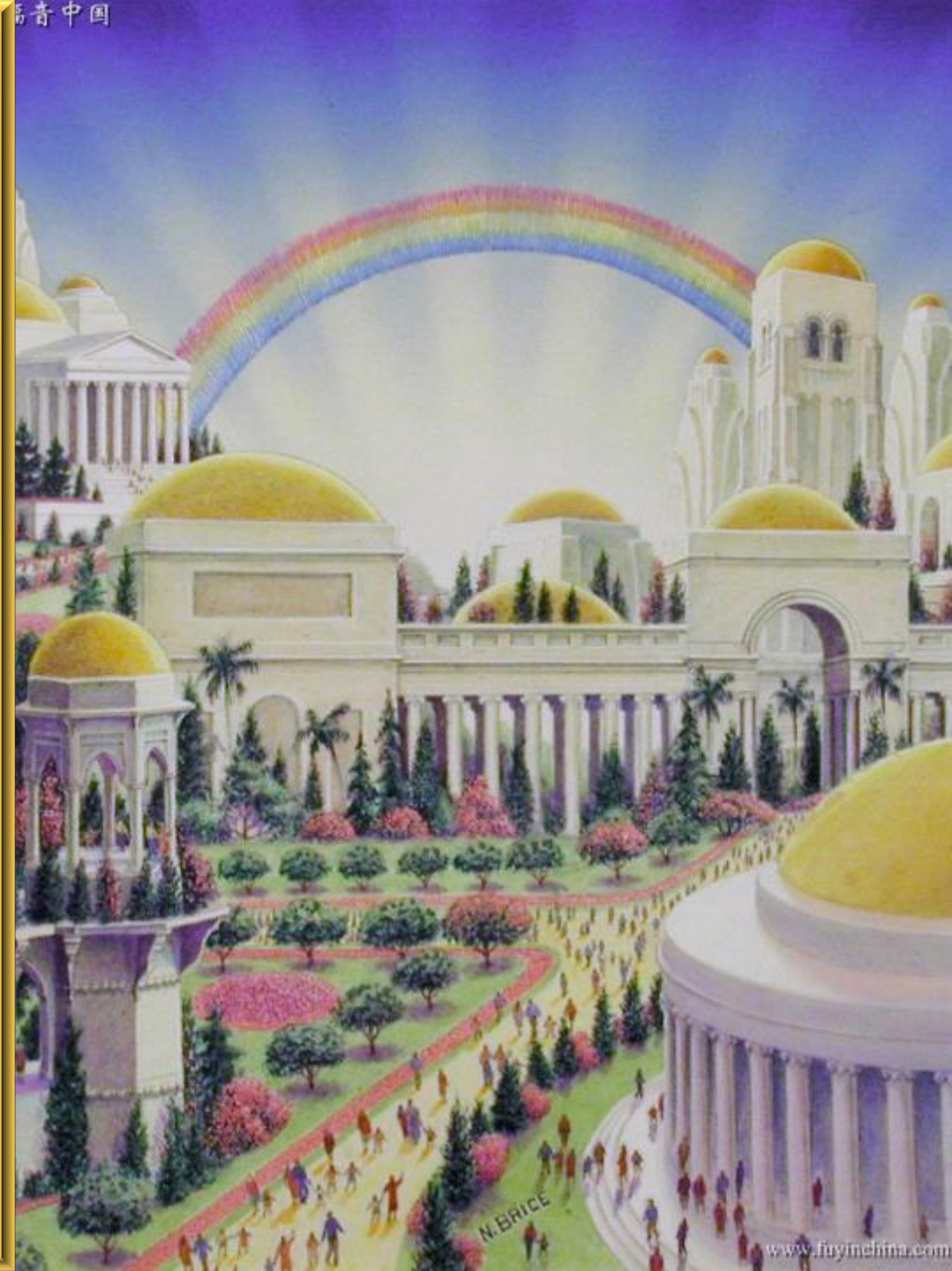


Lesson 11 for March 16, 2024

LONGING FOR GOD IN ZION



“My soul
longs, yes,
even faints
for the courts
of the Lord;
my heart and
my flesh cry
out for the
living God”

(Psalm 84:2, NKJV)



Zion is the name of the mountain where Jebus (Jerusalem) was located, which was also known by the name of Zion. Since David conquered it, Zion came to be called “the city of David” (2 Sam. 5:6-7). Over time, Zion was used as a name to refer to the entire city of Jerusalem (including the Temple area) or even the entire people of Israel (Ps. 48:2; 126:1).

In Psalms, Zion is mentioned 38 times. It stands out as the dwelling place of God, the place from which He sends help and salvation (Ps. 9:11; 14:7; 20:2).

