

Praising God

Psalm 117:1-2;



Rock Hill Baptist Church
605 Rock Hill Road
Lexington, Tennessee 38351

Pastor David Buffaloe
731-845-6104
online at bibleteacher.org

FOCAL Read Responsively Psalms 117:1-2 O praise the LORD, all ye nations: praise him, all ye people. {2} **For his merciful kindness is great toward us: and the truth of the LORD endureth forever. Praise ye the LORD.**

Psalm 117 is the shortest chapter in the Bible and, sadly, one of its most ignored texts. Most of the commentaries I looked at gave only a passing note on this Psalm. Most people look at the Psalm as if it were but a “praise chorus”, but it's much more than that. This is a Psalm of Twos. There are two verses in the Psalm. The first verse issues the call to praise, and the second verse gives us the cause that makes us praise.

1. The Call To Praise The Lord

Verse one is in two parts:

**O praise the LORD, all ye nations;
Praise Him, all ye people**

This isn't the same thing said twice.

The word “**nations**” is the Hebrew (גוֹי, pronounced *go'-ee*), which literally means “**you Gentile Nations**”.

The Psalmist is calling the Gentile Nations to praise the LORD.

In the second half of the Psalm we see that the “people” (עַמִּי, pronounced *oom-maw*) or “the nation” is called to praise the Lord. The Psalm in effect commands that the Gentiles and Israel are to praise God.

In the Old Testament Israel was God's people, but few Gentiles were saved – or even concerned about the Lord. Why would the Psalmist call and command that both Jews as well as Gentiles praise God? Most of the Gentiles worshiped false gods and goddesses.

The key to this text is found in the Book of Romans. Paul the Apostle a man who had been a “of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of the Hebrews; as touching the law, a Pharisee;” (Philippians 3:5) quoted several Old Testament texts, including Psalm 117:1, to prove that God *always* had the salvation of ALL PEOPLE in mind.

Romans 15:5-12 Now the God of patience and consolation grant you to be likeminded one toward another according to Christ Jesus: {6} That ye may with one mind and one mouth glorify God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. {7} Wherefore receive ye one another, as Christ also received us to the glory of God. {8} Now I say that Jesus Christ was a minister of the circumcision for the truth of God, to confirm the promises made unto the fathers:

{9} And that the Gentiles might glorify God for his

mercy; as it is written, For this cause I will confess to thee among the Gentiles, and sing unto thy name. (Quotation of Psalms 18:49 Therefore will I give thanks unto thee, O LORD, among the heathen, and sing praises unto thy name)

{10} And again he saith, Rejoice, ye Gentiles, with his people. (Quotation of Deuteronomy 32:43 Rejoice, O ye nations, with his people: for he will avenge the blood of his servants, and will render vengeance to his adversaries, and will be merciful unto his land, and to his people)

{11} And again, Praise the Lord, all ye Gentiles; and laud him, all ye people. (Quotation of Psalms 117:1 O praise the LORD, all ye nations: praise him, all ye people)

{12} And again, Isaiah saith, There shall be a root of Jesse, and he that shall rise to reign over the Gentiles; in him shall the Gentiles trust. (Quotation of Isaiah 11:10 And in that day there shall be a root of Jesse, which shall stand for an ensign of the people; to it shall the Gentiles seek: and his rest shall be glorious)

Paul called the Gentiles to praise God with one mind and one mouth and to receive one another, as Christ received us to the glory of God.

Though Israel was God's Old Testament people, it was God's intent from the very beginning to *offer salvation to the Gentiles as well.*

Salvation would come from and through Israel. This is seen in the truth at the Psalms were written by the Jews, but the Gentiles are told to praise God within this Psalm. Jesus Christ came out of Israel to save all!

When God made His Covenant with Abraham there were *two promises* made for blessing: one for Israel, and one for **all the nations**.

Genesis 18:17-18 ... Shall I hide from Abraham that thing which I do; {18} Seeing that Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him?

