

WEEK FOUR
DAY TWO

“Let the nations be glad and sing for joy,
for you judge the peoples with equity
and guide the nations upon earth. Selah”

Psalms 67:4

Let the nations

לְאֹמֹת *lěom*

– from an unused root that means to gather; a community – nation, people.

be glad

שָׂמַח *samach*

– to creak or emit a stridulous sound as a mast in a strong wind; to shout for joy, cry out, sing aloud, triumph.

and sing for joy

רָנַן *ranan*

– a primitive root; probably to brighten up; be gleesome:—cheer up, be glad, make joyful, rejoice

for you judge

עָמַד *`am*

– to judge, pronounce sentence, to govern, plead, reason, rule.

the peoples

שָׁפָט *shaphat*

– a people(s), nation(s), a tribe(s), men, figuratively: a flock

with equity

מִישׁוֹר *miyshowr*

– from a word meaning to be straight or even; a level, straightness, justice or justly, equity, even place, uprightness.

and guide

נָחַה *nachah*

– to guide, govern, lead.

the nations

לְאֹמֹת *lěom*

– to gather; a community(ies), nation(s), people(s).

upon earth

אֶרֶץ *'erets*

– the earth, ground, land, world.

Selah

סֵלָה *celah*

– exact definition unknown; possibly to lift up or exalt; a (musical) pause.

Journal

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DAY THREE

**Let the nations be glad and sing for joy,
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Psalm 67:4**

The theme expressed in verse 3, "Let all the peoples praise You," is expanded now in verse 4: "Let the nations be glad and sing for joy." The expansion of this theme speaks to us of its importance. We see in the New Testament that when our Lord taught the disciples to pray (Matthew 6:9-13 and Luke 11:1-2), He *first* prayed for God's name to be hallowed, for His Kingdom to come, and for His will to be done on earth, as it is in heaven. God wants people from all tribes, languages, people groups, and nations to glorify and enjoy Him.

The classic devotion book *Streams in the Desert* (December 14) shares these thoughts from someone named Dr. Francis regarding Christ's priority in praying for the extension of God's Kingdom:

"What a contrast between this [the Lord's Prayer] and much praying we have heard. When we follow the devices of our own hearts, how runs it? 'O Lord bless *me*, then My family, My church, My city, My country,' and away on the far fringe as we close up, there is a prayer for the extension of His Kingdom throughout the wide parish of the world."

"The Master begins where we leave off. The world *first*, my personal needs second, is the order of this [Jesus'] prayer. Only after my prayer has crossed every continent and every far-flung island of the sea, after it has taken in the last man in the last backward race, after it has covered the entire wish and purpose of God for the world, only then am I taught to ask for a piece of bread for myself."

May our hearts and our prayers be molded by the priorities of our Master. And may great numbers of all varieties of people throughout all the world come to glorify God and enjoy Him forever!

~ Susan Hooker

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An overflowing heart bubbles out of the depths in song. In the car, in the shower, jogging to the play list...what makes your heart sing? And how about private longings—the “if only” wish list of unfinished business you groan inwardly to see resolved? Who hasn’t felt, at some point, like the only song they can dredge up is a lament?

Paul learned contentment in all circumstances—not that he was resigned to second-rate satisfaction (“oh well, get over it”)—but he grew into increasing appreciation of heavenly vistas. Knowing Jesus with tried-and-true trust, Paul could offload chafing details to God’s divinely capable hands. He confidently assures you and me that in Christ we enjoy the same prerogative...in proximity to Jesus, inclinations change. It’s a choice to sing praise.

David’s song affords us another glimpse of how that maturity plays out. With God-honed heart’s desire, the “man after God’s own heart” verbalizes his longing—international praise celebrating God’s sovereignty. David understands that God’s exquisitely perfect rule and guidance should elicit ebullient praise from everyone everywhere—contagious worldwide. Personal life is still messy, sometimes lamentable; but, David (like Paul) has graduated to a more expansive eternal focus. His theme—oh, if only the whole world could experience heartfelt overflowing song of the heavenward gaze! It’s a new year; perhaps time for an introspective look. How is your heart leaning...longing...singing? If your heart’s song was contagious, who would be blessed?

~ Denise Nyberg

WEEK FOUR
DAY FIVE

**Let the nations be glad and sing for joy,
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and guide the nations upon earth. *Selah*
Psalm 67:4**

Be glad. In Hebrew, that's how the verse begins, with a command for the nations, which includes the reader, to rejoice; literally "cheer up" and give a ringing shout of praise to God. Most of you probably flinched when you saw "cheer up," because it's a command that is used to encourage the pretense of joy. "I know you're having a hard time right now, but scrape together what positive thoughts you can and you'll see the sunny side of things soon."

While "be glad" doesn't leave room for wallowing, it is not calling you to artificial and unfounded celebration. There is a reason we should be glad: justice shall be done. Our perfectly moral, all-knowing God shall judge each one of us with complete impartiality. We don't have to worry about Him not knowing "our side" of an issue. He's seen it all—every single detail of the arguments you've had, the injustices you've experienced and the wounds you've endured. However, this also means He's seen the arguments you began, the injustices you have brought on others, and the wounds you have given. And all these wrongs shall be set right, either by eternal punishment or by the blood of Christ Jesus which absolves us from the well-earned wrath of God.

So be glad my sisters, for He has done marvelous things! We are under the blood of Christ and do not have to pursue petty vengeance, for the Lord will fully repay those who hurt, wound or abuse us! He is—right now, in real time—guiding not only you but all the nations upon the earth with a kindness we cannot begin to fathom! Everything is not in our control but in His!

As God's people, we have every reason to be glad yet we forget to credit the Lord with all He has done. The verse ends with the word "selah." The exact meaning of this word is uncertain. Some scholars believe it is a musical notation indicating a pause or musical interlude; some say it means "to praise" or "to lift up." But both meanings encourage us to do the same thing: to take time each day to get into the habit of pausing and exalting His name, for He is worthy of such praise; He shall execute justice at the perfect time in the perfect place.

~ Joanna Toso

