

Psalm 67

To the chief Musician on Neginoth, A Psalm [or] Song.

Psalm 67: This national psalm of thanksgiving expresses the gratefulness of the people to God and their confidence in His continued blessings. It begins with a blessing by the priest (verse 1), and a reflection of the Aaronic benediction (in Numbers 6:24-26). Then there is a call to all peoples to praise God (verses 2-5). Finally, there is an expression of trust in God's continued blessings (verses 6-7). The point of the psalm seems to be that God's blessing on Israel is only a harbinger of divine blessings for the entire world. This universal outlook is revealed not only by the explicit statement of the final verse, but by the exclusive preference of the general word for God, Elohim (Creator God), to the complete exclusion of the personal name of Israel's God, Yahweh.

Verses 1-7: This brief psalm develops two optimistic themes: the need and result of God's mercy, and the future universal worship of God. The psalm reflects the promise to Abraham that God would bless his descendants, and in Abraham, "all the families of the earth" (Gen. 12:1-3).

- I. The Prayer for Divine Mercy (67:1-2).
- II. The Plea for Universal Worship (67:3-5).
- III. The Prospect of Divine Blessings (67:6-7).

Verses 1-7: A prayer for the enlargement of Christ's kingdom. All our happiness comes from God's mercy; therefore, the first thing prayed for is, God be merciful to us, to us sinners, and pardon our sins. Pardon is conveyed by God's blessing, and secured in that. If we, by faith, walk with God, we may hope that his face will shine on us. The psalmist passes on to a prayer for the conversion of the Gentiles, which shows that the Old Testament saints desired that their advantages might also be enjoyed by others. And many Scripture prophecies and promises are wrapped up in prayers: the answer to the prayer of the church is as sure as the performance of God's promises. The joy wished to the nations, is holy joy. Let them be glad that by his providence the Lord will overrule the affairs of kingdoms. That even the kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdom of the Lord, and of his Christ. Then is declared a joyful prospect of all good when God shall do this. The success of the gospel brings outward mercies with it; righteousness exalts a nation. The blessing of the Lord sweetens all our creature-comforts to us, and makes them comforts indeed. All the world shall be brought to worship Him. When the gospel begins to spread, it shall go forward more and more, till it reaches to the ends of the earth. It is good to cast in our lot with those that are the blessed of the Lord. If nothing had been spoken in Scripture respecting the conversion of the heathen, we might think it vain to attempt so hopeless a work. But when we see with what confidence it is declared in the Scriptures, we may engage in missionary labors, assured that God will fulfil his own word. And shall we be backward to make known to the heathen the knowledge with which we are favored, and the salvation we profess to glory in? They cannot learn unless they are taught. Then let us go forward in the strength of the Lord, and look to him to accompany the word the Holy Ghost; then Satan's kingdom shall be destroyed, and the kingdom of our Redeemer established.

Verses 1-2: The psalmist desires God's blessing in order that, through the nation of Israel, God's covenant people, His salvation may be known to all the world (Matt. 28:18-20; Acts 1:8). These words offer an Old Testament voice for world missions.

Psalm 67:1 "God be merciful unto us, and bless us; [and] cause his face to shine upon us; Selah."

"Face to shine": When a king smiled on a supplicant with pleasure, the petitioner was likely to receive his request (compare Num. 6:24-26; Psalms 31:16; 44:3; 80:3, 7, 19; 119:135; Prov. 16:15).

I believe I will begin this verse with the word Selah, which is the last word of the verse. Pause and think on these things. It is only by the mercy of God that any of us come to God. The following is what Jesus had to say about this.

John 6:44 "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day."

We see that God's mercy came to us, to save us from our unrighteousness.

Hebrews 8:12 "For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more."

Romans 5:8 "But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us."

We have no righteousness of our own. It is the righteousness the Lord Jesus clothed us in that we have, if we are Christians. He took our sin upon His body and in return gave us His righteousness. How much more blessed could we be? Notice in the following Scripture, who adds to the church.

Acts 2:47 "Praising God, and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved."

When His face shines upon us, it brings us peace.

2 Corinthians 4:6 "For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to [give] the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ."

Psalm 67:2 "That thy way may be known upon earth, thy saving health among all nations."