The Covenant that God made with Abraham our mutual father (for He is the father of faith to all that believe. See **Romans 4:16**) was that (1) **Abraham shall become a great and mighty nation** (this is Israel), and (2) **all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him** (this is the Gentile nations). God would have His Israel, but He would also have His Church. He would save the believing Jew, but He would also save the believing Gentile. This was prophesied – not only in Psalm 117:1, but also in

Hosea 2:23 ... I will say to them which were not my people, Thou art my people; and they shall say, Thou art my God.

God would reach out to the Gentiles through Israel's King, Jesus Christ. Salvation would be “**of the Jews**” but would not be just “**to the Jews**”. As Moses sang his

final song just before the Lord buried him he sang:

Deuteronomy 32:43 Rejoice, O YE NATIONS, with his people: for he will avenge the blood of his servants, and will render vengeance to his adversaries, and will be merciful unto his land, and to his people.

The “**nations**” (once more the גוֹי, pronounced *go'-ee*), or the Gentiles, were called to rejoice and praise along with God's Israel. It was the Lord's plan to save “whosoever will” - not just among the Jews, but also among the Gentiles. The Bible says:

Romans 2:10-11 ... glory, honor, and peace, to every man that worketh good, to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile: {11} For there is no respect of persons with God.

God does not show “**respect of persons**”. He is not racist, nor separatist. God does not have His favorites, but loves them who love Him equally.

The Bible says:

John 3:16-17 For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. {17} For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved.

God did not just come to save the Jews, but came to save all who would believe. Jesus Christ died to be the *covering* or as the Scripture calls it **the propitiation**:

1 John 2:1-2 My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: {2} And HE IS THE PROPITIATION FOR OUR SINS: AND NOT FOR OURS ONLY, BUT ALSO FOR THE SINS OF THE WHOLE WORLD.

There is enough covering for sin in the Blood of Christ to cover the sins of the **whole world**, if the whole world would but believe in Him.

We are to praise the Lord both Jew and Gentile because He has extended merciful forgiveness to each and every one of us.

2. The Cause Of Praise

FOCAL Psalms 117:2 For his merciful kindness is great toward us: and the truth of the LORD endureth forever. Praise ye the LORD.

Though the Jew and the Gentile are different, and though each and every person in this audience is different, we are all children under the same Father if we have believed in Christ. **His merciful kindness is great toward US.** His mercy, once extended, cannot be removed.

Throughout this Psalm we see the most holy name of God, “**LORD**”, used **three times**.

It is used once in verse one, and twice in verse two. When you see the fully capitalized **LORD** in the King James text this is always the Hebrew name of God (יהוה, pronounced: *yeh-ho-vaw'*), the most Holy and Eternal Name of God. This was the name that God used with Moses at the burning bush. When Moses asked God:

Exodus 3:13 ... when I come unto the children of Israel, and shall say unto them, The God of your fathers hath sent me unto you; and they shall say to me, What is his name? what shall I say unto them?

The Lord responded:

Exodus 3:14 ... I AM THAT I AM: and He said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you.

God is the Great I AM. He is not “I WAS”, nor is He “I AM BECOMING”, but God is always outside of time and always in the Present Tense. He is “I AM”, the great God JEHOVAH. God is not a created being, but He is THE Creator. He is above all else. The Scripture says of God that **He is all knowing**:

Psalms 147:5 Great is our Lord, and of great power: his understanding is infinite.

Isaiah 46:10 Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure:

God is *never surprised*, but knows all things. God knew that man would fall away from Him in sin in the Garden of Eden. **God was not surprised when Adam fell**, but the Bible says:

1 Peter 1:18-20 Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; {19} But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot: {20} Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you,

Jesus was foreordained before the foundation of the world to be your Savior. He was foreordained – predetermined – to die for your sins *before* you were even in existence. The Lord cannot be fooled. He knows all things. If you have called on Jesus Christ for salvation then He knows this. The Bible says:

2 Timothy 2:19 Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, THE LORD KNOWETH THEM THAT ARE HIS. AND, LET EVERY ONE THAT NAMETH THE NAME OF CHRIST DEPART FROM INIQUITY.

He knows them that are His. The Lord knew you weren't perfect when He called you to salvation. He knew you – warts and all – and yet gave Himself for you.

