

Bible Gateway Psalm 48 :: NASB Walk Around Zion Now. Apparently, Psalm 48 was written shortly after an enemy of Israel had attempted to besiege Jerusalem and had failed. Some commentators believe that the Psalm refers to a confederation of Edomites, Moabites, and Ammonites that invaded Judah during the reign of Jehoshaphat. At one point, the enemy army could see Jerusalem.

However, through God's actions, they began to quarrel with each other, fight, and eventually destroyed themselves ([2 Chronicles 20](#)). Another position was the Psalm described the invasion by the Assyrians under Sennacherib and the destruction of their army ([2 Chronicles 32](#)). Whatever the specific event, God had saved His people, and Psalm 48 was a song of rejoicing over the victory.

For the Jewish people, Jerusalem was all important, because the presence of the Lord God was with them in the temple. The people of Israel were a people very much aware of their history, and their identity was directly tied to Jerusalem and the Temple that was located there. Unfortunately, history showed that dedication and love for the Lord God was often lacking. The Temple and Jerusalem was too often seen as a talisman of protection. But at that moment, they were united in their joy and relief at be saved.

In verse 9 is a beautiful description of "what" should be the main theme behind the worship of the Lord, "Within your temple, O God, we meditate on your unfailing love." The key to the passage is that the love of God is the reason for a person's acts of worship, and that same love should be the subject of meditation. This passage is doubly significant in that the Old Testament scriptures did not give as clear a picture of God's love as would the New Testament scriptures in the New Age. In many ways, the accounts within the Old

Testament were harsh and tragic. The Gospel message was still the unrevealed “mystery of the ages” that Paul would write about. Time after time the Lord had punished the nation of Israel. However, in spite of all of that, the Psalmist stressed the “unfailing love” of God!

The message of the Psalm and the attitude of the faithful of Israel are both important examples for Christians today. The faithful of Israel knew that God was Holy, Good, and Perfect. They also knew and accepted that God’s punishments were justified because the people, as a nation, had sinned against the Lord. His punishment did not diminish His love. The faithful of Israel were simply grateful that the Living God had chosen to accept them as His people.

Within that attitude is a lesson for today. Too many Christians question God’s love when any little thing goes wrong. Too many Christians sing the praises of the Lord only when He is “doing His job” to keep problems away. When the problems and trials of life hit, then suddenly the Lord is not near as powerful or loving. The Lord failed!

However, the faithful of the Old Testament age knew that the trials of life had nothing to do with the faithfulness of God. Life is not a vacation – it is a task to be met. The ancient Jews knew that, and the same message is found in the writings of the New Testament scriptures. God’s love is unfailing, and that love has been demonstrated in Jesus Christ. Physical ease and luxury have never been valid tests of God’s love. In fact, in this life Christians are taught that they WILL face adversity.

In verses 12 and 13 the psalmist wrote,

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"Walk around Zion, go around her, count her towers, consider well her ramparts, view her citadels, that you may tell of them to the next generation."

Within that passage was shown both the *great strength* and weakness of the Nation of Israel. The psalmist was awed by the great defenses of the city. His words were very similar to the disciples' words to Jesus as they left the temple. The psalmist knew that the city's fortifications pointed to the fact that the Lord had blessed them and was watching out for them.

However, gradually the people began to believe that their city would never fall. The Temple would always be there, because that was God's home. It did not matter what they did. God was bound to them in Jerusalem. The people had tried to enclose, or limit, God. However, God demonstrated that he was the God of the universe, and the people's attitude was wrong.

Today, Christians need to remember that their strength is in Jesus Christ. Great structures and far-reaching programs may be



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Impressive, but those are not the Lord. The success, or failure, of individual Christians and congregations is based upon an individual relationship with God through Jesus Christ. The Jewish people forgot that their strength was based upon their faith and obedience. The lesson is a clear one for God's people today.

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