

PSALM 117

INTRODUCTION TO PSALM 117

The inscription of this psalm in the Syriac version is,

“it is said concerning those of the house (or the companions) of Ananias, when they came out of the furnace; likewise it foretells the calling of the Gentiles by the declaration of the Gospel.”

Which last is right; for the apostle has quoted it, to prove the Gentiles should glorify God for his mercy, (~~615D~~ Romans 15:9,11). Aben Ezra thinks it concerns only the nations subdued by David; but he quotes R. Moseh, as of opinion that all nations are comprehended: and Kimchi affirms that the psalm belongs to the times of the Messiah; and supposes there is a mystery in its consisting of two verses only; and that it intimates that in those times there will be two people that will serve the Lord; Israel, with the law; and the Gentiles, with the seven precepts of Noah. It certainly refers to Gospel times, and to the conversion of the Gentiles; and when Jews and Gentiles should make one people, and be partakers of the same privileges and blessings; receive the same doctrines, submit to the same ordinances, and be under the same law, to Christ their King.

Ver. 1. *O praise the Lord, all ye nations*, etc.] The Lord having chosen, and Christ having redeemed, some out of every kindred, tongue, people, and nation; and the Gospel being sent and preached to all nations, and some of each being called and converted by the Spirit of God; they are excited to praise the Lord, Jehovah, Father, Son and Spirit, for their several acts of divine grace and kindness towards them, in choosing, redeeming, and sanctifying them; and in favouring them with the Gospel, and the ordinances of it, and with his gracious presence in them; and in supplying them with his grace, and giving them a right unto and meetness for eternal glory; for all which praise should be given to the Lord;

praise him, all ye people; ye people of God in the several nations of the world; not the Jews only, but the Gentiles also: the same thing is repeated in different words, for the greater certainty and confirmation of it; that this should be, the work and exercise of the Gentiles in Gospel times, and

expresses eagerness and vehemence to stir them up to it. A different word is here used for “praise” than in the former clause; and which is more frequently used in the Chaldee, Syriac, Arabic, and Ethiopic languages; and signifies the celebration of the praises of God with a high voice.

Ver. 2. *For his merciful kindness is great towards us*, etc.] Not us Israelites only, of whom David was, but Gentiles also; or otherwise there would be no force in the reason why all people and nations should praise the Lord: but it respects the time when these should become one people, partaking of the same grace, blessings, promises, and privileges; in which the grace, mercy, and lovingkindness of God, greatly appeared; “it prevailed over us”^{f1618}, as it may be rendered: the word is used of the prevailing of the waters of the flood over the earth, (^{<00718>}Genesis 7:18); and so may denote the exuberance of the grace of God, of the abounding and superabounding of it. There is an abundance of it in the heart of God, in his covenant, and in his Son; and which is displayed in redemption by him; in the forgiveness of sin; and in the conversion of sinners, and their everlasting salvation: particularly there has been an inundation or deluge of it in the Gentile world, where it has flowed and overflowed; where sin abounded, grace has much more abounded; and therefore the Lord is to be praised. And another reason follows,

and the truth of the Lord [endureth] for ever; the faithfulness of God to his promises, not only made to the Jewish fathers concerning the Messiah, and redemption by him; but to the Gentiles, and concerning the blessing of all nations in the promised seed: and the faithfulness and truth of God, with respect to any of his promises, never fails; nor will his word of truth, the Gospel; nor Jesus Christ, who is the truth, and the truth of God; the truth of types, promises, and prophecies; (see ^{<0943>}Psalm 43:3); for he is the same today, yesterday, and for ever.

Praise ye the Lord; for his superabounding grace, and eternal truth; even all the people of God, of all nations, Jews and Gentiles.