

A MISSIONARY PSALM

Tuesday, May 8

Reading: Psalm 67

Psalm 67:1 *May God be gracious to us and bless us and make his face shine on us—2 so that your ways may be known on earth, your salvation among all nations.*

Back in 1988, singer/songwriter Scott Wesley Brown put out an album called To the Ends of the Earth. It centered on the theme of missions. One song in this album was titled “Blessed to be a Blessing.” It spoke of God’s blessing on America and His church and called for us to get serious about the Great Commission. The chorus went like this:

“We’ve been blessed to be a blessing / We’ve been loved to give His love / Made mighty so we can fulfill His call/ We’ve been blessed to be a blessing / With enough to give enough / For the greatest in His kingdom / Is the servant of us all

Psalm 67 echoes this sentiment. It opens and closes with God’s blessing on His people and the purpose behind it. The opening verse quotes the high priestly blessing of Numbers 6:23-26. It was the repeated reminder of God’s light and favor that shined upon his obedient people. The psalmist adds that the purpose for this blessing was so God’s ways and salvation would be known among all nations (67:2).

The closing verses (67:6-7) speak of the specific provision of God in blessing His people with abundant harvests. Again it is emphasized that these blessings are “so that all the ends of the earth will fear Him.” God blesses His people, not so they can hoard and stockpile, but so they can share with a world in need, displaying the awesomeness of our God.

This psalm reminds us that the gospel and good deeds cannot be separated. There’s an old saying that goes, “People won’t care how much you know until they know how much you care.” Meeting physical needs opens the door to meet their spiritual need for Christ. God’s blessings in our lives are given so we can be a blessing to others by meeting needs and speaking the gospel. Both must be present for our call as God’s people to be complete.

The middle verses of this psalm tell of the impact on the nations when God’s people shine His light into the world. People are saved (67:2). They come to know the true God and praise Him (67:3, 5). And they have true joy and gladness that only God can give (67:4).

This is a missionary psalm! It is a call for us to remember why God has blessed us. It is a call to take God’s message of salvation to the world in our words and actions. The prayer of Jim Elliot, missionary to the Auca Indians and martyr for Christ, should challenge our hearts today: “Forgive me for being so ordinary while claiming to know so extraordinary a God.”¹ Do you know the greatness of God? Are you being a blessing in His name?

¹ <https://bethanygu.edu/news/10-missionary-quotes-share-worthy/>