If we want to meet God, let us go to Zion (Ps. 84:7). There, God receives praise (Ps. 9:11; 65:1). There, the redeemed will be in the company of the Lamb (Rev. 14:1).



The courts of Zion (Psalm 84).



The peace of Zion (Psalm 122).



Those born in Zion (Psalm 87).



The Refuge of Zion (Psalm 46).



The immovable mountain of Zion (Psalm 125).

THE COURTS OF ZION

Psalm 84

"My soul longs, yes, even faints for the courts of the Lord; My heart and my flesh cry out for the living God" (Psalm 84:2)

Who comes to the courts of Zion?

Psalm 84: 1-2, 10

Those who ardently long for it

Psalm 84:3

Small and great, lofty and humble

Who is happy there?

Psalm 84:4

Those who work in the work of God

Psalm 84:5, 12

Those who trust in God and want to follow him

How do those who go there act?

Psalm 84:6

They turn sorrow into blessing

Psalm 84:7

They grow every day in power

Since no human being can physically be in the courts of Zion (God's abode in Heaven), the Lord has given us prayer as the means to speak with Him and make our requests (Psalm 84:8-9).



God answers our prayers and is for us "sun" –from whose rays he radiates blessing– and a protective shield (Psalm 84:11).

THE PEACE OF ZION

Pray for the peace of Jerusalem: "May they prosper who love you" (Psalm 122:6)

Psalm 122 belongs to a group of psalms called "gradual," "ascension," or "pilgrim" psalms. They were sung as groups of pilgrims went to Jerusalem to celebrate the annual festivals.

As they ascended Mount Zion, the pilgrims burst into joyful praise: "Jerusalem, we are now within your gates!" (Ps. 122:2).

As they go up to Zion, everyone praises God (Ps. 122:4). It was also the time to resolve judicial problems and find justice (Ps. 122:5).



But what stands out most in Psalm 122 is the prayer for peace:

Peace to prosper (Ps. 122:6)

Peace to have rest (Ps. 122:7)

Peace to live in harmony (Ps. 122:8)

Those who rejoice in meeting God will seek the good of their church (Ps. 122:9).



THOSE BORN IN ZION

**"And of Zion it will be said, "This one and that one were born in her;
and the Most High Himself shall establish her" (Psalm 87:5)**



Psalm 87:1-3 → Zion surpasses all mountains

In the past, God established specific places where people were to gather to worship. Among these places was Shiloh, but it had to be destroyed because of its wickedness (Ps. 78:58-60; Jer. 7:12).

After the Temple was built, Zion encompassed Mount Moriah. No place could better teach the plan of Redemption. Therefore, "Glorious things have been said of you, City of God" (Ps. 87:3).

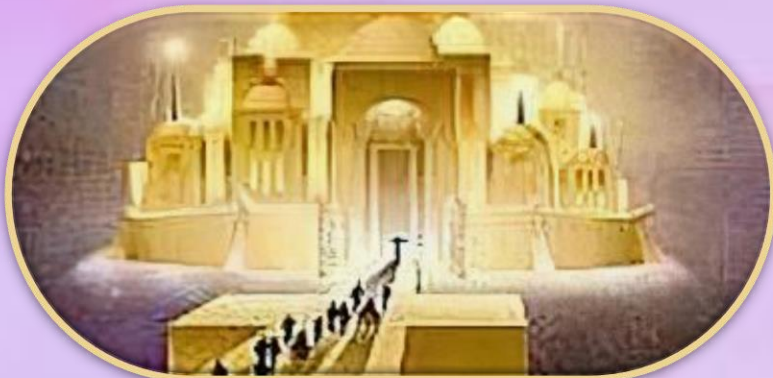
Psalm 87:4-6 → The sons and daughters of Zion

The salvation that emanates from Zion attracts people from all nations. All who accept this salvation will be recorded as born in Zion.

Psalm 87:7 → The source of all inspiration

Praise arises when thinking of Zion.

Mount Zion is that stone that, made into a mountain, fills the earth (Dan. 2:44-45). On that mountain we who are born on it will dwell forever (Rev. 14:1)



THE REFUGE OF ZION

"The Lord of hosts is with us; The God of Jacob is our refuge. Selah" (Psalm 46:11)

