

# PSALM 67

This psalm relates to the church and is calculated for the public.  
Here is,

- I.** A prayer for the prosperity of the church of Israel (v. 1).
- II.** A prayer for the conversion of the Gentiles and the bringing of them into the church (v. 2-5).
- III.** A prospect of happy and glorious times when God shall do this (v. 6, 7). Thus was the psalmist carried out by the spirit of prophecy to foretel the glorious estate of the Christian church, in which Jews and Gentiles should unite in one flock, the beginning of which blessed work ought to be the matter of our joy and praise, and the completing of it of our prayer and hope, in singing this psalm.

## PSALM 67:1-7

### CONVERSION OF THE GENTILES

*To the chief musician on Neginoth. A psalm or song.*

The composition of this psalm is such as denotes the penman's affections to have been very warm and lively, by which spirit of devotion he was elevated to receive the spirit of prophecy concerning the enlargement of God's kingdom.

**I.** He begins with a prayer for the welfare and prosperity of the church then in being, in the happiness of which he should share, and think himself happy, v. 1. Our Saviour, in teaching us to say, *Our Father*, has intimated that we ought to pray with and for others; so the psalmist here prays not, *God be merciful to me, and bless me*, but to *us*, and bless *us*; for we must make supplication for all saints, and be willing and glad to take our lot with them. We are here taught,

**1.** That all our happiness comes from God's mercy and takes rise in that; and therefore the first thing prayed for is, *God be merciful to us*, to us

sinner, and pardon our sins (<sup>4083</sup>Luke 18:13), to us miserable sinners, and help us out of our miseries.

**2.** That it is conveyed by God's blessing, and secured in that: *God bless us*; that is, give us an interest in his promises, and confer upon us all the good contained in them. God's speaking well to us amounts to his doing well for us. *God bless us* is a comprehensive prayer; it is a pity such excellent words should ever be used slightly and carelessly, and as a byword.

**3.** That it is completed in the light of his countenance: *God cause his face to shine upon us*; that is, God by his grace qualify us for his favour and then give us the tokens of his favour. We need desire no more to make us happy than to have God's face shine upon us, to have God love us, and let us know that he loves us: *To shine with us* (so the margin reads it); *with us* doing our endeavour, and let it crown that endeavour with success. If we by faith walk with God, we may hope that his face will shine with us.

**II.** He passes from this to a prayer for the conversion of the Gentiles (v. 2): *That thy way may be known upon earth*. "Lord, I pray not only that thou wilt be merciful to us and bless us, but that thou wilt be merciful to all mankind, *that thy way may be known upon earth*." Thus public-spirited must we be in our prayers. *Father in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come*. We shall have never the less of God's mercy, and blessing, and favour, for others coming in to share with us. Or it may be taken thus: "*God be merciful to us Jews, and bless us, that thereby thy way may be known upon earth, that by the peculiar distinguishing tokens of thy favour to us others may be allured to come and join themselves to us, saying, We will go with you, for we have heard that God is with you,*" <sup>4083</sup>Zechariah 8:23.

**1.** These verses, which point at the conversion of the Gentiles, may be taken,

**(1.)** As a prayer; and so it speaks the desire of the Old-Testament saints; so far were they from wishing to monopolize the privileges of the church that they desired nothing more than the throwing down of the enclosure and the laying open of the advantages. See then how the spirit of the Jews, in the days of Christ and his apostles, differed from the spirit of their fathers. The Israelites indeed that were of old desired that God's name might be known among the Gentiles; those counterfeit Jews were enraged at the

preaching of the gospel to the Gentiles; nothing in Christianity exasperated them so much as that did.

(2.) As a prophecy that it shall be as he here prays. Many scripture-prophecies and promises are wrapped up in prayers, to intimate that the answer of the church's prayer is as sure as the performance of God's promises.

2. Three things are here prayed for, with reference to the Gentiles: —

(1.) That divine revelation might be sent among them, v. 2. Two things he desires might be know upon earth, even among all nations, and not to the nation of the Jews only: —

[1.] God's way, the rule of duty: “Let them all know, as well as we do, *what is good and what the Lord our God requires of them*; let them be blessed and honoured with the same righteous statutes and judgments which are so much the praise of our nation and the envy of all its neighbours,” <sup><BR></sup>Deuteronomy 4:8.

[2.] His saving health, or his salvation. The former is wrapped up in his law, this in his gospel. If God make known his way to us, and we walk in it, he will show us his saving health, <sup><BR></sup>Psalms 50:23. Those that have themselves experimentally known the pleasantness of God's ways, and the comforts of his salvation, cannot but desire and pray that they may be known to others, even among all nations. All upon earth are bound to walk in God's way, all need his salvation, and there is in it enough for all; and therefore we should pray that both the one and the other may be made known to all.

