

Psalm 117 is a very interesting Psalm. It is obviously the shortest Psalm in the entire book of Psalms. This is also the shortest chapter in the entire Bible. As a result of this, the tendency is to gloss over it and pass by it. In fact, some commentators do that. They connect it to the next Psalm and just make some passing comments. But the truth is **it is the shortness of the Psalm that catches your eye. The shortness of the Psalm makes it stand out.**

Now this Psalm is a Psalm that has been used at mission conferences to challenge nations and peoples to get right with God. It is certainly right at any time to challenge people to get right with God, but this Psalm is really not about that. This Psalm is about a time when all nations and all peoples will praise the LORD.

J. Vernon McGee said this Psalm is like a little Atomic Bomb and when it goes off the whole world will stand in awe of the presence and power of God and the whole world will be praising God. **This is really not an invitation to all people to praise the Lord; this is a declaration of a time when all people will praise the Lord.**

Now we come to this Psalm with the knowledge that every Word of God has been placed into His inspired Word. So that means this little Psalm is just as important as the larger Psalms. **The fact is it was this little Psalm that caught the eye of Paul because he quoted it in Romans 15:11 in building his case for the fact that Gentiles could partake of God's grace in a context of a program that was Jewish.** The pronoun "us" in verse 2 refers to Israel, but may be expanded to those non-Jewish.

The theme of this Psalm is not hard to see:

ALL NATIONS AND ALL PEOPLE ARE TO PRAISE THE LORD AND BOAST ABOUT THE LORD FOR HIS GREAT MERCY IN PERMITTING THEM TO SHARE IN A PROGRAM IN WHICH WE ARE ABLE TO SHARE ETERNAL BLESSINGS WITH ISRAEL.

This is the theme of the Psalm. But getting all nations and all people to come to this place will take a major work of God.

Two times in two verses we read "Praise the LORD." The word "praise" (Hallel) is one that means to show forth the brightness and grandeur of God. It means to shine forth the greatness of God (William Gesenius, *Hebrew Lexicon*, p. 226). The word "laud" (v. 1) means to praise God, in the sense of boasting about Him in a soothing way (*Ibid.*, pp. 800-801).

Hallelujah praise Psalms are not about running, jumping, shouting or collapsing; they are about clearly showing forth the greatness of God in a way that boasts about Him.

Now the proper noun "LORD" refers to the sovereign I AM and covenant God of Israel. **You cannot read the noun Jehovah (LORD) without thinking of Israel.** There will come a day when all nations will praise the God of Israel for His sovereign greatness and glory and grace.

Now in this Psalm there are three points the writer makes:

POINT #1 – All nations will praise the LORD. 117:1a

One of the things we may observe is that there is a mention of the “nations” and there is a mention of “all peoples”; but there is no mention of Israel. So this is aimed primarily at non-Israeli nations.

One day all non-Israeli nations and all non-Israeli peoples will be invited to praise the LORD and one of the reasons why will be because of the amazing things they have seen God do for Israel.

Typically, during election time the candidates promote the idea of freedom of religion. The Bible does not promote such an idea. All nations are responsible and accountable to praise the God of the Bible, who is the God of Israel.

In fact, all nations will be held accountable as to how they shined forth in a clear and sharp way the grandeur and brightness of God. Zechariah the prophet predicted that there would come a day when many nations would gather to worship God because of the privilege they have in sharing in a program with Israel (Zechariah 2:10-12). There will come a time when all the nations of the world that are left after the Tribulation will actually travel to Jerusalem to offer praise to God (Zechariah 14:16-17).

Now when Jesus was first here on earth, He specifically said that the Gospel was not to be proclaimed to the Gentiles (Matt. 10:5-6). I don't think we realize the significance of God permitting His program to reach out to us. But later, the truth of the Gospel spread to the Gentiles through Paul.

Now the truth is very few nations of the world shine forth the praises of God. There will come a day when all nations of the world and all peoples of the world will shine forth the praise of God.

There will come a day when the “goyim” (nations) will praise the LORD. There will come a time when no nation on the earth will be atheistic or agnostic. There will come a time when there will be no more idolatrous false religions in any nation of the world.

There will be no more Koran, no more book of Mormon, no more Buddhism, Shintoism, Mohammedism or Islam; but all nations of the world will Praise the LORD.

Now if you look at the world today, you will have to admit this is not happening. Name me one nation on the face of this earth that truly desires to worship and praise the true God of the Bible. Nations are not praising God, they are mocking God. But one day, all of the nations of the world will honor the one true God of the Bible.

Just today we had a major religious leader in this country and his message is not believe in Jesus Christ and be saved. His message is not God is the God of Israel and we need to honor her and honor Him. His message is not carefully study the Scriptures so you can know God. But one day all religious leaders of the world will promote the truth of the one true God of Israel.

