

The Right Way

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Date: 01 January 2000

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[0 : 00] Return with me now for a short time this evening to words which you will find in the portion that we read from the 107th Psalm.

Psalm 107, reading again at birth 7. Psalm 107, reading again at birth 7.

And he led them forth by the right way that they might go to a city of habitation.

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Now the opening verses of this psalm seem to refer to the leading of the children of Israel through the wilderness, to the land of Canaan.

[1 : 05] Or perhaps the reference might be to the return of the Israelites from Babylon after the captivity.

There may be a reference to one or the other of these two things or the reference may be to both of them. But there are expressions in the context that can never be applied to Israel of old.

They can only be applied to God's spiritual Israel. And you will remember how they are described in that chapter from which our text was taken last evening.

We are the circumcisions which worship God in the spirit and rejoice in Christ Jesus and have no confidence in the flesh.

The pilgrimage of the Lord.

[2 : 41] God in the flesh and the Holy of auters being upon the sacred to condemn the sacred to ■■■■it programs of the entitlement meaning of the Mother. And theelin ■■■m AAA They led them forth by the right way that they might go to a city of habitation.

Now I leave with it tonight the four things, the four parts into which the text naturally divides itself.

There's the leader, there are the lead there is the way in which he leads them and there is the destination to which he brings them now first of all there is the leader and it's plain and clear from the preceding verses who this leader is none other than Jehovah himself Jehovah Jesus is the leader of his redeemed people behold I have given him for a witness to the people a leader and commander to the people that's how God describes his own son how did God lead his people through the wilderness well you remember that he led them in a pillar of cloud by day and in a pillar of fire by night that pillar of cloud and fire was the symbol of God's presence the symbol of God's presence with his people and the symbol of his leadership awesome and it's wonderful to note with regard to this pillar of cloud and fire it regulated all the journey when it stopped so did they stop too and when it moved and when it moved and when it moved and when it moved so did they move onwards too when it turned to the right hand and when it turned to the left so did they turn likewise all the journeys were regulated by the pillar of cloud and fire oh friends the Lord Jesus Christ leads his people by the authoritative government of his world this is his voice this is his voice my sheep hear my voice and I know them and they follow me but he also leads his people by the drawing power of his love and that's something that you and I should never forget what was the prayer of the church in the song of Solomon draw me draw me and we will run after thee

I if I be lifted up from the earth will draw all men unto me you see the saviour doesn't drive he draws but then he leads his people by his own example he lived in this world a man and he encountered everything that his people have to meet within the world and he has left them an example that they should follow his steps he that saith he abideth in him and walketh not after him he that saith he abideth in him ought himself also so to walk even as he walked as many as are led by the spirit of God they are the sons of God the father gives his son to be the leader and commander of his people the son the son gives his holy spirit to lead them do you remember what he said to his disciples in the upper room when he was giving to them the promise of the comfort of the holy spirit

I will send him up to you when he is come he will guide you into all truth now there are two instruments two means that the holy spirit uses in leading the redeemed of the lord there is his own word inspired by the holy spirit thy word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path oh send out thy light and thy truth let them lead me and the other instrument that the the holy spirit uses to lead the redeemed of the lord is the ministry thou led us thy people like a flock by the hand of Moses and Aaron or does Paul cry be you followers of me does he stop there no even as I also am of Christ may ye followers of me even as I also am of Christ

[9 : 48] I wonder if you ever have thought of this friends how fearfully destructive is the ministry that was never sent to read blind leaders of the blind and if the blind lead the blind well you don't need me to tell you tonight what's the end of the the ditch and an awful end it is but who are those whom he leads you'll get it in verse 2 let the redeemed of the lord say so whom he hath redeemed from the hand of the enemy and there's where the leading of the begins it's not everyone that

Christ and the holy spirit lead those whom he leads are those whose inheritance he has redeemed or brought back and those whom he leads are those whom he delivers from the power of the enemy who would hold them back from the inheritance and keep them in bondage Pharaoh and the task masters of Egypt Nebuchadnezzar and the captains of Babylon were but images of higher power than those sin and Satan and the world but those whom Christ leads by his holy spirit are those who are brought to himself in the day of their conversion made willing in the day of his power brought out of darkness into his marvelous light made free with the glorious liberty wherewithin makes his people free now in the passing tonight just let me leave with you these three marks of those who are led by the