(2.) That divine worship may be set up among them, as it will be where divine revelation is received and embraced (v. 3): “*Let the people praise thee, O God!* let them have matter for praise, let them have hearts for praise; yea, let not only some, but *all the people, praise thee*,” all nations in their national capacity, some of all nations. It is again repeated (v. 5) as that which the psalmist's heart was very much upon. Those that delight in praising God themselves cannot but desire that others also may be brought to praise him, that he may have the honour of it and they may have the benefit of it. It is a prayer,

[1.] That the gospel might be preached to them, and then they would have cause enough to praise God, as for the day-spring after a long and dark night. *Ortus est sol — The sun has risen.* <sup><4088></sup> Acts 8:8.

[2.] That they might be converted and brought into the church, and then they would have a disposition to praise God, the living and true God, and not the dumb and dunghill deities they had worshipped, <sup><2004></sup> Daniel 5:4. Then their hard thoughts of God would be silenced, and they would see him, in the gospel glass, to be love itself, and the proper object of praise.

[3.] That they might be incorporated into solemn assemblies, and might praise God in a body, that they might all together praise him with one mind and one mouth. Thus a face of religion appears upon a land when God is publicly owned and the ordinances of religious worship are duly celebrated in religious assemblies.

(3.) That the divine government may be acknowledged and cheerfully submitted to (v. 4): *O let the nations be glad, and sing for joy!* Holy joy, joy in God and in his name, is the heart and soul of thankful praise. That *all the people may praise thee, let the nations be glad.* Those that *rejoice in the Lord always will in every thing give thanks.* The joy he wishes to the nations is holy joy; for it is joy in God's dominion, joy that *God has taken to himself his great power and has reigned*, which the unconverted nations are angry at, <sup><6417></sup> Revelation 11:17, 18. Let them be glad,

[1.] That *the kingdom is the Lord's* (<sup><4228></sup> Psalm 22:28), that he, as an absolute sovereign, shall govern the nations upon earth, that by the kingdom of his providence he shall overrule the affairs of kingdoms according to the counsel of his will, though they neither know him nor own him, and that in due time he shall disciple all nations by the preaching of his gospel (<sup><4189></sup> Matthew 28:19) and set up the kingdom of his grace among them upon the ruin of the devil's kingdom — that he shall make them a willing people in the day of his power, and even *the kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdoms of the Lord and of his Christ.*

[2.] That *every man's judgment proceeds from the Lord.* “Let them be glad that *thou shalt judge the people righteously*, that thou shalt give a law and gospel which shall be a righteous rule of judgment, and shalt pass an unerring sentence, according to that rule, upon all the children of men, against which there will lie no exception.” Let us all be glad that we are

not to be one another's judges, but that he that judges us is the Lord, whose judgment we are sure is according to truth.

**III.** He concludes with a joyful prospect of all good when God shall do this, when the nations shall be converted and brought to praise God.

**1.** The lower world shall smile upon them, and they shall have the fruits of that (v. 6): *Then shall the earth yield her increase*. Not but that God gave rain from heaven and fruitful seasons to the nations when they *sat in darkness* (<sup>4447</sup>Acts 14:17); but when they were converted the earth yielded its increase to God; the meat and the drink then became a *meat-offering and a drink-offering to the Lord our God* (<sup>2024</sup>Joel 2:14); and then it was fruitful to some good purpose. Then it yielded its increase more than before to the comfort of men, who through Christ acquired a covenant-title to the fruits of it and had a sanctified use of it. Note, The success of the gospel sometimes brings outward mercies along with it; righteousness exalts a nation. See <sup>2025</sup>Isaiah 4:2; 62:9.

**2.** The upper world shall smile upon them, and they shall have the favours of that, which is much better: *God, even our own God, shall bless us*, v. 6. And again (v. 7), *God shall bless us*. Note,

**(1.)** There are a people in the world that can, upon good grounds, call God their God.

**(2.)** Believers have reason to glory in their relation to God and the interest they have in him. It is here spoken with an air of triumph. *God, even our own God*.

**(2.)** Those who through grace call God their own may with a humble confidence expect a blessing from him. If he be our God, he will bless us with special blessings.

**(4.)** The blessing of God, as ours in covenant, is that which sweetens all our creature-comforts to us, and makes them comforts indeed; then we receive the increase of the earth as a mercy indeed when with it God, even our own God, gives us his blessing.

**3.** All the world shall hereby be brought to do like them: *The ends of the earth shall fear him*, that is, worship him, which is to be done with a godly fear. The blessings God bestows upon us call upon us not only to love him, but to fear him, to keep up high thoughts of him and to be afraid of

offending him. When the gospel begins to spread it shall get ground more and more, till it reach to the ends of the earth. The leaven hidden in the meal shall diffuse itself, till the whole be leavened. And the many blessings which those will own themselves to have received that are brought into the church invite others to join themselves to them. It is good to cast in our lot with those that are the blessed of the Lord.