

Sermon Notes

WORSHIP SERVICE - 9.15.2024

PSALM 67 - LET ALL THE PEOPLES PRAISE YOU!

I. INTRODUCTION

PSALM 67:1-7

1 May God be gracious to us and bless us

and make his face to shine upon us, Selah

2 that your way may be known on earth,

your saving power among all nations.

3 Let the peoples praise you, O God;

let all the peoples praise you!

4 Let the nations be glad and sing for joy,

for you judge the peoples with equity

and guide the nations upon earth. Selah

5 Let the peoples praise you, O God;

let all the peoples praise you!

6 The earth has yielded its increase;

God, our God, shall bless us.

7 God shall bless us;

let all the ends of the earth fear him!

- This psalm seems to give us a feel for how the people of Israel might have prayed for the peoples of the surrounding nations so that they might enjoy what they enjoyed, God's presence, blessings, and favor.
- Psalm 67 is a thanksgiving psalm, a psalm of praise and prayer.
- God's people are praying for God's blessing.
- This prayer of blessing brackets the psalm.
- But the prayer of this psalm is not just for personal blessing so that one's life is personally enriched and ultimately better.
- The purpose of praying for God to bless his people is so that the world might see who God is more clearly, that they might come to know him and his saving power.

- It is so that all the peoples of the earth will praise God!
- It's ultimately for the glory of God!
- The repeated refrain of this psalm in v3 and 5 proclaims this:
- "Let the peoples praise you, O God; let all the peoples praise you!"
- Psalm 67 is also a missionary psalm.
- Its theme is: God's blessing upon his people will cause the nations to know God's way and his salvation, resulting in glad rejoicing and praise of God in all the earth.
- The psalmist captures the anticipation of God's people for the time when the Lord will rule over all the nations of the earth—over Jews and Gentiles.
- There's no author indication in this psalm and no context about when it was written.
- This psalm is connected to the group of psalms in 65-68 that express God's providence over Israel, the nations, and all of his creation.
- This was a communal psalm that would have been sung during public worship.

II. PRAYER FOR GOD'S BLESSING AND SALVATION OF THE NATIONS

- V1 opens with a line that echoes the familiar blessing and priestly benediction found in Number 6.
- Numbers 6:24-26 The Lord bless you and keep you; 25 the Lord make his face to shine upon you and be gracious to you; 26 the Lord lift up his countenance upon you and give you peace.
- The psalmist borrows the language of the blessing in the opening line; three of the six aspects of the blessing are imported, but it is sufficient to remind Israel of the totality of God's blessings.
- There is a notable change, God's covenant name is not mentioned. Here it is not "Yahweh" but "Elohim."
- God's covenant name is for his people, this gives us an indication that the psalmist sees the inclusion of those outside of the covenant enjoying the same blessings.
- And there is a change in persons from "you" to "us."
- The psalmist encourages God's people to personalize the priestly benediction on themselves.
- "May God be gracious to us and bless us..."
- This is an acknowledgement that we have no good unless God's mercy and grace are shown to us.
- He is the source of all benefits and blessings, and grace is the basis of blessing, it is undeserved, it is unmerited.
- All the blessings of God come through mercy and grace.
- "And make his face to shine upon us."
- The phrase is a vivid image of God turning toward his people such that he favors them.
- It speaks of the warm, personal relationship God has with his people.
- It is an expression of his Fatherly goodness and care expressed towards his children.
- The covenant blessing pronounced by Aaron and the priests reached its fulfillment when spoken by Christ, the Great High Priest, over his people.
- This prayer was answered by the incarnation.
- Jesus said, "if you have seen me, you have seen the Father." (John 14:9)

- Paul writes that, “the light of the knowledge of the glory of God” is expressed “in the face of Jesus Christ.” (2 Cor 4:6)

INCLUSION OF THE GENTILES

- V2 seems to echo the promise God made to Abraham found in Genesis 12:1-4, where God promises to bless Abraham with a blessing by which all the families of the earth shall be blessed.
 - “That your way may be known on earth, your saving power among all nations.”
 - The purpose of God’s blessings is not for his people to selfishly enjoy.
 - The purpose of God’s blessings and favorable disposition towards his people is that these things would be something that would provoke the nations to know God’s way, to know the God of Israel, and to experience His saving power.
 - By observing God’s blessing on his people, the nations should be able to deduce that Israel’s God is the Sovereign God and King, and acknowledge Israel’s God is God!
 - In doing that, they also may enjoy the fullness of his salvation, his blessings and promises.
- The theme of God’s blessing of his people as being connected to the salvation of the nations is all throughout Scripture.
 - See Isaiah chapters 40-66
 - The blessings of Israel will gain the attention of the nations.
 - What the nations will come to know is God’s way—that is, his covenant, the way he deals with his people, the way of salvation, the will of God, the law of God, and the way he deals with the children of men.
- There is a connection drawn between the blessings that descend on God’s people and the salvation of others.
 - People ought to be able to observe our lives, observe God’s blessing and grace upon us, and deduce something about God’s way and saving power.
 - One commentator on this passage wrote, *“When the Lord shines upon his people, and fills them with light, purity, and consolation, it exceedingly tends to spread the knowledge of his salvation.”*
 - Our lives should be instruments of proclamation, in word and example.
- God’s blessing upon the church, and upon His people is for the salvation of the nations.
 - All around us are people who are walking in darkness and need the light of God’s face to shine upon them.
 - 2 Cor 4:3-6 And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing. 4 In their case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelievers, to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God. 5 For what we proclaim is not ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord, with ourselves as your servants for Jesus’ sake. 6 For God, who said, “Let light shine out of darkness,” has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.
- We have been entrusted with the good news. We must herald that news not just with the example of our lives, as those who have been transformed by it, but also by proclaiming it with our mouths.
 - Romans 10:14-15 How then will they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone preaching? 15 And how are they to preach unless they are sent? As it is written, “How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the good news!”

