

PSALM 67

INTRODUCTION TO PSALM 67

To the chief Musician on Neginoth, A Psalm [or] Song.

According to the Septuagint, Vulgate Latin, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions, this psalm is a psalm of David; and very probably it was written by him, since the spirit and language of it agree with that sweet singer of Israel, though his name is not in the title; wherefore Aben Ezra says, we know not who composed it: and so the inscription of the Syriac version pronounces the same uncertain; which adds,

“the people sung it when they brought David over Jordan;”

meaning after Absalom’s rebellion was over, (~~1094~~2 Samuel 19:41); but what follows better expresses the occasion and intent of it;

“but to us it intimates a prophecy in it concerning the calling of the Gentiles, and the preaching of the apostles; likewise concerning the judgments of the Lord:”

and it seems indeed to breathe out the desires of the church after the coming of Christ, and spiritual blessings by him, and the spread of the Gospel among the Gentiles, as what would bring forth much fruit in the earth, and be the occasion of great joy. The ancient Jews ^{f877} apply it **abldyt [I**, “to future time”; the world to come, the times of the Messiah: and Kimchi understands it of the gathering of the present captivity when the Messiah comes, and of the destruction of Gog and Magog. Of the word “neginoth”, (see Gill on “~~3001~~Psalm 4:1”), title.

Ver. 1. *God be merciful unto us, and bless us*, etc.] That is, God, of his unmerited mercy, of his rich grace and free favour, bless us with the coming of his Son, the promised seed, in whom all nations are to be blessed; and with the blessings of peace, pardon, and righteousness in him; all which with him spring from the tender mercy of God, the riches of his grace, and his great love; than which nothing could be more desirable to the Old Testament saints, who were shut up under the law, until faith

came; and though children, they differed nothing from servants, being in a state and under a spirit of bondage: for the psalmist seems to represent the whole church under that dispensation: some understand the words as a prophecy, expressing the certainty of what would be; and, as the words may be rendered, “God will be merciful”, or “gracious to us”^{f878}, and he will bless us”; as he has promised to do;

[and] cause his face to shine upon us; that is, grant his gracious presence, and the discoveries of his love; that he would favour with communion with himself through Christ, and a greater knowledge of him in him; or that he would cause him, who is his face, his image, the brightness of his glory, to appear and shine forth; the great light, the sun of righteousness, and dayspring from on high, that was to arise and shine upon the people of God. The Targum is,

“and cause the splendour of his face to shine with us always;”

there seems to be some reference to the high priest’s form of blessing in (^{<4064>}Numbers 6:24-26).

Selah; on this word, (see Gill on “^{<4082>}Psalm 3:2”).

Ver. 2. *That thy way may be known upon earth*, etc.] God’s way and method of grace, in the salvation of sinners; the contrivance of it in Christ, the impetration of it by him, and the application of it by his Spirit; and the way of sinners to him through Christ, the way, the truth, and the life, the new and living way to the Father; and the way of life and salvation, which is grace, and by Christ alone; and the Gospel which points out this way, and is itself called the way of God, (^{<4085>}Acts 18:25); together with the ordinances of it, which are ways of pleasantness, and paths of peace; all this was made known by the apostles and first preachers of the Gospel; not only in the land of Judea, but throughout the whole earth;

thy saving health among all nations; or “thy salvation”; or “thy Jesus”^{f879}; whose name signifies a Saviour; and who is the only one, and an able and willing one, and is God’s salvation, of his appointing, promising, and sending; salvation is by him, and by him only; he came to obtain it, and he is the author of it; health is also by him, he is the physician of souls, and his blood the balm that cures every disease; so that he is the Saviour, salvation, and saving health, to his people; this was unknown to the nations of the world until the Gospel came among them, until the grace of God bringing this salvation appeared unto them, and shone upon them, (^{<4011>}Titus 2:11).

Ver. 3. *Let the people praise thee, O God*, etc.] Let them have occasion to praise God, the people of the Jews, for the mission of Christ, and for the blessings of grace and peace with him;

let all the people praise thee; all the nations of the world, for making known the way of life and grace, and the saving health or salvation of God unto them: the word used signifies to “confess”^{f880}; and so the Targum,

“the people shall confess before thee, O God; all the people shall confess before thee;”

that is, shall confess their sins, being made sensible of them; and confess the true and living God, turning from their idols to serve him; and Christ to be the only Saviour and Redeemer, being now made known unto them, through the preaching of the Gospel.

Ver. 4. *O let the nations be glad and sing for joy*, etc.] As they were glad, and did sing for joy, and glorified God, when Christ was made known, and the Gospel was preached unto them, (^{<485>}Acts 8:5,8 13:47,48).

for thou shalt judge the people righteously; meaning not the people of the world at the last day, at the general judgment, which will be a righteous one; when God will judge the world in righteousness, according to the strict rules of justice and equity, by him whom he has ordained, (^{<981>}Psalms 96:1-3 ^{<473>}Acts 17:31); but either the righteous judgment which will be executed on the enemies of Christ’s church and people; particularly on antichrist, which will be matter of great joy, (^{<601>}Revelation 19:1,2); and Kimchi interprets it of the judgment of the nations which shall come with Gog and Magog; or else the judging and vindicating the Lord’s own people, defending their cause, righting their wrongs, and suffering no weapon to prosper against them;

and govern the nations upon earth; or “lead [them]”^{f881}; not to punishment, as Kimchi, who interprets this clause as the other; but by his grace and Spirit, into the knowledge of his way, and saving health; or as a shepherd leads his flock into green pastures, and beside the still waters; or as a king leads and governs his people, as David guided the people of Israel, with the skilfulness of his hands; so Christ leads and governs his people, protects and defends them, holds them by his right hand, guides them with his counsel, and then receives them to glory; (see ^{<921>}Psalms 23:2 78:72 73:24).

