a sermon: ON PSALM 100

LET US GIVE THANKS UNTO THE LORD!

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I. A PROPOSITION

Let us offer up joyful praises unto The LORD! Let us serve The LORD with gladness! Let us come before His Presence with a song of thankfulness! For The LORD is good, great is His mercy, and His Truth endures to all generations!

II. THE KING JAMES VERSION TEXT – PSALM 100:1-5: 1

<A Psalm of praise.>

- 1 Make a joyful noise unto The LORD, all ye lands.
- 2 Serve The LORD with gladness: come before His presence with singing.
- 3 Know ye that The LORD He is GOD: it is He that hath made us, and not we ourselves; we are His people, and the sheep of His pasture.
- 4 Enter into His gates with thanksgiving, and into His courts with praise: be thankful unto Him, and bless His Name.
- 5 For The LORD is good; His mercy is everlasting; and His truth endureth to all generations.

III. INTRODUCTION – THE NATURE OF THE PSALMS

In whatever age, place and tongue The PSALMS may be read in, they have a universal appeal to the hearts, minds and souls of men. Their form, expression and poetry express the deepest yearnings and passions of men. Why? The timeless and universal appeal of The PSALMS are more than just good art, stirring literature or superb poetry by the minds of men. It is because The PSALMS are Inspired by The Spirit of GOD, through its human writers, as part of The Special Revelation of The Creator to man!

The Reverend James Anderson observes of the universal appeal of The PSALMS, "It teaches the most exalted piety, and the purest morality. It tends only to refine and exalt the nature of man, to elevate the soul to GOD, and inspire it with the admiration and love of His character, to curb the passions, purify the affections, and excite the cultivation of whatever things are true, honest, just, pure, lovely, and of good report. It has guided the saint in doubt and difficulty; it has nerved him for self-denial and suffering; it has imparted support and comfort to him in the hour of death!" ²

The Fathers of The Church have universally lauded The PSALMS. Athanasius calls Them, "An epitome of The whole Scriptures." Basil, "A compendium of all theology." Martin Luther, "A little Bible, and the summary of The Old Testament." Melancthon, "The most elegant work extant in the world." John Calvin calls The

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¹ 1, KJV, PSALM 100:1-5.

² 2, Calvin's Commentaries, Volume IV, Commentary on The Book of PSALMS by John Calvin, Introductory Notice by The Rev. James Anderson, page vii.

³ 2, Calvin's Commentaries, Volume IV, Commentary on The Book of PSALMS by John Calvin, Introductory Notice by The Rev. James Anderson, page vii.

PSALMS "An Anatomy of all the Parts of the Soul" because, as he observes, "...there is not an emotion of which any one can be conscious that is not here represented as in a mirror" by the hand of The HOLY SPIRIT!

This is why Matthew Henry says of The PSALMS, "...This Book brings us into The Sanctuary [of The LORD], draws us off from ...[petty discourses] with men, with the politicians, philosophers, or disputers of this world, and directs us into communion with GOD, by solacing and reposing our souls in Him, lifting up and letting out our hearts towards Him. Thus may we be in The Mount with GOD!" ⁵

IV. THE PURPOSE OF PSALM 100

We do not know who wrote PSALM 100, but we certainly know its purpose! PSALM 100 opens in The Hebrew text with the words – MIZMOR LETODAH – הובר הוב השלור השלור

Willem A. VanGemeren offers that PSALM 100 may have been a hymn sung by ancient Israel in its liturgical worship of GOD in The Jerusalem Temple. In fact, PSALMS 96 to 99 proclaim "YAHWEH's Kingship" – celebrating GOD as King of The Universe - which suggests that PSALM 100 may have served "...as a hymnic conclusion of this [Enthronement] collection [of PSALMS]." Regardless, we shall come to see that PSALM 100's call to men in all times and places is universal, glorious, riveting and appropriate where ever and when ever men seek the face of The LORD!

⁴ 2, Calvin's Commentaries, Volume IV, Commentary on The Book of PSALMS, "The Author's Preface," by John Calvin, page xxxvii.

⁵ 3, Matthew Henry, PSLAMS, Introduction.

⁶4, BHS WTT translation of The Hebrew, PSALM 100:1.

