

Title: Gather In Close

Brandy Helton, Garden Gathering, 03/26/23

We are glad you are here with us as we gather close under His shadow. Today the word is “gather in close.”

Psalm 17:8 NKJV

“Keep me as the apple of your eye.” That means *having* a singular focus. *May* everything that you are thinking about be me. That is the cry, “Focus on me, God.” “Keep me as the apple of your eye,” your focus, your favorite, your all in all, right?

Psalm 36:7

That is just jumping in and agreeing with “we are the apple of your eye.” How precious is your loving kindness, God, to the children of men. You are so precious, and because of your loving kindness, the children of men are running to you. *They want* to be close to you, gather to you, and to be literally under the shadow of your wings. God has this way of drawing people to Himself.

Psalms 57:1

Now you see the one clinging to God, asking for mercy, hiding under the shadow of His wings, and choosing to trust in God, while the calamities go on their way, and pass by and over. Do you understand?

Psalms 61:1-4

Amen, that says it all.

Psalm 63:7-8

Psalms 91:1-4

Amen, you can find strength in these words. This is gathering close under the shadow of His wings.

Matthew 23

This is a pretty serious chapter. In my Bible it is all in red, which means that Jesus is speaking. The summary of it is that He is declaring to Israel, His chosen people, the heart of God and His displeasure with them. Because, they would not listen. They would not repent. They would not believe in the day of their salvation. He loosed many woes as a prophet, and He began to prophesy against them, calling them “blind guides,” and so forth.

Matthew 23:37 Subtitled, “*Jesus laments over Jerusalem*”

He is weeping over them. He is prophesying. He is speaking truth, because Jesus is perfect truth. They have been crying out and believing for the Messiah for a really long time. The Messiah was in their midst, but they were blinded, and they did not believe. So, this grieved the heart of Jesus, and He wept over them. This was a very deep weeping. Jesus was crying over His own and prophesying. He describes it so beautifully in other passages in scriptures. Even some of these I have already read to you. “I wanted to gather my children together.” You hear that? “I wanted you to gather to me. I wanted you to come to me. I wanted you to abide in me and remain in me and believe me. Let me hide you under my shadow in my presence forever.”

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Jeremiah 4:14

Now, He is speaking to a literal city. We know that Jerusalem is, “the apple of His eye.” Jerusalem is His dwelling place. Scripture says it is the place King Jesus will rule from for all eternity. He is jealous for Jerusalem. King Jesus shall rule in, with, and through Jerusalem forever. It belongs to Him. The prophet Jeremiah saw what was going to happen to Jerusalem, and is prophesying to her. “Wash your heart from wickedness, that you may be saved. How long shall your evil thoughts lodge, or live or dwell within you?” Then Jesus shows up, and He weeps this. “O Jerusalem, Jerusalem.” How I longed for you. I have longed for you. I have seen your journey. I have seen those who have come against you since you were formed. I have seen all that has happened all these years, and now salvation is coming. Yet, you do not believe that I am the One that the Father has sent. But, He says, “One day you will.” They shall. All Israel shall be saved, hallelujah. The Lord shall restore Jerusalem.

Mark 12:1-12

This is called the “Parable of the Vineyard Owner.”

Again, He came to His own, to His own Israel, to His own people. He just testifies of the story of all of the prophets, all the way up to Jesus, and what they did when the word or the voice of the Lord was spoken through the men and women of God who served Him. He lays that out so clearly in this parable. He says, “Surely, the Son will become the Heir of all things,” and yet, all the more that evil vengeance rose up within their hearts. Let's kill the Son, because He is the Heir, and we are going to get what He has.

He spoke of Himself, He prophesied of Himself. You can see this when He wept over Jerusalem. You can see through our own understanding of words, but there is no depths to what His heart feels. He wants to gather all to Himself, yet even His own have rejected Him. But, He knows that one day they will say, “Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord.” All will be restored. Amen. He gave the Kingdom to the Gentiles, hallelujah. He went to the nations outside of the the one, true nation, correct? We are being grafted in. We are in Him, and we are saved. We shall be one new man and restored fully. That is the good news.

Joel 1:14

Joel is speaking. He is calling to the assembly.