Lord Jesus Christ and the spirit and the first mark is this they are a people that are made to realize that they can never lead themselves and the more they go on in the spiritual life this is something that born in upon them more and more they can never lead themselves they need to be led and do you know they're just like little children they're just like blind men they need to be led the second mark is this they are willing to be led a willing people submissive obedient and they're always praying what we were singing tonight show me thy ways

O Lord thy paths O teach thou me do thou lead me in thy truth wherein my teacher be the third mark of those who are led by the Christ of the Holy Spirit is this they steadfastly turned by his grace from their old ways their old ways and from their former masters many as are led by the Spirit of God they that are Christ have crucified the flesh with the affections of lust now I ask you tonight as I ask myself have we these marks are we the redeemed of the Lord out of the hand of the great enemy of our soul sin

Satan and the world what a pitiable condition it is to be in to be a willing captive in the hands of the devil you won't be led by Christ you won't be led by the Spirit you'll be led by yourselves ah well how many there are and how many there have been and how many there are whom the devil drives just like an ox to the slaughter what is the way in which he leads them he led them forth by the right way and the interesting thing with regard to this is there was no highway through the wilderness no highway but God led his people by the right way and the

[16 : 17] Holy Spirit is gathering the redeemed of the Lord from north and south and east and west and is gathering them into the one only way that leads to the celestial city now it's one special way of grace the way that is laid down marked out in the covenant of grace and what is that way Jesus I am the way the truth and the life no man cometh unto the father but by me Jesus Christ who of God is made unto us wisdom and righteousness and sanctification and redemption that's the one only way that brings us into the holiest of all love but then it is one special way of providence tell me friends is it by a chance way that the

Lord leads his people through the wilderness of this world is there anything such as chance no there's no such thing as chance everything that happens to the child of God is just like a link in a chain it has a bearing upon a future step and everything has a bearing upon the end of the way let me give you two illustrations first of all you remember the case of Abraham's servant when he was sent to find a wife for Isaac what did he say

I being in the way the Lord led me to the house of my master's brethren I being in the way the Lord led me to the house of my master's brethren but then there is the case of Joseph one of the most remarkable in all God's world you remember how a coat of many colours awakened the envy and the enmity and the jealousy of his brothers that led to his being sold to Ishmaelites who brought him down into the land of Egypt that in turn led to the house of Potiphar an incident in that house led to an

Egyptian prison a dream in the prison led to the presence of Pharaoh and in time to the second place in the government of all the land of Egypt but do you see God's purpose in it all oh oh the wonder of God's providence the preservation of Jacob's of Joseph's family in the day of famine and the bringing down of the children of Israel into the land of Egypt Egypt now will you tell me any of you here tonight that the stats of the list of God's children aren't as surely and certainly arranged if they aren't so strongly marked all things work together for good to them that love

God to them who are called according to his purpose the steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord but look at how he described the way the right way the right way could it be any other than the right way does God ever live by the wrong way never as for God his way is perfect and it's right because it's the only way every other way is wrong the Lord

[22 : 20] Jesus Christ is the one only way to the celestial city but it's also the right way morally the word that he uses here means straight straight moral rectitude righteousness the way in which the Holy Spirit leads is the way of holiness the unclean shall not pass over it the redeemed shall walk there and you find the same expression in the 23rd psalm he leadeth me in the path of righteousness for his name's sake but it's the right way because it's the best way however thorny and rough and mysterious it may seem to us it's the best way the best way for pilgrims oh no doubt there's a valley of humiliation and there's a small of discord and there's a hill difficulty but it's the best way for pilgrims now I'm going to say this to you tonight the worst things that happen to a child of

God in the way of God's providence are the best things for the end of the way the worst things that happen to a child of God in the way of God's providence are the best things for the end of the way Listen to how Jacob cries in a day of deep distress, Joseph is not. Simeon is not. The union will take Benjamin away. All these things are against me. But Jacob couldn't do without any one of those hard trying experiences that brought down his grey head with sorrow to the grave. And the captain of his salvation showed him that before he left the world. He got the good of it all in the latter end.

I leave with you again tonight, friends, the promise that I left with you at the table yesterday.

