

The Lord's Message: God Blesses Us

Date: August 20, 2023

Where: Tilghman United Methodist Church

Scripture Reference: Psalm 67

This beautiful Psalm could be a harvest psalm. Throughout this psalm, the writer displays a quiet confidence in the goodness of God. One can imagine the people singing this song in gratitude for God providing an abundance harvest. The psalmist starts off with the Aaronic Blessing found in **Numbers 6:24-26**. A large part of the life of a Christian is portrayed as one of struggle and triumph. Very rarely of one basking in the blessing and the joy in our relationship with God. Today, we are going to focus not on the struggle, but on the blessing.

Let us pray.

The beginning of the Psalm paints a picture of faith as gratitude and peace. "May God be gracious to us and bless us." One reading this might recall what Paul says in **Philippians 4:4-7**.

I would like to bring to your attention that this Psalm is void of any enemies or calamities, only the graciousness of God. God is blessing and the people are praising. How many times have you felt the blessing of God not when you are in a struggle, but when your life is going well? How many times have you taken the time to thank and praise God for those times? We often thank God for the times when He has been there with us to overcome the struggles, such as a loss of a loved one, a poor medical diagnosis, problems in a relationship or standing up for your faith. Have we thanked God for the peace that we have in our life?

The Reformist John Calvin understood the importance of the quiet rest and confidence that a believer in God has. Even though he lived in the sixteenth century, a time filled with upheaval and wars. He often would use the word, "repose," to describe the deep sense of peace that comes from one knowing that they were created and loved by God. Before beginning his lectures on the Bible, he often prayed this prayer: "May we repose in peace under the guardianship which You have promised us."

There is peace and repose in knowing “your saving power among all nations.” Now when this psalmist is writing this, the Messiah had not come. He may have been thinking of this, but still Jesus had not come on this earth. O the peace that we have knowing that Jesus has come to save us. O the peace we know that Jesus has taken our sins away. O the peace to know that one day, we can enter into the gates of Heaven and gather around the throne praising God. O the blessing that God has given to us of His only Son, Jesus. O the blessing of Jesus to saved us. O the blessing of the Holy Spirit that lives and guides our lives. This is the peace and repose that the psalmist had not experienced. Still the writer is able to write: “Let the people praise You, O God; let all the peoples praise You.”

We praise God not only for His saving power, but also for His justice and mercy. The psalmist writes, “Let the nations be glad and sing for joy, for You judge the people with equity and guide the nations upon earth.” I am glad that God does not judge me as I deserve. If God were to judge me as I deserve, then I would be condemned to death. As Paul says in **Romans 6:23**, then I would be condemned to death. God’s blessing is that He does not judge as we deserve, but instead blesses us by forgiving us of our sins. “Let the people praise You, O God; let all the peoples praise You.”

The psalmist goes on with “The earth has yielded its increase; God, our God, has blessed us.” The simple and profound truth is that the source of all good things come only from God. The stock market is not the source of all good things. Our jobs are not the source of all good things. Human ingenuity or human power is not the source of all good things. The government is not the source of all good things. The bounty of the earth comes from God. Only God is the source of all good things.

This blessing is not meant for just the people that have a relationship with God, but also for those that do not. This blessing extends to everyone, even the people that do not want a relationship with God. God still blesses them. Jesus says in **Matthew 5:45**. God’s blessing are a global blessing.

The blessings of God bring people the knowledge of God. How can you look up in the night sky and not believe in God? How can you see a new-born baby and not believe in God? How can you see how the rain waters the earth and not believe in God? How can you see a rainbow after it rains and not think that God is the one that made this possible? How can you see an abundance of fish or other seafood and not think of God? God’s blessings bring people to the knowledge of God. The more that scientists study the earth and the heavens, the more they come to see how all of this is not a random occurrence, but an intelligent design. The designer is God, who made the heavens and the earth.

The theologian, Karl Barth once said, "Knowledge of God's ways always implies a new human action corresponding with the divine." The knowledge of God draws us closer to the divine and elicits within us praise. "Let the people praise You, O God; let all the people praise You."

A Christian life is one that is not completely filled with struggle, but often times there is peace and repose. In all times and in all ways, we need to acknowledge the one that blesses us. "May God continue to bless us; let all the ends of the earth revere Him." Amen.