



# The Scrolls

Helping **CENTRAL BIBLE CHURCH** Families Belong, Become and Go Beyond

V27 N23

June 8, 2025

## PSALMS: CELEBRATING CHRIST IN GOD'S HYMNBOOK

“Psalm 67”

### THIS WEEK'S CORE COMPETENCY

#### Evangelism

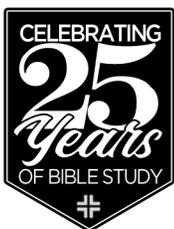
I share Jesus with others through personal proclamation and demonstration of the gospel.

*“But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”*

Acts 1:8



Does the Old Testament have a Great Commission?



Most of what is written in the New Testament follows from the commission Jesus gave his disciples (Mt 28:18-20). In fact, the history of the church has been driven forward through the centuries by that Great Commission. This observation begs an answer to the question, “What does mission look like in the Old Testament?”

The idea of mission is rooted in God’s promise to bless Abraham and through him to bless all peoples on earth (Ge 12:3b) and is entailed by God’s later description of Israel as “a kingdom of priests” (Ex 19:5-6) —highlighting the role of the nation as mediator between God and the nations. These two passages are among the strongest calls in Scripture for the descendants of Abraham through Jacob to be witnesses to all the families of the earth.

The plagues that the LORD brought upon Egypt were brought not only to punish the Egyptians and their king but also that the Egyptians might know the LORD (Ex 7:5; cf. 7:17; 8:22; 14:4, 18). In Exodus 9:16, God tells Moses, “I have raised you up for this very purpose, that I might show you my power and that my name might be proclaimed in all the earth.” On the meaning of “know,” one author writes: “There can be little mistaking that the word know here connotes more than a mere intellectual or cognitive awareness of who God is. It expresses a desire that the Egyptians might themselves come to a personal, experiential knowledge and appreciation of who Yahweh is. God would proclaim his own name among the Gentiles even if the Israelites were not outgoing in their witness” (Walter C. Kaiser, Jr., *Mission in the Old Testament*, 13).

Furthermore, the Old Testament clearly shows that salvation/deliverance is for Gentiles as well as Jews. The two Hebrew midwives come to mind — two women who thwarted the genocidal intentions of Pharaoh by preserving the lives of newborn Israelite

males. “So, God dealt well with the midwives . . . and because the midwives feared God, he gave them families” (Ex 1:20-21). Rahab, the Canaanite prostitute who protected the two Israelite spies, was subsequently spared, along with her family, when Jericho was conquered and burned (Jos 6:22-25). A Sidonian widow was provided for by Elijah, who also raised her son from the dead (1Ki 17:8-16). Naaman, the Syrian military commander, was cured of leprosy by Elisha (2Ki 5:1-19). Not to mention, perhaps the best example of all, Ruth. Ruth was not “converted” by her mother-in-law Naomi; indeed, Ruth returned to Bethlehem with Naomi over Naomi’s objections. But Ruth soon integrated herself into the community, showing Torah-kindness to Naomi, accepting Israel’s God and Israelite customs, and ultimately conceiving and delivering a son who would become the grandfather of King David (Ru 4:13-17).

Finally, in the book of Isaiah, the LORD says, “I will make you a light for the Gentiles, that my salvation may reach to the ends of the earth” (49:6; cf. 42:1), which, of course, raises the question, “to whom does you refer?” In context, “you” refers to the Servant of the LORD (v. 6; cf. Isa 42-44). But who is this Servant of the LORD — a nation, i.e., Israel or a person, i.e., Messiah? According to the author above, it can refer to both. He explains: “Our conclusion is that the ‘servant of the LORD’ is a corporate term that embodies at one and the same time a reference to the One, who is the representative of the whole (i.e., the Messiah), and a reference to the whole group that belongs to that single whole or corporate term (i.e., Israel) . . . We conclude, therefore, that salvation was to come to the Gentiles through the mediation of Yahweh’s servant Messiah and Israel” (Kaiser, 56, 62). Both are “a light for the Gentiles,” and evidence of God’s worldwide mission in the Old Testament.

# 1

## EXAMINE GOD'S WORD

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### Read Psalm 67:1-7

For the director of music. With stringed instruments. A psalm. A song.

- 1 *May God be gracious to us and bless us  
and make his face shine on us –*
- 2 *so that your ways may be known on earth,  
your salvation among all nations.*
- 3 *May the peoples praise you, God;  
may all the peoples praise you.*
- 4 *May the nations be glad and sing for joy,  
for you rule the peoples with equity  
and guide the nations of the earth.*
- 5 *May the peoples praise you, God;  
may all the peoples praise you.*
- 6 *The land yields its harvest;  
God, our God, blesses us.*
- 7 *May God bless us still,  
so that all the ends of the earth will fear him.*

### Read another translation

For director; to be accompanied by stringed instruments; a psalm, a song.