⁷ 5, Whittaker's R-BDB Lexicon, B2673 MIZMOR היו - noun - melody: technical distinguishing of PSALMS. Noun common masculine singular absolute, page 274.

⁸ 5, Whittaker's R-BDB Lexicon, B3835 TODAH הקוֹד – noun – thanksgiving: 1. give praise to..., praise rendered by acknowledging and abandoning sin. 2. thanksgiving in songs of liturgical worship. 3. thanksgiving choir, procession, line, company. 4. thank-offering. Noun common feminine singular absolute, page 392.

^{91,} KJV, PSALM 100:1. This PSALM is titled, "A PSALM of praise."

¹⁰ 6, Expositor's Bible Commentary, Volume 5, PSALMS, William A. VanGemeron, PSALM 100, page 638.

V. THE POETIC UNITS OF PSALM 100

VanGemeron divides This PSALM 100 into 4 parts: First, a "Call to Give Thanks (verse 1-2)," followed by Second, a "Celebration of The covenant (verse 3)." He sees this pattern repeated again with Third, a "Call to Give Thanks (verse 4) and again Four, a "Celebration of The Covenant (verse 5)." ¹¹ I offer an alternative division of the text: ¹² Let us call the title, "A PSALM of praise," line 0. We then have the 5 verses or lines themselves. This gives us a total of 6 lines from 0 to 5 to work with.

First, the summons of lines 0, 1 and 2. Second, the decree of line 3. Third, the call to thankful worship of lines 4 and 5. The core of PSALM 100 - line 3 - may be seen as the central purpose of This PSALM, around which the other two sections revolve. I see leading up to the core the first section – lines 0, 1 and 2 - which in the English looks very much like an ascending staircase of increasingly longer lines of greater detail. I see descending back down from the core what might be taken as a reverse staircase of somewhat decreasingly shorter lines the third section – lines 4 and 5. Consider:

- 0 [a] A PSALM [b] of praise.
- 1 [a'] Make a joyful noise unto The LORD, [b'] all ye lands.
- 2 [a"] Serve The LORD with gladness: [b"] come before His Presence with singing.
- 3 [c] Know ye that The LORD [d] He is GOD: [c'] it is He that hath made us, [d'] and not we ourselves; [c"] we are His people, [d"] and the sheep of His pasture.
- 4 [e] Enter into His gates with thanksgiving, [f] and into His courts with praise: [e'] be thankful unto Him, [f''] and bless His Name.
- 5 [e"] For The LORD is good; [f"] His mercy is everlasting; [e"] and His truth endureth [f""] to all generations.

VI. THE SUMMONS OF PSALM 100 – LINES 0, 1 and 2

From the English text, the most evident pattern is that of "synonymous parallelism," one of the simplest and often most profound hallmarks of Hebrew poetry. The units of one line are "paralleled" by units in following lines that restate the point with similar words, expand into a deeper meaning or give more fuller explanation. We see such an interlinear [between lines] parallelism in lines 0, 1 and 2: The purpose of [a] The "PSALM" is to [a'] "make a joyful noise unto The LORD" and to [a''] "serve The LORD with gladness." This [b] "praise" is a call to [b'] "all ye lands" to [b''] "come before His Presence with singing." Lines 0, 1 and 2 serve as a summons to the people of GOD to come before The Almighty to worship, extol, praise and give thanks to Him.

The Psalmist here calls all men generally and GOD's people particularly to offer up [a] melodies to The LORD by daily making [a'] a joyful noise to The LORD and [a"]

¹¹ 6, Expositor's Bible Commentary, Volume 5, PSALMS, William A. VanGemeron, PSALM 100, page 638.

