

**When Love Comes To Town [Psalm 87]**  
Draft by Steve Carr [[www.houseofcarr.com/thread](http://www.houseofcarr.com/thread)]

## INTRODUCTION

1. It's an interesting thing about life: things change. And we can't stop it.
  - \*SOMETIMES, I LONG TO FRAME SOMETHING IN TIME SO IT'S REMAINS THAT WAY.
  - a. At the end of the 1990's, one of my favorite movies was released: the Matrix.
    - 1) In it, the Wachowski brothers mastered a great story and told it well.
    - 2) It utilized a Christ-redemption narrative and even made Keanu awesome.
  - b. But well enough wasn't left alone and they killed the series with the follow-up
  - c. If I could dwell in a world where Matrix 2/3 didn't exist, I would gladly do so.
2. As I'm flashing back to last century, let me drop another example on you: the band U2.
  - a. I'm deliberately showing the older image of the band because I like them that way
  - b. The last decade of their music is dead to me, but I want to frame them in youth.
    - 1) They were simple and poetic, and their music is beautiful.
    - 2) Their 1988 Rattle and Hum album is simply brilliant. I WANT TO FRAME THIS IN TIME.
    - 3) An example: their collaboration with BB King in "*When love comes to town . . .*"
  - c. The opening lyrics: *I was a sailor, I was lost at sea, I was under the waves, Before love rescued me*
3. These themes of salvation and redemption are the basis of Scripture and are in our psalm
4. As we explore Psalm 87, let's observe what happens **WHEN LOVE COMES TO TOWN**

## VERSES 1-3

*On the holy mount stands the city he founded; <sup>2</sup> the LORD loves the gates of Zion more than all the dwelling places of Jacob. <sup>3</sup> Glorious things of you are spoken, O city of God. Selah*

\*\*\**This is a peculiar psalm, as it's disjointed in its language*

-It reads "his foundation in mountains of holiness"

-The first verses reveals God's love for three things.

1. God loves the city of Zion (city of Jerusalem, home of the temple).
  - a. Cities in the ancient world signified power and presence
  - b. The city shines for what it represents: home of God and his people.
  - c. Cities were often built on high hills near roads, water, and good farmland
    - 1) Ancient peoples would rebuild cities on sites that had these
    - 2) Jerusalem existed before and after God's people because of this
2. God loves "The dwelling places of Jacob."
  - a. This is the whole of the land God promised to his people.
  - b. The "eretz" of Israel is a critical part of the people's identity
  - c. God had established Israel as a nation apart from all other nations, dwelling exclusively for Him as His people in His land
3. God loves the gates of Jerusalem.
  - a. What is so significant about gates? Why does God love gates?
  - b. Ancient cities were built for defense against invaders.
    - 1) Gates were the most vulnerable of a cities protective measures
    - 2) Here are four chambered gates of Megiddo (designed during times of Solomon).
    - 3) Note the areas above where they could attack.
  - c. You couldn't easily maneuver an attacking army through here
  - d. Why does he like the gates most?
    - 1) Gates were also the means for rightful people to enter.
    - 2) They were the means of access to the city.
    - 3) The gates made it possible for people to come near to God.

**John 4:23** *But the hour is coming, and is now here, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for the Father is seeking such people to worship him.*

4. THEY COME TO THE LAND, THEY COME TO THE CITY, THEY COME THROUGH THE GATES,
  - a. This city brings humanity together

#### **VERSE 4**

<sup>4</sup> *Among those who know me I mention Rahab and Babylon; behold, Philistia and Tyre, with Cush— "This one was born there," they say.*

1. The Selah connotes a break, pause or shift in the Psalm
  - a. What we have here is a change of voicing, a new speaker
  - b. And with the phrase "those who know me" we see that this is God.
  - c. God has decided to leave heaven to go and check out the city
2. As God is meandering around, he's looking at some different nationalities.
  - a. Rahab, not just indicative of the prostitute from Jericho, but a double meaning
    - 1) It is synonymous in Hebrew for "dragon" and the dragon people were Egypt
  - b. Philistia- Canaanite coastal people who were the adversaries of Israel
    - 1) They were difficult enemies as they sought to subdue the promised land
  - c. Tyre – modern day Lebanon
    - 1) They were northern Canaanites/Philistines, also an adversary
  - d. Cush – modern day Ethiopia
    - 1) Indicative of invaders from deep Africa
3. If you were to see these people walking among Jerusalem, you'd assume evil
  - a. Did these people finally conquer Jerusalem?
  - b. The response to this puzzle is in the final verses.

#### **VERSES 5-7**

<sup>5</sup> *And of Zion it shall be said, "This one and that one were born in her"; for the Most High himself will establish her. <sup>6</sup> The LORD records as he registers the peoples, "This one was born there." Selah <sup>7</sup> Singers and dancers alike say, "All my springs are in you."*

1. These foreigners were no longer adversaries, they were immigrants.
  - a. Immigration is a hot-topic among Americans, but it's always been this way
  - b. Every few decades, a new group wants part of the American dream and people who have been here longer are never enthused.
  - c. It's fear based as if someone coming in is taking something from you.
    - 1) This phrase: "THIS ONE WAS BORN HERE" turns that concept on its head.
    - 2) We're talking instantaneous citizenship. It's the ultimate source of pride.
2. When it comes to the heritage of Zion, it was likely a similar thing.
  - a. In fact, in the New Testament, the conflict between Jewish & Gentiles was this
  - b. The Jews were the people of God! Who wants outsiders coming in?
  - c. But the reality is, this was the dream of God as seen in the psalms.
3. Now you know this about me: I hold intense pride in Cincinnati: I was born here.
  - a. I love to talk about that with my daughter as it's HER heritage too.
  - b. But there are those of you non-Cincinnati born that are picking up this heritage.
    - 1) You buy Reds gear, you eat Skyline Chili, you're adopting this city as your own.
  - c. Honestly, as a native, I'm proud of that. I want people to own it like I do.
4. But here's the key to the Psalm in the last words: ALL MY SPRINGS ARE IN YOU.
  - a. The poets of the Bible portrayed salvation as springs, fountains, fresh water.

- b. The springs are in Zion, Jerusalem and the land of God.
- c. Thus, the nations *must come to Zion*, not Zion coming to the nations.
  - 1) This is important on both sides because Zion still holds its importance.
  - 2) But at the same time, the nations must assimilate into Zion.
  - 3) JERUSALEM IS OUR HERITAGE.

## **CONCLUSION**

- 1. The good news: this is a moment FRAMED in time for us to live forever.
  - a. God came to town and revealed his dreams of a new nation.
  - b. God came to town and the entire world were the beneficiaries
- 2. There's an extra lyric to the *When Love Comes to Town* song that I think is apt

*When I woke up I was sleeping on the street  
I felt the world was dancing, and I was dirt beneath their feet  
When I woke up I saw the Devil looking down  
But my Lord played guitar the day love came to town*

**\*\***When God comes to town, all of our fortunes are reverses.

**Communion** is the realization of Psalm 87: God in our midst.