even as Abraham did when as yet he was a Gentile, 430 years before God gave the law at Sinai]

Romans 9: 30: What shall we say then? That the Gentiles, which followed not after righteousness, have attained to righteousness, even the righteousness which is of faith. 31 But Israel, which followed after the law of righteousness, hath not attained to the law of righteousness. 32 Wherefore? Because *they sought it* not by faith, but as it were by the works of the law. For they stumbled [at Christ the Rock]

Those who worship graven idols as well as any who put confidence in any work of their hands are confounded! They do not have spiritual discernment that they are sinners, guilty under the law, because they believe not on Christ alone! The sin is not believing on Christ. Without faith in Christ, all our sins remain. In Christ, is no sin!

THE REJOICING OF BELIEVING ON CHRIST

Psalm 97: 8: Zion heard, and was glad; and the daughters of Judah rejoiced because of thy judgments, O LORD. 9: For thou, LORD, art high above all the earth: thou art exalted far above all gods. 10: Ye that love the LORD, hate

evil: he preserveth the souls of his saints; he delivereth them out of the hand of the wicked. 11: Light is sown for the righteous, and gladness for the upright in heart.

How are sinners saved from being confounded? God quickens. God gives faith to behold and believe Christ reigneth. The holiness of God manifest in Christ on the cross makes every regenerated believer glad so that we rejoice in the LORD Jesus alone.

"Zion heard" Zion is God's elect, chosen and redeemed by God's grace; Christ's church redeemed by his precious blood.

Hebrews 12: 18: For ye are not come unto the mount [sinai] that burned with fire,... 22 But ye are come unto MOUNT SION...the heavenly Jerusalem, 23:...the church of the firstborn...to God the Judge of all,...24:...to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than *that of* Abel.

By the Spirit of God quickening us when we were dead in sins, giving us spiritual ears, we are no longer confounded! God made us true Jews by circumcising our heart in spirit. So we hear the good news of the gospel. We hear that Christ by his holiness has established us in righteousness on the cross. By God's grace, we believe Christ is all our Righteousness and Holiness. "He that believeth on Christ shall not be confounded!" The result is always the same.

"Zion heard and was glad; and the daughters of Judah rejoiced because of thy judgments, O LORD." "Judgments" means the act of deciding a case. God our Judge hands down the verdict to each one he brings to believe on Christ: JUSTIFIED THROUGH FAITH IN CHRIST'S BLOOD.

Romans 5: 1: Therefore being justified, by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: 2: By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.

"For thou, LORD, art high above all the earth: thou art exalted far above all gods." Each believer is glad and rejoices because we behold the LORD reigneth! Like Isaiah, he made us behold Christ high and lifted up, *exalted above all the earth: far above all gods* as our triumphant Redeemer who accomplished the redemption of his people.

"Ye that love the LORD, hate evil". By God shedding his love abroad in our heart, we love the LORD and hate evil. God is love! By the Spirit of God dwelling in his people, we "love the LORD." We say with John Newton that I don't love him as I ought; I don't love the Lord like I would; I don't love the Lord like I will one day; but I do love the LORD.

"Ye that love the LORD, hate evil." All sin is evil. Anything and everything that is contrary to holy God is evil. Christ is love. In the heart where Christ dwells, love reigns. God's people are not enemies to one another. Our enemies are those who hate us for the sake of the gospel. But Christ teaches us to hate no man but to love even our enemies and do good to them. He said,

Matthew 5: 43-44: Ye have heard that it hath been said by them of old time, Thou shalt love thy neighbor and hate thy enemy; but I say unto you, love your enemies; do good to them that hate you, and pray for them that despitefully use you, and persecute you.

We are not to hate any man. We are to have no wrath, malice, anger, harshness, or uncharitableness toward even enemies, certainly not toward brethren. But we hate evil because it was for our evil that our Savior suffered the cruel cross in our place. Evil blinded us and made us hate God. Evil made our nature "deceitful above all things and desperately wicked." Our evil would have destroyed us had not Christ intervened to create in us a new man, washing us in his precious blood. So now, by God's grace, we fear the LORD and hate the evil that God hates.

Proverbs 8:13: The fear of the LORD *is* to hate evil: pride, and arrogancy, and the evil way, and the froward mouth, do I hate.

How we hate pride! In the new heart, God's saints hate it. We hate it in our own selves. But oh, that we hated it more! Paul said,

Romans 7:15 For that which I do I allow not: for what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I.

We so prone to hate evil in others while being lenient toward evil in ourselves. We have to say of evil what John Newton said of love that I don't hate evil as I ought; I don't hate it as I would; I don't hate evil as I will one day; but I do hate evil.

Romans 12:9: *Let* love be without dissimulation. Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good.

Psalm 34:14: Depart from evil, and do good; seek peace, and pursue it.

"He preserveth the souls of his saints; he delivereth them out of the hand of the wicked. Light is sown for the righteous, and gladness for the upright in heart." Every sinner born of God is a saint. We have been sanctified by God. God sanctified us in divine election. We were sanctified by Christ blood perfecting forever those God sanctified and gave to him. We are sanctified by his Spirit in regeneration. Therefore, by his grace, our Sanctifier preserves the "souls" of his saints. Christ redeemed us! He will not let sin destroy us. He will not let one who he redeemed fall away in apostacy. Christ preserves the souls of his saint. Our body shall return to the dust but he preserves our souls forever! And Christ shall raise our bodies new.

Christ preserves us from every enemy, "*He delivereth them out of the hand of the wicked.*" And he preserves us by continuing to shine his Light into our hearts, "*Light is sown for the righteous, and gladness for the upright in heart*" Like he did for Isaiah, he keeps us beholding Christ reigning, triumphant over our sin, so he keeps us partaking of HIS HOLINESS. He keeps putting the live coal of the gospel on our tongue making us know he hath purged our sin! By this he keeps us bowing and worshipping and following him.

Psalm 93: 1: The LORD reigneth, he is clothed with majesty; the LORD is clothed with strength, *wherewith* he hath girded himself: the world also is stablished, that it cannot be moved. 2: Thy throne *is* established of old: thou *art* from everlasting. [when we become shaken, we cry] 3: The floods have lifted up, O LORD, the floods have lifted up their voice; the floods lift up their waves. [but he makes us behold Christ reigneth in his holiness; he has established us in his righteous judgment; so he puts the live coal on our tongue, declaring in our hearts] 4: The LORD on high *is* mightier than the noise of many waters, *yea, than* the mighty waves of the sea. [again he makes us fall our face and worship him, rejoicing] 5: Thy testimonies are very sure: holiness becometh thine house, O LORD, for ever.

So the Holy Spirit settles us at Christ's feet, making us behold it is Christ who is our Holiness. He is our Holiness at God's right hand the Holiness of our new heart. We are kept sanctified unto him by him. So we obey from the heart when he speaks saying, verse 12, "*Rejoice in the LORD, ye righteous; and give thanks at the remembrance of HIS holiness.*"

By his holiness, in his judgment on the cross, Christ has quenched the fire of God's wrath for his people, making us righteous in him. He has brought us to Mt Zion by giving us spiritual discernment to behold Christ reigning as our Mediator whose blood purged our sins. He has brought us to God our Judge who handed down the judgment, "Justified by Christ's blood!" He has made us partaker of HIS HOLINESS and keeps us partaking of his holiness by his preserving hand. So it is in Christ our Righteousness that we rejoice and give thanks at the remembrance of HIS HOLINESS!

Amen!