¹² 1, KJV, PSALM 100:1-5.

serving Him with gladness. Why? We may answer, "Because of His great mercy, which brings salvation to men and causes Him to forgive sin!" As VanGemeron observes, our "gladness" in being part of GOD's people should flow from "...the joy in living in harmony with The Creator, Redeemer and King [of The Universe]!" ¹³ Therefore we should rejoice as does the prophet in ISAIAH 61:10, "I will greatly rejoice in the LORD, my soul shall be joyful in my GOD; for He hath clothed me with The garments of salvation. He hath covered me with the robe of righteousness...!" ¹⁴

Here The Psalmist foresees a coming fulfillment of The Biblical Promise that GOD's salvation would spread over all the earth, and call men out of all nations to Himself! As Keil and Delitzsch observe, this is the joy of GOD's people which "...springs up out of an all-hopeful, world-embracing love [of GOD for man] ...[which is] the spontaneous result of [a] living faith in the promise that all tribes of the earth shall be blessed in the seed of Abraham...!" 15 What The Psalmist and the Israelites of his day hoped for – the coming of The Messiah – we The Church now possess as part of CHRIST's Church!

The [b] praise of GOD Incarnate, JESUS CHRIST, is called forth from [b'] all the lands of the earth, in which multitudes of souls are saved by His Grace, who [b"] come before His Throne with songs of thankful gladness. Calvin echoes this view, that The Psalmist "...invites the whole of the inhabitants of the earth indiscriminately to praise JEHOVAH, ...[seeing], in the spirit of prophecy, to refer to the period when The Church would be gathered out of different nations" from all the lands of the earth! ¹⁶ So Isaiah foresees in ISAIAH 61:11, "For as the earth bringeth forth her bud...; so The Lord GOD will cause righteousness and praise to spring forth before all the nations!" ¹⁷

VII. THE DECREE OF PSALM 100 – LINE 3

We find intralinear [within a line] parallelism in line 3: We are called to [c] "know ye... The LORD," from which it should be evident that [c'] "it is He that hath made us," and that [c"] "we are His people." These things are so because [d] "He is GOD," [d'] "and not we ourselves," which make us His saints [d"] "the sheep of His pasture." To "know" The LORD is to see that He "made" us according to His purposes and that we "are" - by His decree and grace - His people. As VanGemeron observes, here Israel confesses with glad hearts that The LORD "...is their only true GOD, ...[that they are held in accountability to Him..., that their privileged position ... [as] the sheep of His pasture..." is because He alone is The Eternal Good Shepherd! 18

¹³ 6, Expositor's Bible Commentary, Volume 5, PSALMS, William A. VanGemeron, PSALM 100:1-2, page 639.

^{1,} KJV ISAIAH 61:10.

¹⁵ 7, Keil and Delitzsch, Commentary on The Old Testament, Volume 5 – PSALMS, PSALM C, Vers. 1-3,

¹⁶ 2, Calvin's Commentaires, Volume VI, PSALMS 93-150, PSALM C, [Verses 1-3], page 83. ¹⁷ 1, KJV, ISAIAH 61:11.

¹⁸ 6, Expositor's Bible Commentary, Volume 5, PSALMS, William VanGemeron, PSALM 100:3, page 639.

It is The LORD Who is GOD and therefore sovereign - not man! This should cause all men generally and those saved by His Grace particularly to confess their total dependence upon Him as sheep are upon their shepherd. This is the decree of PSALM 100, its central core, which proclaims to GOD's people the reason for both their very existence and their reason to be joyful in The LORD. Calvin here observes that The Psalmist "...calls upon all men to bethink themselves [of their idolatry], and to cease from robbing GOD of the honour due to His Name; and, at the same time, ...[he preaches] against their folly in that, not content with the one GOD, they were become vain in their imaginations" with instead many false ones! ¹⁹

Mankind has no excuse to claim they do not know of GOD's existence because of the testimonies evident all around them in creation. Even more so for the redeemed of The LORD, who are called to, [c] not just know of Him, but know Him as it were face to face. For The Almighty has [c'] fashioned us as holy vessels for His purposes, [c"] having washed us clean of sin by His own sacrifice for us on The Cross! So says Saint Paul in I CORINTHIANS 6:9-10, "What? know ye not that your body is the temple of The HOLY GHOST which is in you, which ye have of GOD, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify GOD in your body, and in your spirit, which are GOD's!" ²⁰