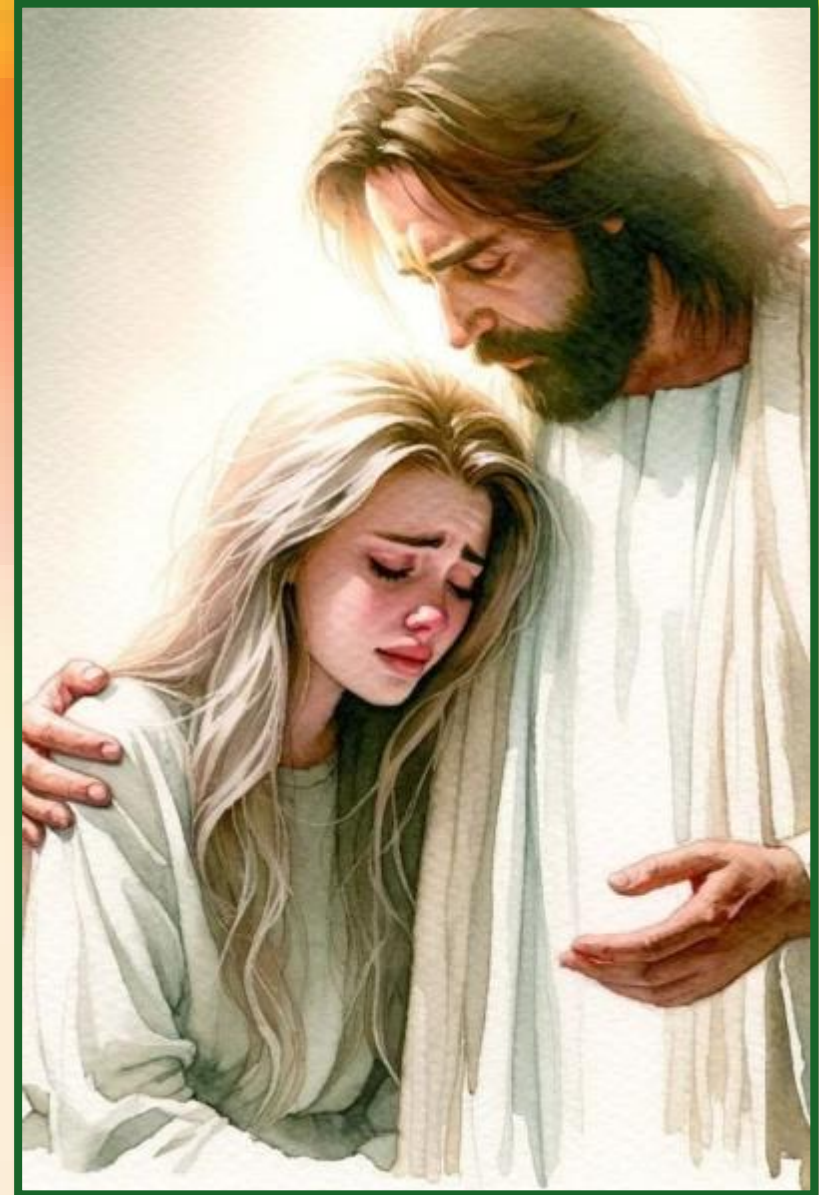
Faced with the problems that may arise around us, "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble" (Ps. 46:1).

Those who do not know God act impetuously causing calamities, disasters, and wars (Ps. 46:2-3, 6). But God has the ability to stop these wars, and to act in the face of calamity and disasters (Ps. 46:9).

Just as the verses that tell us about God's protection are scattered throughout Psalm 46, God lets his protective power show here and there (Ps. 48:5, 7-8, 11).

However, we must still wait for the definitive moment, when God will be "exalted among the nations; exalted [...] in the earth" (Ps. 46:10b).

Meanwhile, we are given the assurance that God, from his sanctuary, gives us life (Ps. 46:4), and asks us to wait patiently, maintaining our communion with Him: "Be still, and know that I am God" (Ps. 46:10a).



THE IMMOVABLE MOUNT OF ZION

"Those who trust in the Lord are like Mount Zion, which cannot be moved, but abides forever" (Psalm 125:1)

The chiasmus of Psalm 125 shows us a great teaching:



Psalm 125:1. Those who trust in God are immovable

Psalm 125:2. God is always doing good to his people

Psalm 125:3. Evil will not always reign, let us not stop trusting

Psalm 125:4. God is always doing good to his people

Psalm 125:5. If we stop trusting, we will be destroyed

"As for such as turn aside unto their crooked ways, the Lord shall lead them forth with the workers of iniquity: but peace shall be upon Israel" (Ps. 125:5).

“If the eye is single, if it is directed heavenward, the light of heaven will fill the soul, and earthly things will appear insignificant and uninviting. The purpose of the heart will be changed, and the admonition of Jesus will be heeded... Your thoughts will be fixed upon the great rewards of eternity. All your plans will be made in reference to the future, immortal life ...Biblical religion will be woven into all your daily life.”

EGW (God's Amazing Grace, August 31)