

**WORSHIP**

**Psalm 122**

**May 24, 2009 – Grace Covenant Baptist Church**

**INTRO: Jerusalem, the city of God, earthly (national Israel and spiritual Israel) and heavenly (Rev. 21).**

**Hebrews 12:22-24** – But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to myriads of angels,<sup>23</sup> to the general assembly and church of the firstborn who are enrolled in heaven, and to God, the Judge of all, and to the spirits of *the* righteous made perfect,<sup>24</sup> and to Jesus, the mediator of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood, which speaks better than *the blood* of Abel.

Covenantally, Old Covenant Jerusalem and what it pre-figured, and New Covenant Jerusalem.

*It is the duty of all believers to go to church and to pray for the church.*

**I. The Joy in Jerusalem (122:1-2)**

- Hear how the people longed for Jerusalem and rejoiced

**Psalm 122:1-2** – I was glad when they said to me, “Let us go to the house of the LORD.”<sup>2</sup> Our feet are standing within your gates, O Jerusalem.”

ILLUS: Pilgrims progress through from Psalm 120 – 122.

**Deuteronomy 12:10-12** – When you cross the Jordan and live in the land which the LORD your God is giving you to inherit, and He gives you rest from all your enemies around *you* so that you live in security,<sup>11</sup> then it shall come about that the place in which the LORD your God will choose for His name to dwell, there you shall bring all that I command you: your burnt offerings and your sacrifices, your tithes and the contribution of your hand, and all your choice votive offerings which you will vow to the LORD.<sup>12</sup> And you shall rejoice before the LORD your God.”

**Psalm 87:2** – The LORD loves the gates of Zion more than all the *other* dwelling places of Jacob. *And there they now stood!*

- If they rejoiced, if they were glad, how much more should we rejoice today? We live in a world with enemies all around six days a week. And we battle our greatest enemy, self, continually. Unfortunately, the world often dictates our thinking.

ILLUS: TGIF—instead, TGIS. The Church gathered is the one place where a person should feel safe and secure and rejoice in God’s goodness and provision.

**Hebrews 10:23-25** – Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful; <sup>24</sup> and let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds, <sup>25</sup> not forsaking our own assembling together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging *one another*; and all the more as you see the day drawing near.

- New Jerusalem

**Revelation 21:1-4** – <sup>1</sup> Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth passed away, and there is no longer *any* sea. <sup>2</sup> And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, made ready as a bride adorned for her husband. <sup>3</sup> And I heard a loud voice from the throne, saying, “Behold, the tabernacle of God is among men, and He will dwell among them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself will be among them, <sup>4</sup> and He will wipe away every tear from their eyes; and there will no longer be *any* death; there will no longer be *any* mourning, or crying, or pain; the first things have passed away.”

## II. The Benefits of Jerusalem (122:3-5)

### 1. Corporate worship promotes unity (vv. 3-4)

**Psalms 122:3-4** – <sup>1</sup> Jerusalem, that is built as a city that is compact together; <sup>4</sup> To which the tribes go up, even the tribes of the LORD – <sup>2</sup> An ordinance for Israel – to give thanks to the name of the LORD.

- At its best, however, the earthly Jerusalem was only a weak type of the Church and the heavenly city to come.

**Ephesians 4:1-7, 15, 16** – <sup>1</sup> Therefore I, the prisoner of the Lord, implore you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling with which you have been called, <sup>2</sup> with all humility and gentleness, with patience, showing tolerance for one another in love, <sup>3</sup> being diligent to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. <sup>4</sup> *There is one body and one Spirit*, just as also you were called in one hope of your calling; <sup>5</sup> one Lord, one faith, one baptism, <sup>6</sup> one God and Father of all who is over all and through all and in all. <sup>7</sup> But to each one of us grace was given according to the measure of Christ's gift... <sup>15</sup> We are to grow up in all *aspects* into Him who is the head, *even Christ*, <sup>16</sup> from whom the whole body, being fitted and held together by what every joint supplies, according to the proper working of each individual part, causes the growth of the body for the building up of itself in love.

**Revelation 5:9-10** – <sup>9</sup> And they sang a new song, saying, “Worthy are You to take the book and to break its seals; for You were slain, and purchased for God with Your blood *men* from every tribe and tongue and people and nation. <sup>10</sup> You have made them *to be* a kingdom and priests to our God; and they will reign upon the earth.”

**Revelation 21:10-16** – <sup>10</sup> And he carried me away in the Spirit to a great and high mountain, and showed me the holy city, Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, <sup>11</sup> having the glory

of God. Her brilliance was like a very costly stone, as a stone of crystal-clear jasper. <sup>12</sup> It had a great and high wall, with twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels; and names *were* written on them, which are *the names* of the twelve tribes of the sons of Israel. <sup>13</sup> *There were* three gates on the east and three gates on the north and three gates on the south and three gates on the west. <sup>14</sup> And the wall of the city had twelve foundation stones, and on them *were* the twelve names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb. <sup>15</sup> The one who spoke with me had a gold measuring rod to measure the city, and its gates and its wall. <sup>16</sup> The city is laid out as a square, and its length is as great as the width; and he measured the city with the rod.