God knew every sin you would commit as a believer – and yet saved you anyway. He knew you wouldn't be perfect – and yet saved you anyway. Dear friends, God does not and will not condone sin in the life of His believers. Those that are His should “**depart from iniquity**”, turn away from sin. As the Apostle said:

1 John 2:1-3 My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: {2} And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world. {3} And hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments.

We who are His should turn from sin. When we sin then, as dear Children, we should turn to our Advocate and ask forgiveness. He paid for our sins – we must love and serve Him.

But God as the **Great I AM** not only knows all things, but He is ALL POWERFUL. The Bible says:

Job 42:2 I know that Thou canst do every thing, and that no thought can be withholden from Thee.

Jeremiah 32:17 Ah Lord GOD! behold, thou hast

made the heaven and the earth by thy great power and stretched out arm, and there is nothing too hard for thee:

Matthew 19:26 But Jesus beheld them, and said unto them, With men this is impossible; but with God all things are possible.

When a person says that he believes that Christians can *gain* and *lose* their salvation by that which they do, then that person surely does not understand the power of God.

God knows you, and knew ALL of you – the past, present, and future you – at the point of your salvation. But also know that God is *all powerful*. There is nothing He cannot do. The Scripture says:

1 Peter 1:3-5 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, {4} To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, {5} Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

We are *kept by the power of God*.

Jesus Christ our Lord said when He walked this earth:

John 10:27-30 My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: {28} And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. {29} My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand. {30} I and my Father are one.

The Christian is held in the hand of Almighty God. If you have been born again by faith in Christ then you are God made and God kept.

Your salvation cannot be lost. As God is ALL KNOWING and ALL POWERFUL, He knew all of you when He saved you and has the power to *keep you* until the day of your glorification in Heaven.

ARGUMENT Now I know that some will say “but I saw so and so who was saved, and now he is running around and sinning. Surely this proves that someone can be lost who was saved”. Dear friends, doesn't the Scripture teach us that:

2 Corinthians 5:7 (For we walk by faith, not by sight:)

How do you *know* that that person was saved in the first place? Where ever there is wheat, there is also tares. Where ever there are sheep there are surely wolves. I have never pastored a Church yet that didn't have some dogs on the Church roll along with the Children of God. How can we tell if a person is saved? Only by their

works. How can we tell if a person is *born again*? Only by the *new life* that they live.

If a person is saved they will have an *overcoming faith*.

1 John 5:4 ..For whosoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith. {5} Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?

What of those who came, and who are now overcome of the world? John also wrote:

CHAFF BUT NOT WHEAT 1 John 2:19-20 They went out from us, but they were not of us: for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us. {20} But ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things.

If they *go out* then they *were not of us* in the first place. A person can pretend to be saved. They can walk an aisle, make a statement, read Scripture from the pulpit, or even preach a sermon. A person can stay in the Church and eventually – and I have seen this at my sending Church – be elevated to the position of Deacon and not be saved.

A saved person is a **new creature in Christ**. The Bible

says:

2 Corinthians 5:17 Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.

You are a remade Being. Just as our above text has LORD – the most Holy Name of God listed in *three places*, you yourselves are remade by the LORD. **God the Father is your LORD, God the Son is your LORD, and you are indwelt by God the Holy Spirit Who is your LORD.** He remade you. The Godhead worked in unison to save you, to adopt you, and to reclaim you from this old sinful world.

Praise be unto God for His marvelous gift!

3. Praising God Is Powerful!

If you are born again, a believer and a Son of God by faith in Christ, then it is your eternal destiny to praise God. Heaven is a place where we will praise Him for His merciful kindness.

Revelation 19:5-6 And a voice came out of the throne, saying, Praise our God, all ye his servants, and ye that fear him, both small and great. {6} And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth.

Please note that Psalm 117 *begins* and *ends* with **praise the LORD**. What are some applications of this truth?

We should begin our day by praising the Lord and thanking Him for loving us. Instead of falling asleep in front of the television we should praise the Lord and thank Him for His mercy and salvation every night before we go to sleep. When trials come our way we should “**count it all joy**” (**James 1:2**) and praise the Lord in the midst of the trials.

ILLUSTRATE BIBLE When **Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego** were commanded by **Nebuchadnezzar** to worship his false gods they refused, praising their Lord.

