

THRU THE BIBLE EXPOSITION

Psalms: God's Nurture Of The Inner Man In The Life Of Faith

CXVII: Praising God For His Goodness To The World

(Psalm 117:1-2)

I. Introduction

- A. Big messages at times come in small, compact passages of Scripture. Such is the case with Psalm 117:1-2.
- B. It is the shortest and the middle chapter of the Bible (Ryrie Study Bible, KJV, 1978, fn. to Psa. 117), but it calls the world's nations to praise the Lord for His goodness to them with a great, timeless lesson for us all:

II. Praising God For His Goodness To The World, Psalm 117:1-2.

- A. The verse numbering system in the Hebrew text matches that of the English Bible (Kittel, Bib. Heb., p. 1077), so we stay with the English Bible's numbering system for this lesson.
- B. We thus translate Psalm 117:1-2 (as follows):
 - 1. "Praise Jahweh, all nations; commend Him all tribes; nationalities (lit. "people of a mother," *'umah*, B. D. B., A Heb. and Eng. Lex. of the O. T., p. 52; H. C. Leupold, Expos. of the Psalms, 1974, p. 810)," (v. 1)
 - 2. "for mightily prevailing (*gabar*, Ibid., B. D. B., p. 149) over us is His loyal love (*hesed*, Ibid., p. 338-339; H. A. W., Theol. Wrdbk. of the O. T., 1980, v. I, p. 305-307), and the faithfulness (*'emet*, Ibid., B. D. B., p. 54) of Jahweh is unto eternity [endures forever NIV; ESV; KJV]. Praise Jah(weh)," Psalm 117:2.
- C. We consider significant observations regarding this psalm (as follows):
 - 1. The psalmist's use of the Hebrew words for "nations" and "tribes; nationalities" recalls the Abrahamic Covenant (Genesis 12:1-3) where God promised to make of Abraham a great "nation," Israel, and all the "clans" (*mishpahah*, Ibid., Kittel, p. 16; Ibid., B. D. B., p. 1046) of the earth would be blessed in him.
 - 2. That covenant involves not only a national land for Israel, not only national redemption and not only numerous descendants for Abraham, but also the basis for the Palestinian covenant where Israel gets the Holy Land, the Davidic Covenant that expands on the seed promise to Abraham and the New Covenant that builds on the promises of God to bless Abraham and make him a blessing. (J. Dwight Pentecost, Things To Come, 1972, p. 71-72) Thus, the Abrahamic Covenant "determines the whole future program for the nation Israel and is a major factor in Biblical Eschatology," the doctrine of last things, Ibid., p. 72.
 - 3. However, God promised to bless all the "clans" of the earth through Abraham, and Galatians 3:13-14 explains how He will accomplish this (as follows): (a) Christ redeemed the whole world from the curse of the Law by His substitutionary atonement on the cross, Galatians 3:13. (b) Thus, the blessing of Abraham by way of the Abrahamic Covenant can come on individual Gentiles who believe in Christ, and that through Christ, with that blessing being not only the reception of eternal life, but the reception of the Holy Spirit and His manifold ministries to, through and for the believer, cf. John 14:16-17 et al.
 - 4. Thus, the Abrahamic Covenant, unconditionally applied to the believer by God's grace (Ibid., p. 78), gives cause for him regardless of his race, nationality or country of citizenship, to praise and commend God for (a) his loyal love exhibited in sending His Son Jesus Christ to die on the cross in his behalf that he might have eternal life! (b) Also, every believer owes God praise for His faithfulness to fulfill His unconditional covenant not only to save him, but to keep him saved in eternal security by the sealing of the Holy Spirit until the day of redemption (Ephesians 1:13-14). (c) In addition, the believer owes God praise in forever equipping him with the Holy Spirit that he might live a holy life in dependence on that Spirit, what would otherwise be impossible for him to do, Romans 8:3-4 with 7:15-25. (d) Besides, the Holy Spirit has spiritually baptized the believer into the body of Christ (1 Corinthians 12:13) and gifted him with a supernatural ability effectively to serve the Lord in that body (1 Corinthians 12:4-11), another reason to commend God for His grace! (e) The Holy Spirit also teaches the believer through God's written Word (John 16:12-15), (f) He guides the believer through the Word and circumstantial evidences in alignment with the Word (Romans 8:14; Acts 16:6-10), (g) He gives the believer assurance of his salvation (Romans 8:16) through Scripture (1 Corinthians 12:3; 1 John 4:1-4) and (h) He intercedes to God in prayer for the believer (Romans 8:26), all cause to praise the Lord; Charles C. Ryrie, The Holy Spirit, 1973, p. 104-107.

Lesson: Because of the abundant grace and eternal faithfulness of God extended to every believer through Christ by means of God's unconditional covenant to Abraham, every believer owes God praise.

Application: May we praise the Lord for His loyal love and eternally enduring faithfulness unto us.