

## *"Let The Nations Be Glad And Sing For Joy"*

Psalm 67:1-7

We are here for Him and we will one day be gathered to worship Him. Nothing can stop this from happening. Everything is pushing us to that end.

As we consider the idea of God's mission in and through local churches, I would like us to step back by noting the bigger picture first. After noting the bigger picture we will consider several of the "smaller" pieces.

A psalm is a hymn of praise to God. The Book of Psalms was originally the hymn book for Israel. The Psalms are a classic example of Hebrew poetry which, unlike English poetry made of rhyme and rhythm, consists of parallel or contrasting ideas.

The Psalm we are considering in this study has been called "Israel's Missionary Psalm, and Israel's Millennial Prayer." It will become evident that the climax of our present Psalm is found in verse 4.

There is an ever increasing crescendo that climaxes in an explosion of celebration and God driven declaration; LET THE NATIONS BE GLAD! There is a prophetic anticipation that forces us to live on the edge of unbridled exuberance; LET THE NATIONS BE GLAD!

Although the Psalm is used by the nation of Israel it is a celebration of what God will do among the nations of the earth and we are a part of this prophetic promise.

### I. The Request / Petition (v. 1)

Israel recognized that the good favor of God would be reflected in His face and in that face would be found grace and blessing. This is no less true for us today. Because God has caused His face to shine upon us, He is gracious and He has blessed us. There is sustenance in the presence of God. He sustains us with His presence.

There is also this sense whereby God is working in us and through us to those around us. It is through His people that God is proclaiming and working His will for the nations. We are asking God to bless us for the sake of the nations. We beg God to bless us in our depth of Him, we beg God to bless us in numerical growth and for financial power in order that we might be used by God for the advancement of His mission to the ends of the earth. Verse 1 ends with the meditative footnote "Selah". It sets verse one and verses 2-4 as stanzas of this hymn. As a result of God's face shining upon us we are a blessed and graced people. This blessing is defined in three ways in verses 2-4: redemption, rejoicing, and reassurance.

### II. The Reason / Purpose (vv. 2-4)

#### A. Their redemption (v. 2)

There is a universal aspect to God's redemptive activity. The knowledge of who He is will permeate the created order. The redemptive work of Christ is to be made known among all nations. The Hebrew word "nations" occurs in 58 verses in the book of Psalms. There are at least three big ideas as it relates to the Nations and our God.

*Continued on the other side...*

1. The nations are His inheritance (Pss. 2:8, 22:28, 82:8).
2. The nations will serve Him (Pss. 18:43, 47:8, 72:11, 96:10, 113:4).
3. He will be worshipped by the nations (Pss. 22:27, 46:10, 72:17, 86:9, 117:1).

This same central truth is found throughout the New Testament and is seen with a culminating vision in Revelation 4 and 5. Listen carefully to Revelation 5:1-14.

- a. Man's inadequacy to open the book (vv. 1-4).
- b. God's ability to open the book (vv. 5-14).
  - 1a. His regal authority (vv. 5-7)
  - 2b. His redemptive activity (vv. 8-14)
  - 3c. His redemption buys people (v. 9)
  - 4d. His redemption makes rulers (v. 10)
  - 5e. His redemption solicits adoration (vv. 11-14)

Revelation 5:14 reflects and echoes Psalm 67:3 and 4. The redemptive activity of God solicits a response of praise and joy.

- B. Their rejoicing (vv. 3, 4a)

The fourth verse contains the core of the composition. "Praise is the healthy habit of happy hearts. When the righteous Ruler reigns, there will be real rejoicings." (A.G. Clarke, Analytical Studies in the Psalms, 174)

1. Let the nations
2. Be glad and sing for joy

In considering the thoughts contained in Psalm 67:4, John Piper of Bethlehem Baptist Church says,

God is interested in all the peoples. He wants to draw every people into the joy of his supremacy: "Let the nations be glad and sing for joy." This is our understanding of finishing the great commission – not that every individual will be saved but that every people group will be penetrated with the gospel. Revelation 5:9 says that Christ "was slain, ransomed for God with [his own] blood people from every tribe and tongue and people and nation."

Our mission at [Waukesha Bible Church] will not be finished until all people hear and the church is planted in every people group. This is a huge priority among us. World history hangs on it.

- C. Their reassurance (v. 4b)
    1. God will judge
    2. God will guide
- III. The Review (vv. 5-7)
- A. The faithful choir (v. 5 ["Let the peoples praise You, O God"])
  - B. The fruitful earth (v. 6 ["The earth has yielded its produce"])
  - C. The fulfilled purpose (v. 7 ["All the ends of the earth may fear Him"])