God's way and method of grace, in the salvation of sinners. The contrivance of it in Christ, the impetration of it by him, and the application of it by his Spirit. And the way of sinners to him through Christ, the way, the truth, and the life, the new and living way to the Father. And the way of life and salvation, which is grace, and by Christ alone. And the Gospel which points out this way, and is itself called the way of God (Acts 18:25). Together with the ordinances of it,

which are ways of pleasantness, and paths of peace. All this was made known by the apostles and first preachers of the Gospel. Not only in the land of Judea, but throughout the whole earth.

"Thy saving health among all nations": Or "thy salvation"; or "thy Jesus"; whose name signifies a Savior. And who is the only one, and an able and willing one, and is God's salvation, of his appointing, promising, and sending. Salvation is by him, and by him only. He came to obtain it, and he is the author of it. Health is also by him, he is the physician of souls, and his blood the balm that cures every disease. So that he is the Savior, salvation, and saving health, to his people. This was unknown to the nations of the world until the Gospel came among them, and until the grace of God bringing this salvation appeared unto them, and shone upon them (Titus 2:11).

The word that was translated health here, means salvation. It also can mean deliverance. This is easier to understand by this meaning. Salvation is offered to the peoples of all nations. The great commission that Jesus gave was in Mark.

Mark 16:15 "And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature."

Salvation is not just for the Caucasians of this world. It is for the Orientals and all people groups of the world too. God is not concerned about the flesh; He is interested in our spirit. Spirits do not have colors. In the following Scripture, we will see that God is not even interested in whether you are male or female either. God looks on the spirit, not on the flesh.

Galatians 3:28 "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus."

God's ways are not as man's ways. We are too concerned with this world. Church, we need to focus on God and His Word, and not on earthly happenings.

Psalm 67:3 "Let the people praise thee, O God; let all the people praise thee."

"People": A reference to the inclusion of the Gentile nations in the millennial kingdom (compare Isa. 56:3-8; 60:1-14; Zech. 14:16-19; Matt. 8:11; 25:31-46; Rev. 20:1-10).

Even our praise to God must be by His permission. Notice the word "let". We must praise God in the name of Jesus, just as we pray in the name of Jesus. We have much to praise God for.

Psalm 67:4 "O let the nations be glad and sing for joy: for thou shalt judge the people righteously, and govern the nations upon earth. Selah."

As they were glad, and did sing for joy, and glorified God, when Christ was made known, and the Gospel was preached unto them (Acts 8:5).

"For thou shalt judge the people righteously": Meaning not the people of the world at the last day, at the general judgment, which will be a righteous one. When God will judge the world in righteousness, according to the strict rules of justice and equity, by him whom he has ordained

(Psalm 96:1). But either the righteous judgment which will be executed on the enemies of Christ's church and people. Particularly on antichrist, which will be matter of great joy (Rev. 19:1). And Kimchi interprets it of the judgment of the nations which shall come with Gog and Magog. Or else the judging and vindicating the Lord's own people, defending their cause, righting their wrongs, and suffering no weapon to prosper against them.

"And govern the nations upon earth": Or "lead them". Not to punishment, as Kimchi, who interprets this clause as the other; but by his grace and Spirit, into the knowledge of his way, and saving health. Or as a shepherd leads his flock into green pastures, and beside the still waters. Or as a king leads and governs his people, as David guided the people of Israel, with the skillfulness of his hands. So Christ leads and governs his people, protects and defends them, holds them by his right hand, guides them with his counsel, and then receives them to glory (see Psalm 23:2).

Jesus is the Judge of all the earth. His judgement is righteous. We also know that Jesus is to rule as King of kings and Lord of lords on the earth for a 1000 year period of time. All the people of the earth will rejoice at this, because there will be peace. Jesus is the King of Peace. The 20th chapter of Revelation goes into great detail about this 1000 years, and about those who will reign with Jesus Christ. One of the main reasons the people of all nations will be rejoicing, is because the devil will be chained for the thousand years, and will not be able to cause problems for the people during that time. Probably the greatest reason for them being so joyful is, because they are the redeemed. Christians will be joyful, because they will not taste of the second death. All of this is in the 20th chapter of Revelation as I said. Nations will not govern themselves as they did before, but all will be under the rule of Christ.

Verses 5-7: The ultimate goal of salvation is not just that we know God for ourselves but to praise Him for Himself.

Psalm 67:5 Let the people praise thee, O God; let all the people praise thee.