It is by [d] The Creator's design and mercy, and [d'] not our own will and works, [d"] by which we are saved in CHRIST! As Calvin observes here, The Psalmist speaks not of universal salvation – though GOD does desire that all men would repent and live – but rather of "...that spiritual regeneration by which He creates anew His Image in His elect. ...[who are the] workmanship of GOD, because they are created unto good works, which GOD hath before ordained that they should walk in them!" ²¹ So we read in EPHESIANS 2:8-10, "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of GOD: Not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are His workmanship, created in CHRIST JESUS unto good works, which GOD hath before ordained that we should walk in them!" ²²

VIII. THE CALL TO THANKFUL WORSHIP OF PSALM 100 – LINES 4 and 5

In lines 4 and 5 we return to an interlinear [between the lines] parallelism, where The Psalmist in line 4 states the actions incumbent upon GOD's people, and where he states in line 5 the reasons for those actions. So we Who are called out from all lands are to [e] "enter into His gates with thanksgiving" and [e'] "be thankful unto Him." Why? Because [e"] "The LORD is good" and because [e"] "His truth endureth" forever! So we Who are the people of His pasture are to come [f] "into His courts with praise" and [f']

¹⁹ 2, Calvin's Commentaries, Volume VI, PSALMS 93-150, PSALM C, [Verses 1-3], page 83-84.

²⁰ 1, KJV, I CORINTHIANS 6:9-10.

²¹ 2, Calvin's Commentaries, Volume VI, PSALMS 93-150, PSALM C, [Verses 1-3], paragraph 1, page 84.

²² 1, KJV, EPHESIANS 2:8-10.

"bless His Name." Why? Because [f "] "His mercy is everlasting" and is offered [f "] "to all generations!"

Here is the root of all true ecstasy and joy in the hearts, minds and souls of all men in all times and places who have been made as the friend of GOD by His amazing grace and boundless mercy! We together as GOD's people are called to Covenantal worship of Him at all the properly appointed times, as well as individually every moment of our lives. It should always be [e] with the giving up of thanksgiving to Him from hearts that are [e'] thankful to Him for all His great gifts to us! So we read in COLOSSIANS 3:15, "And let the peace of GOD rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one Body; and be ye thankful!" ²³

The foundation of our thankfulness for all that The LORD has done for us is placed upon the unchanging nature of Who He is, [e"] all goodness and [e"] all truthfulness. Therefore, no matter what trials and tribulations we may face in this life, we may rely on CHRIST our Lord to always be there with us, The HOLY SPIRIT to be about and in us, and JEHOVAH Himself to go before and follow us! For when JESUS CHRIST is our King, we should, as VanGemeron says, bring our "...thanksgiving and praise ...together [to Him? For] ...The Lord reveals Himself both in His [wondrous] perfections and [merciful] acts" in the saving of our souls at The Cross! ²⁴

Therefore, as we enter into The Lord's House to worship, and as we draw our daily breath from His sustaining hand, we are to [f] extol The Most High for Who He is and [f'] magnify Him in all His holy Names for what He has done for us! Why? Because we are made His heirs into everlasting life in Heaven by [f'] His never ending and fathomless Covenantal mercy, which [f''] calls all generations of men to salvation at The most holy and precious Unshakable Hope - JESUS CHRIST!

IX. THE GOODNESS, MERCY AND TRUTH OF GOD

Let us briefly visit The Hebrew text in PSALM 100:5, which gives 3 great reasons for GOD's people to rejoice in praise and thanksgiving before His Presence. We have read, "For The LORD is good; His mercy is everlasting; and His truth endureth to all generations." ²⁵ The Hebrew text here reads, KIY-TOV YEHVAH, LE"OLAM CHASEDO, VE"AD-DOR VADOR 'EMUNATO. ²⁶ Or more literally, "Because good [is] The LORD, according to antiquity [is] the mercy of Him, and as far as [all] generation[s] and [all] periods [of time is] the truth of Him!"

²³ 1, KJV, COLOSSIANS 3:15.

²⁴ 6, Expositor's Bible Commentary, Volume 5, PSALMS – William A. VanGemeron, PSALM 100:4, page 640.

²⁵ 1, KJV, PSALM 100:5.