Daniel 3:17 I... **our God whom WE SERVE is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and He will deliver us out of thine hand, O king.**

Cast into the furnace they came out:

Daniel 3:27 ... **the fire had no power, nor was a hair of their head singed, neither were their coats changed, nor the smell of fire had passed on them.**

ILLUSTRATE BIBLE Beaten for preaching the Gospel of Christ, **laying many stripes upon them, Paul and Silas were cast into a jail** in Philippi. As they sat in the jail, naked and bleeding, as midnight came upon them the Bible says:

Acts 16:25-26 **And at midnight Paul and Silas prayed, and sang praises unto God: and the prisoners heard them. {26} And suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken: and immediately all the doors were opened, and every one's bands were loosed.**

Praising God turned their misery into happiness. Dear friends, we who are God's *must* praise Him. We should avoid murmuring and complaining – for these things spring forth as a root of bitterness to destroy our joy – but we should pursue praise. The **Imperials** wrote a song called “**Praise the Lord**”, where they sang:

**When you're up against a struggle
That shatters all your dreams;
When your hopes have been cruelly crushed
By Satan's manifested schemes;
When you feel the urge within you
To submit to earthly fears;
Don't let let the faith you're standing in
Seem to disappear.**

**Just praise the Lord.
He can work through those who praise Him.
Praise the Lord,
For our God inhabits praise.
Praise the Lord,
For the chains that seem to bind you
Serve only to remind you
That they drop powerless behind you
When you praise Him.**

Praise God at the beginning of the day and praise Him at the end. Praise God at the beginning of your trials and praise Him at the end. You are children of the King, born again by the shed Blood of Jesus Christ. You cannot be lost, you will always be found. Your destiny is now tied to Christ's destiny. Your inheritance is not now, but in Heaven.

Hebrews 13:12-16 Wherefore **Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate. {13} Let us go forth therefore unto him without the camp, bearing his reproach. {14} For here have we no continuing city, but we seek one to come. {15} By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to his name. {16} But to do good and to communicate forget not: for with such sacrifices God is well pleased.**

We owe God our praise. We owe Jesus our praise. Praise Him!



FOCAL Read Responsively Psalms 117:1-2 O praise the LORD, all ye nations: praise him, all ye people. {2} For his merciful kindness is great toward us: and the truth of the LORD endureth forever. Praise ye the LORD.

1. The Call To Praise The Lord

(Romans 15:5-12; Genesis 18:17-18; Hosea 2:23; Deuteronomy 32:43; Romans 2:10-11; John 3:16-17; 1 John 2:1-2)

■ The word “nations” is the Hebrew (גוֹי, pronounced *go'-ee*), which literally means “_____”.

■ In the second half of the Psalm we see that the “people” (אָמֵם, pronounced *oom-maw'*) or “the nation” is called to praise the Lord. _____

■ Salvation would come from and through Israel. This is seen _____

■ God does not show “_____”. He is not racist, nor separatist. God does not have His favorites, but loves them who love Him equally.

2. The Cause Of Praise

FOCAL Psalms 117:2 For his merciful kindness is great toward us: and the truth of the LORD endureth

forever. Praise ye the LORD.

(Exodus 3:13; Exodus 3:14; Psalms 147:5; Isaiah 46:10; 1 Peter 1:18-20; 2 Timothy 2:19; 1 John 2:1-3; Job 42:2; Jeremiah 32:17; Matthew 19:26; 1 Peter 1:5; John 10:27-30; 2 Corinthians 5:7; 1 John 5:4; 1 John 2:19-20; 2 Corinthians 5:17)

- Throughout this Psalm we see the most holy name of God, “LORD”, used _____.

■ He knows them that are His. The _____

■ We who are His should turn from sin. _____

He paid for our sins – we must love and serve Him.

■ We are _____ *by the power of God.*

■ The Christian is held in the hand of Almighty God. If you have been born again by faith in Christ then you are _____

■ If a person is saved they will have an _____ *faith.*

3. Praising God Is Powerful!

Revelation 19:5-6; Daniel 3:17; Daniel 3:27; Acts 16:25-26; Hebrews 13:12-16