

Psalm 147:2

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

The LORD doth build up Jerusalem: he gathereth together the outcasts of Israel.

Analysis

The LORD doth build up Jerusalem: he gathereth together the outcasts of Israel. The Hebrew verb boneh (בּוֹנֵה) appears in the present participle, emphasizing ongoing divine action—Yahweh is continually building Jerusalem, not merely once-for-all but perpetually sustaining and restoring His covenant community. This verb echoes God's promise through the prophets to rebuild what exile destroyed (Jeremiah 31:4; Amos 9:11).

The phrase "**he gathereth together the outcasts**" uses kenasaf nidchei (קְנַסָּף נִדְחֵי), where nidchei means those thrust out, banished, or scattered. Post-exilic Israel knew this reality intimately—physically dispersed among nations, spiritually alienated through covenant unfaithfulness. Yet Yahweh, the covenant-keeping God, actively regathers His people. This gathering anticipates the Messiah's ministry to "the lost sheep of the house of Israel" (Matthew 15:24) and Christ's promise to draw all people to Himself (John 12:32). The church becomes the new Jerusalem, built of living stones gathered from every nation (1 Peter 2:5; Ephesians 2:19-22).

Historical Context

Psalm 147 is a post-exilic hymn, likely composed after Nehemiah's rebuilding of Jerusalem's walls (444 BC). The historical context is crucial: Jerusalem lay in ruins for decades after Babylonian destruction (586 BC). The returned exiles faced enormous challenges—hostile neighbors, economic hardship, ruined

infrastructure, spiritual discouragement. Rebuilding the physical city became a sign of God's continuing faithfulness to His covenant promises.

Related Passages

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Study Questions

1. How does God continue to 'build up' His spiritual Jerusalem (the church) today through gathering outcasts and outsiders?
2. In what ways have you personally experienced being an 'outcast' whom God gathered into His covenant community?
3. What does this verse teach about God's heart for the scattered, marginalized, and displaced in our contemporary world?

Interlinear Text

doth build up	Jerusalem	The LORD	the outcasts	of Israel
H1129	H3389	H3068	H1760	H3478

וְיִשְׁרְאֵל
gathereth together

he gathereth together

H3664

Additional Cross-References

Isaiah 56:8 (References Lord): The Lord GOD which gathereth the outcasts of Israel saith, Yet will I gather others to him, beside those that are gathered unto him.

Psalms 51:18 (References Jerusalem): Do good in thy good pleasure unto Zion: build thou the walls of Jerusalem.

Deuteronomy 30:3 (References Lord): That then the LORD thy God will turn thy captivity, and have compassion upon thee, and will return and gather thee from all the nations, whither the LORD thy God hath scattered thee.

Isaiah 14:32 (References Lord): What shall one then answer the messengers of the nation? That the LORD hath founded Zion, and the poor of his people shall trust in it.

Isaiah 62:7 (References Jerusalem): And give him no rest, till he establish, and till he make Jerusalem a praise in the earth.

Jeremiah 32:37 (Parallel theme): Behold, I will gather them out of all countries, whither I have driven them in mine anger, and in my fury, and in great wrath; and I will bring them again unto this place, and I will cause them to dwell safely:

Ezekiel 38:8 (References Israel): After many days thou shalt be visited: in the latter years thou shalt come into the land that is brought back from the sword, and is gathered out of many people, against the mountains of Israel, which have been always waste: but it is brought forth out of the nations, and they shall dwell safely all of them.

Isaiah 27:13 (References Lord): And it shall come to pass in that day, that the great trumpet shall be blown, and they shall come which were ready to perish in the land of Assyria, and the outcasts in the land of Egypt, and shall worship the LORD in the holy mount at Jerusalem.

Jeremiah 31:4 (References Israel): Again I will build thee, and thou shalt be built, O virgin of Israel: thou shalt again be adorned with thy tabrets, and shalt go forth in the dances of them that make merry.

Nehemiah 7:4 (Parallel theme): Now the city was large and great: but the people were few therein, and the houses were not builded.