## 2. Corporate worship proclaims justice (v. 5)

The writer talks about the fact that it is in Jerusalem that **“the thrones were set for judgment, the thrones of the house of David.”** This refers to the fact that during his reign David established courts in Jerusalem that were the place of final appeal for the Israelites.

**2 Samuel 8:15** – So David reigned over all Israel; and David administered justice and righteousness for all his people.

**2 Samuel 15:2-6** – <sup>2</sup> Absalom used to rise early and stand beside the way to the gate; and when any man had a suit to come to the king for judgment, Absalom would call to him and say, “From what city are you?” And he would say, “Your servant is from one of the tribes of Israel.” <sup>3</sup> Then Absalom would say to him, “See, your claims are good and right, but no man listens to you on the part of the king.” <sup>4</sup> Moreover, Absalom would say, “Oh that one would appoint me judge in the land, then every man who has any suit or cause could come to me and I would give him justice.” <sup>5</sup> And when a man came near to prostrate himself before him, he would put out his hand and take hold of him and kiss him. <sup>6</sup> In this manner Absalom dealt with all Israel who came to the king for judgment; so Absalom stole away the hearts of the men of Israel.

It was there that judgments were made. The basis for making those judgments would have been the application of the Word of God which had come to them through the prophets. One commentator suggests that it was likely for the psalmist or perhaps someone that the psalmist knew, the journey to Jerusalem was a “journey of justice.” That is, they would have made their way to the city in obedience to the law regarding the feasts, but also in order to bring before the courts some matter which had been unsettled in the country courts, or which had been referred to the officials in Jerusalem.

This too was in the psalmist’s mind as he entered the city. This too was one of the things which caused him to marvel at the city of Jerusalem and, from there, to praise God for the provision of his law and for the provision of these “thrones of judgment” where justice was administered according to His law.

- This praise of Jerusalem as the place where justice is administered according to the Word of God speaks to us as well as we consider how in our own gatherings we too submit ourselves to the Word of God, and therefore to the judgment of God as we have spiritual truths impressed upon our consciences, sometimes affirming and encouraging us and sometimes rebuking us, but at all times serving to build us up, to make us more like Christ. As we respond to his Word, we are led back to praise God and thank him for the gracious provision of his Word and for his on-going work in our lives and the lives of those around us.

**Revelation 21:5-8** – <sup>5</sup> And He who sits on the throne said, “Behold, I am making all things new.” And He said, “Write, for these words are faithful and true.” <sup>6</sup> Then He said to me, “It is done. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give to the one who thirsts from the spring of the water of life without cost. <sup>7</sup> He who overcomes will inherit these things, and I will be his God and he will be My son. <sup>8</sup> But for the cowardly and unbelieving and abominable and murderers and immoral persons and sorcerers and idolaters and all liars, their part *will be* in the lake that burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death.”

**Revelation 21:22-27** – <sup>22</sup> I saw no temple in it, for the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb are its temple. <sup>23</sup> And the city has no need of the sun or of the moon to shine on it, for the glory of God has illumined it, and its lamp *is* the Lamb. <sup>24</sup> The nations will walk by its light, and the kings of the earth will bring their glory into it. <sup>25</sup> In the daytime (for there will be no night there) its gates will never be closed; <sup>26</sup> and they will bring the glory and the honor of the nations into it; <sup>27</sup> and nothing unclean, and no one who practices abomination and lying, shall ever come into it, but only those <sup>1</sup> whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life.

### III. The Peace of Jerusalem (122:6-9)

#### 1. The content of the prayer

Prayer for peace and security (vv. 6-7)

**Ephesians 2:10-18** – <sup>10</sup> For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them. <sup>11</sup> Therefore remember that formerly you, the Gentiles in the flesh, who are called “Uncircumcision” by the so-called “Circumcision,” *which is* performed in the flesh by human hands— <sup>12</sup> *remember* that you were at that time separate from Christ, excluded from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. <sup>13</sup> But now in Christ Jesus you who formerly were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. <sup>14</sup> For He Himself is our peace, who made both *groups into* one and broke down the barrier of the dividing wall, <sup>15</sup> by abolishing in His flesh the enmity, *which is* the Law of commandments *contained* in ordinances, so that in Himself He might make the two into one new man, *thus* establishing peace, <sup>16</sup> and might reconcile them both in one body to God through the cross, by it having put to death the enmity. <sup>17</sup> AND HE CAME AND PREACHED PEACE TO YOU WHO WERE FAR AWAY, AND PEACE TO THOSE WHO WERE NEAR; <sup>18</sup> for through Him we both have our access in one Spirit to the Father.

#### 2. The motive of the prayer

(1) Love for the brethren (v. 8)

(2) Delight in the Lord (v. 9)

## Conclusion

### 1. Corporate worship should not be a burden, but a delight.

1. By prayer for the church.
2. By service in the church.
3. By bringing others to attend.
4. By keeping the peace.

### 2. Corporate worship is but a preview of what heaven will be like.

Henry Law, best known for his devotional on the Psalms, wrote, “To know what heaven is, heaven must be entered. May we rejoice in the thought that each day brings us nearer to it.”<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Henry Law, *Daily Prayer and Praise*, vol. 2, 214.