Selah; on this word, (see Gill on “^{<498D>}Psalm 3:2”).

Ver. 5. *Let the people praise thee, O God; let all the people praise thee.*] (See Gill on “^{<497B>}Psalm 67:3”). This is repeated from that preceding verse to show the earnest desire of the church that it might be so; or that there might be an occasion for it; the ardour of her mind, and fervency of her petitions, and how much she was solicitous for the praise and glory of God; or to declare the certainty of it, she most strongly believing that so it would be; as the Targum, “the people shall confess”, etc. because of a new favour to be enjoyed, mentioned in (^{<497D>}Psalm 67:6).

Ver. 6. [*Then*] *shall the earth yield her increase*, etc.] Not literally the land of Israel, as in some copies of the Targum, and as Kimchi interprets it; (see ^{<498B>}Leviticus 26:3,4); but mystically and spiritually the church of God in the times of the Messiah, (^{<498C>}Ezekiel 34:23-27); the word of God preached in the world is the seed sown in it; converts to Christ are the increase or fruit of it; and the church is God’s husbandry, where it is yielded or brought forth; and this increase is of God, and is owing to the efficacy of his grace attending the ministration of the word, (^{<498F>}1 Corinthians 3:6); it had its accomplishment in part in the first times of the Gospel, when it was preached by the apostles throughout the earth, and brought forth fruit everywhere, (^{<500C>}Colossians 1:5,6); and has been fulfilling more or less ever since, and will appear more abundantly in the latter day; a large increase and a plentiful harvest of souls shall be brought in, both Jews and Gentiles: or this may be understood of the fruitfulness of believers in Christ, who may be called “earth”, because of their common original from the earth with the rest of mankind; because they are inhabitants of the earth; and because they have earthly as well as heavenly principles in them; but more especially because they are the good ground on whom the seed of the word falls and becomes fruitful; or are the earth which drinks in the rain of the Gospel, and of grace, and brings forth fruit meet for them, by whom it is dressed, and receives blessing of God, (^{<498E>}Matthew 13:23 ^{<498F>}Hebrews 6:7); these yield the fruits of the Spirit, increase in grace, and abound in the exercise of it; bring forth fruits meet for repentance, being filled with the fruits of righteousness by Christ; for the increase and fruit yielded by them are owing to the grace of God, to their grafting into Christ the vine, and to the influence of the blessed Spirit. Some of the ancients understand this of the incarnation of Christ; (see ^{<498E>}Psalm 85:11 ^{<498F>}Isaiah 45:8); then “the earth” is the Virgin Mary, who was, as to her original, of the earth, earthly; of whose earthly substance

Christ took flesh, and is called the fruit of her womb; yea, the fruit of the earth, (~~414~~Luke 1:42 ~~341~~Isaiah 4:2); for though he is the Lord from heaven, as to his divine nature, and came down from thence, not by change of place, but by assumption of nature; yet, as to his human nature, he was made of a woman, and is the seed of the woman, the promised seed, in whom all nations of the earth were to be blessed; and it here follows:

[and] God, [even] our own God, shall bless us; not as the God of nature and providence only; but as the God of grace, as a covenant God in Christ, in which sense he is peculiarly his people's own God, so as he is not others; and as such he blesses them with all spiritual blessings in Christ: or the repetition of the word "God", with the affix "our own", may denote the certainty of the divine blessing, the assurance had of it, and the great affection of the persons that express it: and some think, because the word is repeated three times in this verse and (~~398~~Psalm 68:7), respect is had to the trinity of Persons in the Godhead; God the Father blesses his people in Christ with the blessings of justification, pardon, adoption, and eternal life: the Son, who is Immanuel, God with us, God in our nature, our own God, God manifest in the flesh; he blesses with the same blessings of grace, peace, and eternal happiness; he was raised up of God as man and Mediator, and sent to bless his people, (~~418~~Acts 3:26).

Ver. 7. *God shall bless us*, etc.] The Holy Spirit blesses with regenerating and renewing grace; with faith, comfort, joy and peace, by shedding abroad in the heart the love of the Father and the Son; by applying precious promises; by testifying adoption; by making meet for heaven and happiness, and working up for the selfsame thing eternal glory;

and all the ends of the earth shall fear him; the one God, Father, Son, and Spirit, the object of religious fear, internal and external; for this includes the exercise of that inward grace of filial fear, and the performance of all divine worship, public and private; and which in the latter day will be found among Jews and Gentiles, in all the inhabitants of the earth, even to the ends of it, (~~388~~Hosea 3:5 ~~654~~Revelation 15:4).