



## Psalm 48—Giving Credit Where Credit Is Due

*Great is the LORD and greatly to be praised in the city of our God. His holy mountain, beautiful in elevation, is the joy of all the earth, Mount Zion, in the far north, the city of the great King. Within its citadels God has shown himself a sure defense. Then the kings assembled, they came on together. As soon as they saw it, they were astounded; they were in panic, they took to flight; trembling took hold of them there, pains as of a woman in labor, as when an east wind shatters the ships of Tarshish. As we have heard, so have we seen in the city of the LORD of hosts, in the city of our God, which God establishes for ever. We ponder your steadfast love, O God, in the midst of your temple. Your name, O God, like your praise, reaches to the ends of the earth. Your right hand is filled with victory. Let Mount Zion be glad, let the towns of Judah rejoice because of your judgments. Walk about Zion, go all around it, count its towers, consider well its ramparts; go through its citadels, that you may tell the next generation that this is God, our God for ever and ever. He will be our guide for ever.*

The psalmist may well have been given to exaggeration. Jerusalem, the city of God, is praised as a city so grand in its dimensions and glory that the “kings” who had made common cause to attack it, retreat in fear. *Then the kings assembled, they came on together. As soon as they saw it, they were astounded; they were in panic, they took to flight; trembling took hold of them there, pains as of a woman in labor, as when an east wind shatters the ships of Tarshish.* Most all of us, at times, are given to hyperbole, and the more time that passes very often the larger the event grows in one’s memory—the “perfect” vacation, the “huge” fish you reeled in, the high school or college football victories in which you participated become larger than life. This, though, is more than hyperbole. The psalmist looks beyond the obvious, or what he assumes is the obvious, to God’s unseen activity in the event. It is not the king who is praised or the builders of Jerusalem, but God. *Walk about Zion, go all around it, count its towers, consider well its ramparts; go through its citadels, that you may tell the next generation that this is God, our God for ever and ever. He will be our guide for ever.* It is easy to forget sometimes that in spite of our successes and our accomplishments, which may be clearly visible, beneath and in and through what we *ourselves* may have done is the unseen and enabling work of the hand of God who is *our guide for ever*.