

## PSALM SIXTY-SIX AND SIXTY-SEVEN

crossing of the Red Sea and the Jordan? (c) The God for all is revealed in these verses (8-12) as one who: (1) disciplines (2) delivers. Show where these two thoughts are developed.

## PSALM 67

### DESCRIPTIVE TITLE

Prayer for Blessing on Israel as a Means of  
Blessing to All Nations.

### ANALYSIS

Stanza I., vers. 1, 2, The Priestly Prayer urged with a view to the Enlightenment of All Nations. Stanza II., vers. 3, 4, The Peoples will Give Thanks for Governance and Guidance. Stanza III., The Fruitfulness of the Earth, and Divine Blessing on Israel, securing the Universal Reverence of the Divine Benefactor.

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(Lm.) Psalm—(By David)<sup>1</sup>—Song.

- 1 May God be gracious unto us and bless us,  
may he light up his face among<sup>2</sup> us.
- 2 That men may know throughout the earth thy way,  
among all nations thy victory.<sup>3</sup>
- 3 Peoples will thank<sup>4</sup> thee O God!  
peoples all of them will thank thee,
- 4 Populations will rejoice and ring out their joy:  
when<sup>5</sup> thou shalt judge peoples in equity,  
and populations throughout the earth thou shalt lead.<sup>6</sup>
- 5 Peoples will thank thee O God!  
peoples all of them will thank thee:
- 6 Earth hath given<sup>7</sup> her increase:

1. So in some cod. (w. Sep., Vul.)—Gn.

2. So Per.; ml. "with."

3. Or: "salvation"; but cp. Pss. 96-98.

4. Cp. 6:5n.

5. Or: "because."

6. As in Exo. 15:13, Pss. 5:8, 23:3, 27:11, 73:24. So Kp. and Br. "Guidest"—Per.

7. As if on some recent occasion (65); but may be prophetic perfect of certainty: "shall have given."

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God our own God<sup>1</sup> will bless us.

- 7 God will bless us—  
and all the ends of the earth will revere him.

(Lm.) To the Chief Musician.

### PARAPHRASE

#### PSALM 67

O God, in mercy bless us; let Your face beam with joy as You look down at us.

2 Send us around the world with the news of Your saving power and Your eternal plan for all mankind.

3 How everyone throughout the earth will praise the Lord!

4 How glad the nations will be, singing for joy because You are their King<sup>2</sup> and will give true justice to their people!

5 Praise God, O world! May all the peoples of the earth give thanks to You.

6, 7 For the earth has yielded abundant harvests. God, even our own God, will bless us. And peoples from remotest lands will worship Him.

### EXPOSITION

The most marked characteristic of this psalm is its clear and quiet blending of Primary Blessing on Israel with Consequent Blessing on All Nations. The leading position of Israel is clearly indicated. The pronouns *us* and *they* (implied) at once strike the keynote of the relationship assumed to exist between the one nation and the many. "In the Messiah," there is neither Jew or Gentile: *under* the Messiah, there are both—blended but not confounded. Let the reader note how in this psalm the people who speak of themselves as "us" occupy the foreground. With a clear reminiscence of the blessing which Aaron and his sons were authorized to bestow on the sons of Israel (Num. 6:22-27) the fulfilment of that prayer-blessing is here first sought for Israel as the people on whom Jehovah had thus "put his name," and which formula He himself had promised to make good. Then immediately an outspread of blessing, proceeding from the one nation to the many, is besought: *That men throughout the*

1. Prob. an elohistic substitute for "Jehovah our God." See Table of Divine Names, *ante*.

2. Literally, "govern the nations."

## PSALM SIXTY-SEVEN

*earth may know thy way*, as exemplified in the long recorded history of Israel; and *thy victory first over them and then for them over their enemies*. Only in that long history, as prophecy enables us to complete it, can that *victory* be traced. Then, for a whole stanza the psalm is engrossed with the nations, so introduced. Not only for what they behold in Israel will they *thank God*, but also and more immediately for immeasurable benefits brought home to themselves: they themselves will be *judged*, that is *governed, in equity*; and He who governs them will *guide* them as a shepherd *leads* his flock (as a comparison of the references will show). When Israel gets her blessing, *the nations*, as nations, will get theirs; yea *all of them* will get it, as the poet is careful to repeat. He who thus *governs* and *guides* the nations will assuredly *lead* them to peace and industry and honesty, and thereby also to plenty: *Earth will give her increase*—no doubt a covenant promise to Israel (cp. Lev. 26:4, Ps. 85:12, Eze: 26, 27) but a promise doubtless overflowing to the teeming *populations* of earth. The blessings previously named—*governance, guidance*—rise up from the political into the spiritual realm, probably to a large extent annihilating the distinction between them; but this—like the “daily bread” petition in the prayer given by Jesus to his disciples—is undisguisedly temporal, as why should it not? Why should not national blessing *come down*: as do the dews of heaven and the showers that water the earth; as does redemption, that delivers first the soul from the bondage of sin, and then the body from the bondage of decay (Rom. 8:20); as will the Heavenly Jerusalem itself, so that “the Tent of God” may be “with men” (Rev. 21:3)? Therefore do we feel at home with one plainly temporal blessing in this comprehensive prayer. Yet—as here we are not on Church ground but on Kingdom ground—we are once more reminded that Israel is here the intercessor; and the circumference of blessing for the whole earth is set around the centre of the covenant-nation. “Jehovah our God” *will bless us: will bless us AND all the ends of the earth will revere him*.

What then is Jehovah’s *way*; and, especially, wherein will consist the *victory* which will yet thrill all nations and tune their hearts as well as their harps to this song? His *way* is seen in his dealings with the nation of Israel: trace it! Note their birth as a people; their enslavement in Egypt; their deliverance; their journeyings in the wilderness; their settlement in Canaan; their degeneracy; their captivities; their partial restorations; their

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treatment of their Messiah; their present long-continued banishment from their beautiful land; their sorrows, so heavily pressed on them; their sufferings, so often cruelly unjust; and, applying to the mind's eye the telescope of the prophetic word, note the issue of all this in national regeneration and restoration:—THERE, along that chequered course, is to be seen Jehovah's way, as nowhere else! And the *victory*—where and what is that? In psalms yet lying ahead of us, will it be repeatedly seen; but perhaps nowhere more brightly and suggestively than in the shortest psalm of this priceless psalter, the 117th. One word therein goes straight to the root of this matter of Jehovah's *victory*: it may be a victory over the jealousies and oppressions of Gentile nations, it may be a victory over the beleaguering forces of Antichrist; but it will be, first and last and foremost, a *victory* over the Hebrew nation itself. And when Israel can say to the nations, concerning Yahweh their God, *His kindness hath prevailed over us*, then those who listen to the story will no longer be slow to believe that *His faithfulness is age-abiding*.

### QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Did God intend for the nation Israel to be evangelistic—i.e. in telling other nations of their God? How does this psalm relate?
2. Someone referred to this psalm as “the Lord's prayer of the Old Testament”—why would this be appropriate?
3. Rotherham was sure this psalm's promise would be fulfilled—but how and when? Discuss.
4. What is the result of disobedience to the great commission? What was it for Israel? What will it be for us?

## PSALM 68

### DESCRIPTIVE TITLE

Glimpses of Jehovah's Visible Reign over Israel and the Nations.

### ANALYSIS

(See Headlines inserted in text.)