

## Psalm 117

“The truth of the Lord endureth forever”

Psalm 117: Well known as the shortest chapter in the Bible, this little psalm contains a great message. Though some have denied it an independent existence, attaching it to Psalm 116, Psalm 117 has all three elements of the hymn of praise: a call to praise (verse 1), a cause for praise (2a, b), and a conclusion, which, in this case, is a simple “praise ye the LORD” (verse 2c). The fact that the “nations” and “people” (literally, “peoples”), are addressed (in verse 1), makes this psalm the only one in the Psalter addressed in its entirety to the Gentile world. Its evangelistic mood was still baffling to some of Paul’s readers. This is one of four passages that Paul quotes from the Old Testament (in Romans 15), to prove that God is interested in saving Gentiles.

Verses 1-2 (see notes on Psalm 113:1-9). The seal of redemptive truth is bound up in this diminutive but seminal psalm – its profundity far outdistances its size. This pivotal psalm exhibits distinguishing features:

- (1) It is the shortest psalm;
- (2) It is the shortest chapter in the Bible.

That God looked redemptively beyond the borders of Israel in the Old Testament is made clear here. The psalm looks back to God’s intent for Adam and Eve in Eden (Gen. chapters 1-2), and looks ahead to the ultimate fulfillment in the new heavens and earth (Rev. chapters 21-22).

- I. A Global Invitation (117:1).
- II. A Grand Explanation (117:2).

The shortest of the psalms summons all people to worship the God of Israel, because His “truth” (faithfulness), “endureth forever”. No matter how dire the circumstances, God always keeps His word. Such unwavering faithfulness demands worship.

### **Psalm 117:1 "O Praise the LORD, all ye nations: praise him, all ye people."**

“Nations ... people”: Paul quoted this verse (in Rom.15:11), to make the point that from the very beginning of time God has pursued a worldwide redemptive purpose (compare Rom. 15:7-13). Other passages quoted by Paul in (Rom. chapter 15), to make this point include: (Deut. 32:43; 2 Sam. 22:50, and Isa. 11:10). While not as obvious in the Old Testament, the New Testament makes this point unmistakably clear (compare Acts 10:34-35; Rom. 1:16; 1 Cor. 12:13; Gal. 3:1-29 and especially 28; Col. 3:11).

In chapter 116, we saw the psalmist determining to praise the Lord. In this Psalm, he is encouraging everyone everywhere to praise the Lord. This brings into the account of the Lord Jesus saying that people from all nations would love and serve the Lord. The psalmist here was most assuredly a Hebrew, and they thought at the time that this was written, that they were the only true people of

God in the world. This then, is a prophetic Scripture looking unto the time when all nations and people could worship the Lord.

Why should we praise Him? Because He is our Creator and our Savior. When should we praise Him? All the time, in every circumstance. How should we praise Him? With a humble heart. You can praise Him in song, in word, or in deed. You can even raise your hands in humble praise to Him. I will not tell you how to praise Him. Praise Him the way you feel in your heart.

**Psalm 117:2 "For his merciful kindness is great toward us: and the truth of the LORD [endureth] for ever. Praise ye the LORD."**

The reasons for such exalted praise as that commanded in verse 1 are:

- (1) Because of God's redemptive kindness; and
- (2) Because of God's eternal truth.

Therefore, what God has promised, He will provide (compare John 6:37-40).

This is not speaking of just the Hebrews. It is speaking again prophetically, of all people. This is a continuation of the first verse which is all people in all nations. His kindness is unmatched in all the world. He was merciful to each of us, while we were yet in sin. He saved us and prepared a wonderful place for us, to be with Him. He keeps His covenant to all generations. He not only tells the truth all the time, but is in fact, the Truth. PRAISE YE THE LORD.

### **Psalm 117 Questions**

1. How do we know this was a prophetic statement?
2. Why should we praise Him?
3. When should we praise Him?
4. How should we praise Him?
5. He not only tells the truth, He is the \_\_\_\_\_.
6. How will you praise Him?