III. GOD'S RULE AND THE GLAD REJOICING OF THE NATIONS

- The blessing of God gives rise to praise.
- V3 "Let all the peoples praise you, O God; let all the people praise you!"
- The praise of Israel lies in the expectation that the nations will also join in the praise of God.
- The psalmist is foretelling of the time when the Gentiles shall have the light of the gospel.
- At Pentecost, the good news began to be heralded by Christ's disciples and the gospel began to spread from the Jews to the Gentiles.

- V4 gives us the reason why the nations and all the peoples will praise the Lord.
- "Let the nations be glad and sing for joy, for you judge the peoples with equity and guide the nations upon earth."
- God will make them glad, all of the Gentile nations are called to participate in the blessings of the gospel.
- The gospel proclaims the rule of Christ over all of life, over all of the earth.
- And His rule is righteous, his government is just and upright.
- He guides/shepherds the nations upon the earth.
- They will come to know that the world is not governed by chance but in equity.
- Psalm 96:10-13 Say among the nations, "The Lord reigns! Yes, the world is established; it shall never be moved; he will judge the peoples with equity." 11 Let the heavens be glad, and let the earth rejoice; let the sea roar, and all that fills it; 12 let the field exult, and everything in it! Then shall all the trees of the forest sing for joy 13 before the Lord, for he comes, for he comes to judge the earth. He will judge the world in righteousness, and the peoples in his faithfulness.
- The emphatic gladness shows us that this is no forced obedience but rather glad submission to God that comes from the transforming work of the gospel in the lives of men and women all over the world.
- The righteous rule and reign of Messiah is marvelously displayed in all the provisions of the gospel.
- God governs the nations at the present time, whether people know it or not, but at the return of Christ, the sheer goodness of his government and rule will become evidence to all.

- How does this worldwide expansion of the praise of God happen such that all the nations of the earth will rejoice? It happens as souls are transformed by the gospel.
- That is the mission of the Church, to proclaim the gospel to every man, woman and child.

- We also anticipate the final revelation of God's universal reign at the coming of Christ.
- 1 Cor 15:24 Then comes the end, when he delivers the kingdom to God the Father after destroying every rule and every authority and power.
- All the nations will praise God in glad submission to the only Sovereign!
- God is working to bring the nations to himself!

- Since Pentecost, this ancient prayer of God's people in Psalm 67 is being fulfilled more magnificently than they could have ever imagined.
- But the ultimate fulfillment is not yet.

- We should take the words of this psalm to form the content of our prayer for the salvation of the world.
- Three things to pray:
 1. For God's way and saving power to be known among the nations.
 2. That God's salvation will lead to the praise of all peoples of the earth.
 3. That God's people will be concerned about the eternal condition of all races, tongues and tribes.

IV. HE SHALL BLESS US

- The psalm concludes with a prayer for God's blessings and looks forward to the glorious Messianic era when the Earth is like Eden again.
- V6 The earth has yielded its increase..."
- The earth will yield its increase of her harvest of souls and praise.
- It's declared as if it has already happened.
- This is the promise of the better things that are yet to come in the new heavens and new earth.
- V6 is very close in wording to the covenant promise of Leviticus 26, God promises blessings for obedience, the land will yield its increase (Lev. 26:3-4).
- We know Israel did not obtain all of the promises because of their disobedience, but Christ fully obeyed on behalf of his elect and obtained all of the promises for us.
- The psalmist declares, "God, our God, shall bless us!"
- He shall bless us in all aspects: temporally, spiritually, eternally.
- He repeats it, "God shall bless us," there's no doubt he will bless us.
- And God has blessed us abundantly—in Christ!
- Praise God that an innumerable multitude from every nation, tribe and tongue will bow in reverent fear and worship before God who has poured out his blessings on them in Christ and shown them his way and salvation.

APPLICATION AND REFLECTION

In light of today's message....

- What did I learn about the gospel?
- How can I apply what I learned about the gospel to my life?
- With whom can I share the gospel this week?