Joel 2:15-16

Now you hear this call going out, and this call is for repentance. He is calling to the entire nation to repent. From the eldest and the literal ruling elders, to the nursing babes. Gather them up. Bring my family, gather them close. Gather my people close to me. Gather them close to me and repent, fast, turn from your wicked ways, and seek my face. That is what He is saying.

Matthew 12:30

It is a time of gathering, Beloved. Jesus said this really clear. The New Living Bible says, “Anyone who is not with me, opposes me. Anyone who is not working with me, is actually working against me.” If you are not with me, you are against me. There is no gray *area* here. You are either in Him or you are not. If you are in Him, you are for Him. If you are not in Him, you are against Him. If you are not doing the works of the Kingdom with Jesus, you are working against. But, if with Him, we are gathered to Him, and we are doing the works of Jesus with Him. It is good to have Jesus with us, yes? We do not want to do works without Jesus. That is dead.

Ephesians 1:7-10

We have been talking about this for awhile. He is the Way, the Truth, and the Life. We know that. No one can be saved unless they believe that Jesus is the only begotten Son of God and unless we believe that He was crucified, dead and buried. He bore our sins on the cross. He

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was raised from the dead three days later. We believe that God loved us so much, that He gave. He allowed His Son to be killed, and Jerusalem was hosting the murderers. Jerusalem was the headquarters. Jerusalem was the head of the nation, and the head of the nation said, "Crucify Him. They cried out, crucify Him. Crucify Him. Crucify Him," as He was led and drug through the streets. But, the blood cries out, and blood speaks a better word, that through His spilled blood is great salvation. He would gather all to Himself, His greatest desire, even His own Jerusalem, His own Israel, His own people. What is done is done, in the past, and I cannot fix it. But, to those who have an ear to hear, today is the day of salvation. It is the Father calling out, "Gather in close. Come under the shadow of my wing."

When you hear that, you say, "Okay, is this a metaphor, does God have wings?" No, it is who He is. He is Light. He doesn't even cast shadows. There is no darkness in Him. You understand? It is coming to the Light, and when you get near the Light, you become a Light. So much that He is going to gather together in one, all things in Christ. From the start to the finish, all in Heaven and on the Earth. Everything is in Him. We sing this, "In Him we live, in Him we move, and in Him we have our being. But, it is a "draw me in close."

It is gather in close, gather in close right now for the Church. We are in a place of great humility, yet power and authority to get before God Almighty. Gather together and cry out for souls to believe in Him and to be saved, that they wouldn't perish. Yes, even Israel. You can read about this in Romans 9-11. There are Messianic congregations in all of Israel who are still leading Jews to Jesus. Amen. "Acts 101" is still happening, but many are still hardened in their heart, and do not believe. All the Gentiles and all the nations that still do not believe, mock and curse God and His Son. They will kill all the heirs if they can. You understand?

So, this morning's call is a serious one, but it is a deep one. It is a beautiful one of the heart of humanity, and the Bride's heart towards the Lord. He is saying, "Gather in close with Me right now. Gather in real close with Me. I need you to get close to My heart. I need you to hear what is on it."

When you come in that close, you are going to feel the rhythm and the run of His heart. He is going to lead you in how to pray for cities. You are either for Him or against Him, even cities and nations. This gospel of the Kingdom will be preached to all the nations, and then the end shall come. For those who have an ear to hear, let them hear today.

Let's stand. Father God, we hear what the Spirit of the Lord is saying. We will gather in close. Oh Lord, we know that we are "the apple of your eye." We know that Israel is "the apple of your eye." We know that you love all. You want none to perish, God. But we gather in close into the shadow of your wings, to hear your heart as you weep and cry over the lost. You rejoice and all of Heaven rejoices when one sinner repents. May we be found faithful and worthy to pray. Not only pray for them to come, but also to lead them. To have more boldness now than ever to preach this gospel that all might believe. Lord, we love you. We receive your word today. We thank you, Lord. In Jesus's mighty name, amen. Amen. All right, God bless all of you.

We are going to celebrate with Martha and Jason today, as they have gathered in close and they are going to get water baptized here after service. Their families and friends are here. We are going to wrap around and join them as we celebrate with them today.