(See notes on Psalm 67:3). This is repeated from that preceding verse to show the earnest desire of the church that it might be so. Or that there might be an occasion for it; the ardor of her mind, and fervency of her petitions, and how much she was solicitous for the praise and glory of God. Or to declare the certainty of it, she most strongly believing that so it would be. As the Targum, "the people shall confess", etc. Because of a new favor to be enjoyed, mentioned in (Psalm 67:6).

We see this again, and now there is more reason than ever to praise. There will be no depressions or recessions. There will be no threat of war. There will be no starving children, or shortages of any kind. The King of all the earth will be in charge. It will not be left up to the minds of mortal man to figure all of this out. The Creator of the universe will be on His throne. The praise will be so spontaneous that it will ring from the mouths of every individual, and the governments of the world will rejoice as well. The weapons will be made into plows, and there will be no life threatening war hanging overhead.

Psalm 67:6 "[Then] shall the earth yield her increase; [and] God, [even] our own God, shall bless us."

When the people of the earth shall be converted to the worship and service of the true God, God will take away his curse from the earth, and cause it to yield them abundance of all sorts of fruits. Under which one blessing promised under the law to them that obey God, all other blessings both temporal and spiritual are comprehended, as is very usual in the Old Testament.

"Our own God": He who is Israel's God in a peculiar manner, by that everlasting covenant which he hath made with us.

Now there is a constant worry about the ozone layer disappearing and all the crops failing. There is already famine around the world. That will not be a problem for Jesus. God rained food from heaven for 40 years to feed the estimated three million Israelites on their journey to the Promised Land. It would be no problem to feed all the people in the world. The weather will be perfect, and the rain will come just when it is needed, and the crops will all be bumper crops. This earth will be like the Garden of Eden. There is perfect harmony in all of nature when the Creator of it all is there. One of the blessings of God is plenty to eat. The land was cursed by sin, and now there will be no sin, so there will be no curse, only blessings. This earth will be full of the goodness of God, and there will be plenty. The Lord will turn the whole earth into a fruitful land. I love the statement (our own God). He is our own personal God.

Psalm 67:7 "God shall bless us; and all the ends of the earth shall fear him."

The Holy Spirit blesses with regenerating and renewing grace; with faith, comfort, joy and peace. By shedding abroad in the heart, the love of the Father and the Son. By applying precious promises; by testifying adoption; by making meet for heaven and happiness, and working up for the selfsame thing, eternal glory.

"And all the ends of the earth shall fear him": The one God, Father, Son, and Spirit, the object of religious fear, internal and external. For this includes the exercise of that inward grace of filial fear, and the performance of all divine worship, public and private. And which in the latter day will be found among Jews and Gentiles, in all the inhabitants of the earth, even to the ends of it (Hosea 3:5).

The greatest blessing of all is that He has saved us. Jesus is the Savior.

1 Timothy 4:10 "For therefore we both labor and suffer reproach, because we trust in the living God, who is the Savior of all men, specially of those that believe."

This is a peculiar statement, but Jesus did give His body on the cross that all might live. Some do not accept that wonderful gift. Salvation is for whosoever will.

Revelation 22:17 "And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely."

The fear (in verse 7 above), is really saying, and all the ends of the earth shall reverence Him. At this time, the scales will be removed from our eyes, and we shall see Him as He really is. We will be full of praise and adoration for Him, and He will bless us.

Psalm 67 Questions

1. Why did the author begin this with Selah in verse 1?
2. It is only by the _____ that any of us come to God.
3. In Hebrews 8:12, God will be merciful to what?
4. What condition were we all in when Christ died for us?
5. He took our _____ upon His body, and He clothed us in His _____.
6. In Acts chapter 2, we find that who adds to the church?
7. What does the word that was translated health, in verse 2, mean?
8. Who was salvation offered to?
9. How do we know that even our praising God is by His permission?
10. Who is the Judge of the earth?
11. What kind of Judge will He be?
12. How long will Jesus rule on the earth?
13. What chapter of Revelation gives us more information on His rule?
14. What is the main reason people of all nations will be rejoicing during this time?
15. Name some of the terrible things that are happening on the earth now, that will not be when Christ reigns.
16. How many years did God rain food from heaven for the Israelites?
17. Approximately how many Israelites were fed miraculously?
18. There will be no _____ on the earth, just blessings.
19. The Lord will turn the whole earth into a _____.
20. Who is Jesus savior of?

21. From Revelation chapter 22, who say come?

22. What is the fear, in verse 7?