

<i>Notes</i>



JULY 8, 2018

Short and Sweet

Kevin Rhodes

Though the shortest chapter in the Bible, Psalm 117 is far from short on content. Beginning and ending with “Hallelujah,” including the Gentiles in the call for praise, and then combining the power of God’s love with the perseverance of God’s truth, the depth of meaning contained within this psalm far exceeds the natural expectations for two brief verses. And yet, even then, a consideration of the likely timing and focus of this psalm shines new light that proves worthy of reflection and deep meditation. Therefore, consider these words: “Praise the LORD, all you Gentiles! Laud Him, all you peoples! For His merciful kindness is great toward us, And the truth of the LORD endures forever. Praise the LORD!” (Psa. 117:1-2).

Three times the psalm mentions the covenant name of God, Yahweh, which makes the opening appeal to Gentiles all the more interesting.

Meeting Times

Sunday
 Bible Class 9:30am
 Worship 10:30am

 Worship 6:00pm

 Wednesday
 Bible Class 7:00pm

Ladies Bible Class will
 resume in the fall

Why would the psalmist, by inspiration, connect the covenant name of the LORD with the Gentiles with whom He had no such covenant? Why refer to “us” in verse two, which would have included the Jewish psalmist and therefore the Jews in a psalm calling on Gentiles to praise the LORD? What relationship would the truth of God’s revealed will have to the Gentiles who had no written revelation? When considered in its own time, the beauty of the psalm takes on a puzzling nature. However, its placement in the canon adds yet another dimension. This psalm occurs within the general framework of psalms associated with the return from captivity. Therefore, the attention given to Gentiles proves all the more striking. While some might consider these questions reasons to doubt the inspiration of the psalm, they actually shed light on its meaning.

This psalm acts as a perfect response to Judah’s return from captivity because it focuses on God’s greater purpose and the reason underlying their return in the first place. Therefore, as the Jews returned to their homeland after seventy years, as promised, the LORD once more demonstrated His faithfulness to the covenant despite Judah’s own failure. But that covenant had implications far beyond Judah, as God told Abraham, “And in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed” (Gen. 12:3). The covenant made with Abraham was designed not only for Israel, but for all. Therefore, the covenant name of Yahweh stands as an important reminder of God’s intent to bless all nations. Thus, God included even those peoples who could not trace their physical origin back to Abraham in the blessing of peoples, as Paul would later emphasize to the Galatians (Gal. 3:26-29). The postexilic date puts the second verse in greater relief as well. The LORD extended His merciful kindness, His steadfast love, to His people. It indeed prevailed “toward us.” His love brought them back to fulfill their purpose as a people when their conduct alone would never have warranted it. But the LORD had promised not just to return them from captivity but to use them to bless others, and that truth endured in the mind and heart of God despite the sins of Judah and all mankind. The covenant thus pertained to all people—not just to the Jews. And their return from captivity proved that God had not forgotten His promise nor turned away from that established purpose. Imagine then, as Judah left Babylon after the decree of Cyrus, the psalm calling out to their former captors to praise the LORD! What a scene! But it was appropriate because He was also doing it for them. Even more, it is only because of the enduring character of Jehovah God that salvation is possible for us today. “Praise the LORD, all you Gentiles! Laud Him, all you peoples! For His merciful kindness is great toward us, And the truth of the LORD endures forever. Praise the LORD!” (Psa. 117:1-2).

Order of Service

Opening Remarks		Don Petrosky, Sr.
Song Leader		Tom Barr
Song #97	<i>Christ, the Lord, is Risen Today</i>	
Song #886	<i>Sing Hallelujah to the Lord</i>	
Prayer		
Song #261	<i>I am Thine, O Lord</i>	
Communion		Ray Parks Chris Windham
Song #859	<i>He Paid a Debt</i>	
Song #732	<i>We Praise Thee, O God</i>	
Sermon		Clay Bond
Song #67	<i>Bring Christ Your Broken Life</i>	
Offering		
Closing Remarks		Don Petrosky, Sr.
Song #664	<i>There Stands a Rock</i>	
Dismissal Prayer		Sam Phillips

Upcoming Events:

- July 11th Summer Series: Trent Kennedy will speak to us about the Beauty of Holiness

Wednesday Devotional

July 4-Aug. 29 Summer Series

...Prayer List...

Gay Kyle, Eugene & Barbara Haydon, Bud Bond, Don Walker, Gary Schneider, Kathy Ivanciw's mother Shirley Kiatta had a stroke last week, Butch Crownover
Remember our college students who are away at school: Zach & Jarrett Haydon, Emily & Courtney Meredith, and Steven Petroksy
Shut-Ins: Robbi George

Attendance: Sunday AM: 31 PM: 38 Wednesday: 33 Contribution: \$2272.23