

SEED & BREAD

FOR THE SOWER ISA. 55:10 FOR THE EATER
BRIEF BIBLICAL MESSAGES FROM

THE WORD OF TRUTH MINISTRY

Otis Q. Sellers, Bible Teacher

A PSALM OF DIVINE GOVERNMENT

(Psalm 67)

The foundation for all that is said in the New Testament concerning the kingdom of God was laid down in the Old Testament. When John the Baptist, the Lord Jesus, and the twelve apostles went forth to herald that the kingdom of God was at hand, they did not need to explain what was meant by this term. If any did not understand, it was because they did not know the Scriptures that God had entrusted to Israel. This is also true of men today; for since the New Testament truth follows the pattern of the Old, it is important that we become completely familiar with those Old Testament passages that declare the coming of divine government upon the earth. One of these passages is a short Psalm, which, if I were forced to make a choice, I would memorize rather than Psalm 23. We need to know and believe Psalm 67.

GOD BE MERCIFUL UNTO US. This is, I believe, a Psalm of David, the shepherd king of Israel. This Psalm is a prayer; almost every statement in it is a petition; and I interpret it on the basis of this principle: Every prayer in the Bible is a prophecy, and every prayer will be answered just as every prophecy will be fulfilled. David's own nation is upon his heart here, laid there by the Spirit of God Who inspired this prayer; and Israel is the subject of this expression of his desire. The Hebrew for "be merciful" here means "be gracious"; that is, show us a love and favor that we do not deserve.

AND BLESS US. The desire for God to "be gracious" means to be passively gracious. David knows of the sins of which his nation was guilty and realizes that if the Lord should mark iniquities, none would be able to stand before Him (Psalm 130:3). However, "bless us" is positive and is a plea for active grace. The blessing he desires for his nation is not wealth, grandeur, or territorial expansion. He seeks something far better that will be more enduring.

AND CAUSE HIS FACE TO SHINE UPON US. This blessing that David asked for his nation must not be lightly regarded as if it indicates some transitory moment of happiness, uplift, or blessing. When this prayer is answered, as it certainly will be, it will be the fulfillment of the great promise and prophecy of Isaiah that "the glory of the LORD shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together" (Isa. 40:5). Since the "glory of the LORD" is related to "the face of Jesus Christ" (2 Cor. 4:6), the event that David requests in his prayer is the *epiphaneia* (a blazing forth in a favorable intervention, see Issue No. 37); and this is the same event that we are told to live looking for and expecting, "the blazing forth of the glory of the great God, even our Savior Jesus Christ" (Titus 2:13). This is the event that marks the advent of God's government upon the earth.

Some will ask how this could be; how could David have known about the *epiphaneia* of the Lord Jesus, since Isaiah had not written his prophecy and Paul had not added his enlightening material? The difficulty is not a real one. David probably knew nothing about the *epiphaneia*, but the Holy Spirit did and He is the real author of this Psalm. If any believe that the Psalms are limited to the meager knowledge of David, he may as well excise them from his Bible.

THAT THY WAY MAY BE KNOWN UPON THE EARTH. Today, the knowledge of God's way, especially in regard to peoples and nations, is more sorely needed than anything else. Men have lost their way and nations have lost all sense of direction. Men do not know why they are living and nations do not know why they are existing. All the combined aspects of the work of God which are subsumed in the word *epiphaneia* will result in all men and all nations knowing God's way. When this is known, it will be possible for His will to be done on earth even as it is in heaven.

THY SAVING HEALTH AMONG ALL NATIONS. It is to be noted that in this petition and the previous one, the blessing desired is widened from David's nation, Israel, to the whole earth and to all nations. The request here is for all mankind to know by experience God's saving health. Humanity's greatest physical need is complete deliverance from all the many illnesses, diseases, infirmities, and deformities that now *flow* out of the fact that sin and death are ever at work in this world in which we live. And while the word *yeshuah* here, which is translated "saving health," does mean salvation," the idea of health is positively embodied in it. As I have stated before, the kingdom of God comes with a gift of perfect health for all who are living upon the earth on that day when God speaks from heaven and assumes sovereignty (see Issue No. 35). **"Yea, for the rebellious also, that the LORD God might dwell among them"** (Psa. 68:18).

