

Texts, NRSV: Luke 13.24-29; Psalm 67; Numbers 6.22-27

i. My Grandpa Willis grew up in a time and a region of our nation when racial tensions were part of life, but Grandpa Willis became a Pastor. As an older man, he joined a missions team from the PCG to drill fresh water wells in Africa and to preach. It changed his life, as did Scriptures like Luke 13.29 that he shared with me.

a **Luke 13.29**: This is a powerful verse for race relations, and I still remember conversations with Grandpa Willis about it.

b However, I want you to hear it in context, **Luke 13.24-29**

c At the end of the day, being at the Lord's feast is based on whether or not we know the Lord, nothing else. Jesus Christ welcomes all people, but all the advances we make in racial relations politically will not save our souls eternally. Luke 13.29 is a call to all nations to come to the table and to know Christ.

When the Israelites looked forward to the Messiah's Reign, they looked forward to a time when all nations would join them

ii. In Psalm 67 all the nations are called to the **Messiah's Reign**

a Since this is Hebrew poetry, it helps to understand the structure

b There are 3 key players or groups in this Psalm

1 **Psalm 67.1-2**: This clearly appears to be a prayer of ISRAEL

2 All the NATIONS are referenced in, **verses 3-5**

3 Finally, the EARTH is changed in, **verses 6-7**¹

c This is prophecy, called *Israel's Missionary Psalm* and *Israel's Millennial Prayer*

1 For those who are picky about Hebrew verbs, most of it is past tense

a) However, this is sometimes a writing method of prophecy

b) A prophet sees future events as if they have already happened

c) The Psalmist has seen all nations in unity and the Earth restored

d) The Psalmist sees our future as if it has already happened

2 We can have confidence that our future is in the hands of Christ now

The Israelites have been praying for Messiah's Reign. Israel has been praying for all nations to join them at the table for thousands of years now. Will we join them?

iii. There are at least 3 points that show that Israel is praying for all nations

1st: Ps 67 is an expanding prayer of Israel for all nations

¹ structure of Psalm and sermon adapted from Arthur G. Clarke, *Analytical Studies in the Psalms* (Grand Rapids, MI: Kriegel, 1979), 172-174.

a It begins with a very narrow focus on Israel

1 Comparison: **Ps 67.1; Numbers 6.22-27**

2 In Numbers, God through Moses is blessing Israel

b **Ps 67.1-3:** expands the language of the *Priest Blessing* to all nations

2nd: Each paragraph ends with a similar phrase blessing the nations

a Paragraphs 1 and 2 (verses 1-3, 4-5) have identical endings

b "let all the peoples praise you" - a clear call to everyone

c However the last paragraph ends with a slight change (verses 6-7)

d "let all the ends of the earth revere him" - referring to *Messiah's Reign*

1 We know that all the peoples of earth will not be in unity until then

2 We also know that the earth won't be blessed again until then

3 God will eventually reverse the curse that has covered the earth

3rd: Verse 4 is the core of the Psalm, the verse with the central message

a Each verse is using Hebrew poetry, 2 lines, it's called *parallelism*

b Verse 4 is the only verse with 3 lines, clearly setting it above the others

c **Ps 67.4:** God will "judge," provide "equity," and "guide the nations"

1 These terms point to the justice and reign of Christ

2 Christ's reign will be a reign of joy, not like any other kingdom

3 The Psalmist says "Let the nations be glad and sing for joy"

Charles Spurgeon: "What a sweet word is that 'to sing for joy!' Some sing for form, others for show, some as a duty, others as an amusement, but to sing from the heart, because overflowing joy must find a vent, this is to sing indeed. Whole nations will do this when Jesus reigns over them in the power of his grace. We have heard hundreds and even thousands sing in chorus, but what will it be to hear whole nations lifting up their voices, as the noise of many waters and like great thunders. When shall the age of song begin?"²

Prayer:

Lord Jesus our Messiah, as Christians we are under Your reign *now*, but we also look forward to Your complete reign that is *yet to come*.

Thank You for leading Your people Israel to pray for our salvation centuries ago.

We pray that the nations would come to know You and feast at Your table as You promise in Luke 13. We pray that the nations would be renewed as we experience Your unity and salvation. We pray that the *Messiah's Reign* will be fully established in every corner of the Earth . . . *so that* we can experience the complete joy of our salvation.

As Spurgeon cried out, we cry out today, "When shall that age of song begin?"

² C.H. Spurgeon, *The Treasury of David: Psalms 1-87*, vol. 1 (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1996), 129.