POINT #2 – All peoples will praise the LORD. **117:1b**

There will come a day when the true God of the Bible will be praised nationally, internationally and individually. Every individual will “laud Him.”

The word “laud” is one that means to praise God in the sense of happily boasting about God (*Ibid.*, pp. 800-801). There will come a time when every individual on the face of the earth will boast about the true God.

In fact, the emphasis of “all peoples” means that one day all nations and individuals of the world will be praising and exalting God.

We would certainly see from this that there is accountability for nations to praise and worship the true God, but that accountability also extends to individuals. In other words, individuals have their own culpability.

All peoples have a responsibility to shine forth the greatness of God. Regardless of what a nation does, the individual people have a responsibility to shine forth the greatness of God and praise Him.

We need to be people who testify of the greatness of the power and glory of God. We need to be people who testify of the fact that God is a God of Israel.

POINT #3 – There are specific reasons why all people will praise the LORD. **117:2**

Now there are two specific reasons given as to why all nations and all peoples should praise God:

Reason #1 - Because of the lovingkindness of God. **117:2a**

Any connection God has to Israel and any connection God has to nations and all peoples is due to His grace and His mercy.

The word “lovingkindness” is one that speaks of a desire of God to show Himself gracious and merciful to those who find themselves in unfavorable and helpless condition (William Gesenius, *Hebrew Lexicon*, pp. 293-294).

The potential we have to praise the LORD is due to the grace and mercy of God.

Now we may specifically notice that the group that God targets to be the recipient of His grace and mercy is “us.” That pronoun immediately connects to Israel, but it also includes all nations and peoples who are in a position to praise the LORD.

So God targets His people to be the recipients of His grace and mercy. Specifically in the O.T., this refers to a time when Israel will be praising God because she has finally come to the place where she recognizes the grace and mercy of God in preserving her and saving her.

Now we know from studying the Bible and from just looking at contemporary events that Israel is not faithful to God. In fact, she has turned against God and His Word time and time again. But God has always preserved her and protected her. Her very existence is due to the grace of God. There will come a day when she will be praising God for His great grace and mercy.

There will also come a time when all nations and all peoples will be doing the same thing. The language here means that there will come a time when all nations and all peoples will be praising God because His grace and mercy have prevailed.

This will be a twofold praise. First, all nations will praise God they get to share in a program with Israel, and second, all peoples will praise God they were individually saved.

We who know the Lord can praise God right now for His amazing grace and mercy. We were in a great chasm of helplessness and there was no way out, in and of ourselves. So God, in His pure grace and mercy, targeted “us” to be the recipients of His great love. Do you see what is said here—God’s mercy and grace is “great toward us.”

You and I were not saved by God because we were wonderful, but because we were helpless and hopeless. Furthermore, we were Gentiles, not Jews. God’s program was originally aimed at and for Israel; but in amazing grace, He spotted us in our helpless and hopeless condition and targeted us to be the recipients of His grace.

This is cause for great praise. Every nation on this earth has experienced the mercy of God. Nations that have mocked God and nations who have worshipped false “gods” have still experienced many demonstrations of God’s grace and mercy.

In the millennium all nations and all peoples will be worshipping God for His grace and His mercy. People will praise Him and “laud” Him.

Reason #2 - Because of the truth of God. **117:2b**

There will come a day when every nation and every individual in the world will praise God because He is a God of truth and fulfilled every promise He made concerning Israel and the nations and concerning heaven and hell. The truth of God is “everlasting.” It is truth forever.

If God promises that Israel will have a land, she will have it. If God promises people who believe in Christ will have everlasting life, they will receive it. If God promises people who reject Christ will burn forever in the Lake of Fire, they will burn. If God promises He will reward faithful people, He will reward them. God's Word is God's truth.

The point is all nations and all peoples will one day praise God and laud God because His truth is everlasting. His Word is forever. It is so interesting to see that one day all peoples of the world will praise God for His eternal Word because right now very few who go to church actually praise God for this reason. It is a shame that the vast majority of churches today downplay the Word of God.

When people gather together to praise God by focusing on the truth of His Word, it is actually something that has eternal significance. This is so foreign to the way people think today. Most believe God is praised by concerts, plays, bands, movies, jamborees and hymn sings. In the millennium all people will praise Him for His eternal truth, which is the Word of God.

God's grace and mercy are always rooted in truth. You will not fully experience God's grace and mercy unless you are a person of truth about yourself, your sin and about God.

Now one of the key truths about God is that He is the "everlasting" God. God's truth is everlasting. What this reveals is that the written Word of God is forever. The truth of God is unwavering and unchanging.

In the millennium all nations and all peoples will be praising God and exalting God because His grace and mercy and His Word and truth are everlasting. PRAISE THE LORD!