²⁶ 4, BHS, PSALM 100:5 - יְהוֹנָה לְעוֹלֶם חַסְרָוֹ וְעַד־דְּרֹ וְוֹדֹר אֲמוּנָחוֹ:

First, let us always adore Him because KIY-TOV YEHVAH - בּי־מֵוֹב - "Because The LORD is good!" When we speak of GOD as TOV - מוֹב - good, we refer to that innate quality of The Almighty, in that He is all and perfectly "...good, kind, ethical [and] right." ²⁷ Therefore, GOD is good and full of goodness!

Second, let us always adore Him because LE"OLAM CHASEDO – בּבְּבְּלֵם בְּבְּלֵם בּבְּבְּלַם בּבְּבָּלַם בּבְּבָּלַם בּבְּבָּלַם בּבְּבָּלַם בּבְּבָּלַם בּבְּבָּלַם בּבְּבָּלַם - "Because His mercy is everlasting!" GOD's everlasting CHESED - בּבְּבָּלַם - is His "...lovingkindness in condescending to the needs of [we] His creatures... [especially] in [the] redemption [of we His saints] from enemies and troubles; ...[We find His mercy] in preservation of life from death; in quickening of spiritual life; in redemption from sin; in keeping The Covenants..." with His people, both Old and New!

28 Therefore, GOD is merciful and full of mercy!

Third, let us always adore Him because VE"AD-DOR VADOR 'EMONATO - יוֹלֵר בְּרֹר אֲמוּנְתוֹ - "Because His truth endures to all generations!" GOD's truth – from אֱמוּנָה 'EMUNAH - is His "firmness, steadfastness, faithfulness [and] trust[worthiness]..." ²⁹ Therefore, GOD is truthful and full of truth!

X. PSALM 100 LEADS US TO THE CROSS OF CHRIST!

What we have commented on throughout so far we will now here declare plainly and openly with boldness. Where does GOD's TOV - בוֹלְב - goodness, His CHESED - הפריץ - mercy, His 'EMUNAH - אַבוֹרְבָּה - truth, lead us? These things of GOD which The Psalmist declares in PSALM 100 lead us to only one place: The Cross of The Messiah JESUS CHRIST!

PSALM 100:1 gives us, "Make a joyful noise unto The LORD, all ye lands." ³⁰ Why should men "make a joyful noise unto The LORD?" For those not reconciled to GOD, there is the sure hope of salvation offered at The Cross of CHRIST! And for those who are reconciled back to GOD, the salvation of our lives and souls should fill us will unspeakably boundless joy! Our sure hope of salvation stands firm in the arms of our Redeemer JESUS CHRIST, as Saint Peter says in I PETER 1:8-9, "Whom having not seen, ye love; in Whom, though now ye see Him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy

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²⁷ 5, Whittaker's Revised BDB Hebrew Lexicon, page 373, B3664 TOV אוֹם adj. - pleasant, agreeable, good, kind, ethical, right [as characteristics of GOD].

²⁸ 5, Whittaker's Revised BDB Hebrew Lexicon, page 338, B3297 CHESED תֶּםֶ, n.m. goodness, kindness of GOD.

²⁹ 5, Whittaker's Revised BDB Hebrew Lexicon, page 53, B597 'EMUNAH הול - n.f. firmness, steadfastness, fidelity.

³⁰ 1, KJV, PSALM 100:1.

unspeakable and full of glory: Receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls!" 31

PSALM 100:2 gives us, "Serve The LORD with gladness: come before His Presence with singing." 32 Why should the redeemed in CHRIST "serve The LORD with gladness" and "come before His Presence with singing?" Because, as David says in PSALM 16:8-11, "I have set The LORD always before me: because He is at my right hand, I shall not be moved. Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoiceth: my flesh also shall rest in hope [in Him]... For Thou [O GOD] wilt not leave my soul in hell: neither wilt thou suffer Thine Holy One to see corruption. Thou wilt shew me the path of life: in Thy Presence is fulness of joy; at Thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore!" ³³ Why does David sing before GOD with gladness here in PSALM 16? Because he foresees "Thine Holy One" - The Messiah - Who is his soul's ever present strength, gladness and hope! Because men's souls are delivered from hell and set at the right hand of GOD by "Thine Holy One," JESUS CHRIST!