I will bring the blind by a way that they knew not. I will lead them in paths that they have not known. I will make darkness light before them and crooked things straight. These things will I do unto them.

And not forsake them. Now lastly, the destination to which he brings them. He led them forth by the right way that they might go to a city of habitation.

[26 : 23] And you find the same expression. And you find the same expression. And they make us a hungry to dwell that they may prepare a city for habitation.

And there are these two thoughts involved in this expression that the psalmist uses. And the first thought is this, the thought of permanence.

The thought of permanence. The thought of permanence. Here are we, low continuing city.

Onwards. Onwards. Onwards we must go. From one communion season to another communion season. From one trial to another trial.

From one degree of grace. From one degree of grace. From one degree of grace. And the pilgrim's progress is towards the celestial city.

[27 : 47] The redeemed of the Lord are just like Abraham of old. Looking for a city which has foundations. Whose border and whose nature is God.

And the longer we live in the world, the more they desire that city. The more we find the things of this world empty. Empty. Empty. Oh how empty.

They desire a better country. That is unhavenly. Look at the tents of the wilderness. Have they any foundations? No. No foundation.

The tents are to be taken up. Carried on to the next halting place. No foundation. But. Heaven is described as a city that has foundations. Whose builder and whose maker is God.

Now the other thought is this. What is a city? Well it's a corporation. It's a community of people.

[29 : 34] Who can ever describe the society of heaven? Who?

The eternal trinity. The elect angels. The redeemed of every kindred and people and tongue.

It's the city of God's habitation. The land which is in the midst of the thorns shall feed them and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters.

And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes. The sweetest thing about it. Do you know the sweetest thing about it?

It's forever. It's forever. Nobody will ever hurry them away. Nobody will ever make them afraid.

[30 : 43] Time will be swallowed up in eternity and nothing will be lacking to make the happiness complete. They shall be made perfectly blessed, as the shorter Catechism puts it, perfectly blessed in the full enjoying of God to all eternity.

Now I leave you tonight, I may never see you again, but there are just one or two things that I would like to say to you.

And first of all there is a word of encouragement for the Lord's own people. Well may you put up with the trials by the way, with what the Apostle Paul calls our light affliction which is but for a moment.

Didn't the captain of our salvation think the same? Who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame and is set down at the right hand of God.

So, believer, well may you deny yourself, take up your cross daily, follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth, the city is before you.

[32 : 34] And himself in it. The second lesson is this.

May God teach you and me to deal with temporal things.

As those who have but a little handling of them, as those who have but a little sight of them. Then we must leave them forever. May God teach us to use these things to their proper end.

For their proper purpose. And what is their proper purpose? The glory of God. The glory of God and the believer's own furtherance on his way to the city of which hath foundations.

Now lastly, if God leads in providence, how careful we should be to commit our way to him at every step.

[34 : 07] If God leads in providence, how careful we should be to commit our way to him in every step, if we would have it safe and secure.

Set thou thy trust upon the Lord, be thou doing good. So thou in the land shalt dwell and verily hast foot. Delight thyself in God, he'll give thine heart's desire to thee.

Listen, thy way to God commit. Him trust it bring to pass.

Shall he? He led them forth by the right way, that they might go to a city of habitation.

May God bless his truth to us all tonight, and may he be pleased to make it enlightening and saving and sanctifying truth to us.

[35 : 24] Let us pray. O blessed one, we thank thee for thy word. It is living and powerful and sharper than any two-edged sword.

Make it so in the experience of every one of us. God bless you. And give us all to know and to realize that we can never guide us our own steps.

That we can never lead ourselves. We need thy guidance and thy direction every step of life's way and every stage of life's journey.

And we will plead with thee the promise that we were singing together tonight. I will instruct thee and thee teach the way that thou shalt go.

And with mine eye upon thee set, I will direction show. Grant us grace every one to look away from ourselves, for in us there dwelleth no good thing.

[36 : 39] Grant us grace to look to Jesus, whom thou hast given to be a leader and commander, to thine own people. Grant us grace to follow the Lamb, whithersoever he goeth, and make the path of every one of us to be as the path of the just, which shineth more and more unto the perfect day.

And we will guide us with thy counsel while we live afterward. Receive us to thy glory. Forgive the iniquity of our holy things.

For Jesus' sake, reap us a Wieder song called Holy■■■■. Amen.