Thus, in these two verses we have the divine process by which God's government is established in the earth. (1) It is the grace of *God* that will be back of this greatest of all acts of grace. (2) The glory of *God* is revealed *to* all flesh at the same time and *to* the same extent. (3) Mankind is enlightened. (4) The sin of the world is taken away. (5) Health and soundness become the portion of all.

If, following the kingdom judgment (see Issue No. 36), *some* are not allowed *to* live *to* enjoy all this, it will be because of their own sins. There is no universal forgiveness *or* amnesty accompanying the advent of God's government.

LET THE PEOPLES PRAISE THEE, O GOD, LET ALL THE PEOPLES PRAISE THEE. The word *people* here is plural in the Hebrew. Old English had no plural form for this word, and this explains why it never *so* appears in the Old Testament. Expositors of the Psalms differ as *to* the meaning of the Hebrew words in this passage, and *most* of them translate it, "Then shall the peoples praise Thee, a God; then shall all the peoples praise Thee." However, this makes it seem as though David were telling *God* what the happy outcome will be if He grants the requests he has made. It is *my* understanding that David continues *to* make requests here and says: "Give the peoples cause for praising Thee, a *God*; give all the peoples cause for praising Thee." This is further evidence of the universality of the work of God when He blazes forth as King of all the earth (see Zech. 14:9).

O LET THE NATIONS BE GLAD AND SING FOR JOY. In harmony with the previous passage this should be rendered as, "Give the nations cause for being glad and singing for *joy*." Think upon this and compare it with the present state of nations today. There is no nation as such that can be described as glad or happy. They are all in turmoil. They are faced with external and internal problems that defy solution. Their songs are dirges, for they have no reasons for being glad and singing with *joy*. However, these words deal with nations and may not include the individual citizen. He may have, even as I have, many reasons for being glad and singing with *joy*; but with our nations it is another matter.

FOR THOU SHALT JUDGE THE PEOPLES RIGHTEOUSLY. Today, *most* conflicts of mankind are between different kinds of people. There are Arab and Israelite, black and white, and others *too* numerous to mention. When God assumes sovereignty, He will make righteous determinations that will satisfy and be acceptable *to* all peoples. . And govern the nations upon the earth. *Note* that the Psalmist has changed from petitions *to* direct statements as *to* what *God* is going *to* do. He will govern the nations upon the earth. This is a declaration of divine government *to come*, and it emphatically states that it is *to* be nations upon the earth. This was the hope of every Israelite. He knew that when *God* governed all nations, his nation would have a favored place; and it was his expectation that he would be called from among the dead to have a place in it. God's Word being true and faithful, we can rest assured that He will yet govern the nations upon the earth.

LET THE PEOPLES PRAISE THEE, O GOD; LET ALL THE PEOPLES PRAISE THEE. The Psalmist repeats his request. "Give the peoples cause for praising Thee, O God; give all the peoples cause for praising Thee." This is his Spirit-inspired prayer, and, thus, becomes a prophecy. We know it will be answered, that the prophecy will be fulfilled. God will so act that universal praise of Him will be the result.

THEN SHALL THE EARTH YIELD HER INCREASE. This brings to mind a promise God made concerning the land of Israel in Lev. 26:4. Here it is the whole earth. Every square foot of it will be arable; no part of it will be unproductive. This is the divine answer to all who ask how the earth can support as many people as will certainly be upon it in the kingdom of God. No man can estimate what or how much the soil will produce when the curse of Gen. 3: 18 is lifted and the beneficent climatic conditions of the kingdom prevail.

AND GOD, EVEN OUR OWN GOD, SHALL BLESS US. David recognizes the exalted position of the nation of Israel under God's government, a truth that cannot be denied by anyone who accepts God's testimony on this matter.

GOD SHALL BLESS US; AND ALL THE ENDS OF THE EARTH SHALL FEAR HIM. He repeats the declaration of God's blessing of Israel, and states that "all the ends of the earth" shall fear Him. This is a Hebraism that is found often in the Old Testament. It means all mankind, even those living in the most remote places. Today, we think of these as being the Eskimos within the Artic Circle or the aboriginal people living in South America, Africa, or the New Hebrides. All these shall stand in fear before Him.

The word *fear* here does not mean to be afraid or terrified. It means to reverence, to stand in awe, to show due respect. This will be the result of God blazing forth in revealing the glory of His Son. And since "the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom," we can see mankind as a whole becoming students in the school of God. Better make sure that you will be in that number.

END ISSUE NO. SB049