PSALM 100:3 gives us, "Know ye that The LORD He is GOD: it is He that hath made us, and not we ourselves; we are His people, and the sheep of His pasture." ³⁴ These are the reasons upon which The Psalmist sets the praise of The Almighty on in This PSALM! All men know by His handiwork in creation and in their hearts that GOD is. The faithful Christian man knows not only of GOD, but know Him personally. For GOD made all of creation and all men in general, but His saints in particular He elected from before all time to be His people in both this life and the next. Therefore we His saints dwell in the peace, strength and victory of His loving pastures in both this life and forever! As we read in ROMANS 5:9, "...being now justified By His Blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him!" 35 The faithful Christian man dwells in GOD's earthly and eternal pastures – The Church on earth and The Church in Heaven – only because of what CHRIST has done for us at The Cross!

PSALM 100:4 gives us, "Enter into His gates with thanksgiving, and into His courts with praise: be thankful unto Him, and bless His Name." ³⁶ Here is the proper response of we His people who are saved by The Body and Blood of JESUS CHRIST is this: We are to "enter into His gates with thanksgiving." We are to enter "into His courts with praise." We are to "be thankful unto Him." And we are to "bless His Name!" As we read in PHILIPPIANS 4:5-7, if we love The Lord indeed, let us do as The Psalmist bids us! For "... The Lord is at hand. ... in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto GOD. [And if we do, then] ...the peace of GOD, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through CHRIS JESUS!" ³⁷

³¹ 1, KJV, I PETER 1:8-9.

³² 1, KJV, PSALM 100:2.

³³ 1, KJV, PSALM 16:8-11.

³⁴ 1, KJV, PSALM 100:3.

³⁵ 1, KV, ROMANS 5:9.

³⁶ 1, KJV, PSALM 100:4.

³⁷ 1, KJV, PHILIPPIANS 4:5-7.

PSALM 100:5 gives us, "For The LORD is good; His mercy is everlasting; and His truth endureth to all generations." ³⁸ As if all that The Creator is - and all that He has done for us - does not adequately move our hearts to offer up our daily praises and thanksgiving to Him, The Psalmist bids us yet again with these reasons: GOD is good and all goodness. GOD is merciful and all mercy. GOD is truthful and all truth. There is no wavering or wickedness in The Almighty! Though we do not deserve His pardon and blessings upon us, yet showers us in His great gifts of love! And what GOD declares may be relied upon absolutely, because His Word is absolute! So Saint John records CHRIST's Words in JOHN 14:6, "...I am The Way, The Truth, and The Life: no man cometh unto The Father, but by Me!" 39 JESUS CHRIST is GOD's goodness, mercy and truth Incarnate, Who has come to deliver the souls of men from darkness and death at The Cross, that we may inter into His everlasting life and love now and forever!

XI. IN CONCLUSION

We began with this summary of PSALM 100: Let us offer up joyful praises unto The LORD! Let us serve The LORD with gladness! Let us come before His Presence with a song of thankfulness! For The LORD is good, great is His mercy, and His Truth endures to all generations! Let us consider carefully all that The Psalmist has, by The unerring Inspiration and Guidance of The HOLY SPIRIT, revealed to us and called us to! Shall we choose to praise and thank GOD in all that we do and all that we are, serving The LORD with gladness and coming before His Presence with singing? Or shall we despise The Greatest Gift which The Almighty offers to all men at The Cross of CHRIST?

For as Saint Paul warns in ROMANS 2:7-8, "To them who by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory and honour and immortality, eternal life: But unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath," and eternal damnation! ⁴⁰ GOD forbid it, that we should not follow The Psalmist as he bids us here in PSALM 100:4 to forever "Enter into His gates with thanksgiving, and into His courts with praise: be thankful unto Him, and bless His Name" both now and forever! 41 GOD forbid it, that we should reject our Redeemer JESUS CHRIST, Who bids us at The Cross, "Come unto Me, and live!" In The Name of GOD The Father, and The Son and The Holy Ghost, AMEN!

³⁸ 1, KJV, PSALM 100:5. ³⁹ 1, KJV, JOHN 14:6.

⁴⁰ 1, KJV, ROMANS 2:7-8.

⁴¹ 1, KJV, PSALM 100:4.

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