- 1 *May God show us his favor and bless us.  
May he smile on us. (Selah)*
- 2 *Then those living on earth will know what you are  
like;  
all nations will know how you deliver your people.*
- 3 *Let the nations thank you, O God.  
Let all the nations thank you.*
- 4 *Let foreigners rejoice and celebrate.  
For you execute justice among the nations,  
and govern the people living on earth. (Selah)*
- 5 *Let the nations thank you, O God.  
Let all the nations thank you.*
- 6 *The earth yields its crops.  
May God, our God, bless us.*
- 7 *May God bless us.  
Then all the ends of the earth will give him the honor  
he deserves. (NET)*

After reading the text, practice your Observation skills by noting the following:

- Underline “May” in vv. 1, 3, 4, 5, 7.
- Bracket “make his face shine on us” in v. 1.
- Box “so that” indicating *purpose* in vv. 2, 7.
- Bracket “on earth” in v. 2 and “ends of the earth” in v. 7.
- Circle “ways” and “salvation” in v. 2.
- Highlight “nations” and “peoples” in vv. 2-5.
- Box “for” indicating *reason* in v. 4.

What one word would you use to describe the **TONE** of this passage? (i.e., stern, joyful, cautious, etc.)

What word or idea stands out to you in this passage?

What one thing do you not understand in this passage?

Try to summarize the **THEME** of this passage in one word. If you were going to describe these verses, you might say, “This text is about \_\_\_\_\_.”



## DIG DEEPER

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Answer the questions to help you apply the passage and prepare for discussion

1. Identify the *figurative* expression in verse 1b, and explain what it means.
  2. Explain the *purpose* behind the psalmist's request for God's blessing.
  3. Verse 2 uses *parallelism* characteristic of Hebrew poetry. Explain how the second line *specifies* the first.
  4. What does the *inclusio* do for you as you read the psalm? (See note on v. 3.)
  5. Explain the *reason* behind the nations' joy in verse 4a.
  6. What do you infer from the fact that verse 4, at the center of the psalm, is its longest verse, and a *tricolon* (i.e., it has *three* parts)?
  7. Does verse 4 imply that justice prevailed in the nations of that day? Explain.
  8. Compare how the psalm ends (vv. 6, 7) with how it begins (vv. 1, 2). What do you observe, and what difference does it make?
  9. According to verse 7, God will bless his people so that all nations will know his salvation (cf., v. 2). Do you think that implies he expects us to share his blessings with all nations? Explain.
  10. **Discussion:** Read Acts 13:46-48 and talk about what this psalm has to say about the Central Practice Evangelism.
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### Commentary On The Text

About Psalm 67 one author writes, “If a psalm was ever written round the promises to Abraham, that he would be both blessed and made a blessing, it could well have been such as this. The song begins at home and returns to pause there a moment before the end; but its thought always flies to the distant people and to what awaits them when the blessing that has reached ‘us’ reaches all” (Derek Kidner, *Psalms 1-72*, TOTC, 254).

This psalm has three *stanzas* or *strophes*. The first includes verses 1 and 2, the second verses 3-5, and the third verses 6 and 7. The first and third stanzas express virtually the same sentiment. In the vein of the priestly benediction found in Numbers 6:24-26, “The LORD bless you and keep you; the LORD make his face shine upon you and be gracious to you; the LORD turn his face toward you and give you peace,” the psalmist invites God to bless his people but not so as to benefit them only. He specifies the purpose behind his request in verse 2. He yearns for God to bless his people “so that” all nations might know the LORD’s ways, more specifically that they might know him and his salvation. In the final stanza, the psalmist states with confidence, “The land yields its harvest” in verse 6—perhaps using “harvest” as a figure of speech (*metonymy*) to refer to all kinds of blessings from God. This seems likely given the fact that he asserts “God, our God, blesses us” in the next line. The psalm concludes in verse 7 much like it opened nearly repeating verses 1 and 2 verbatim.

Verses 1 and 2 together with verses 6 and 7 form an *inclusio* that brackets the heart of the psalm found in verses 3-5. In fact, verse 3 and verse 5, which contain the refrain “May the peoples praise you, O God; may all the peoples praise you,” form another *inclusio* that brackets verse 4, the longest verse in Psalm 67. You may not care about *inclusios*; in fact, you may have read the psalm without even noticing them. Still, like other not-so-noticeable features of Hebrew poetry such as *meter* and *parallelism*, for example, they tie the psalm together, increase its impact on the reader, and make it more memorable. Verse 4 targets the point of the psalm, the day in which the nations bask in the just reign of God over them and rejoice. The assertion “for you rule the people justly and guide the nations of the earth” refers to the time longed for when the nations will know the LORD’s saving ways (v. 2) and the peoples from one end of

the earth to the other will fear him (v. 7). As one writer puts it, “Without pointing to the Messiah, the psalm anticipates a glorious messianic era in which Jews and Gentiles share in the glorious presence of God” (Willem A. VanGemeren, *Psalms*, vol. 5, *The Expositor’s Bible Commentary*, rev. ed., 512).

Psalm 67 raises an interesting question: Does God give his people blessings *to show* to the nations, so that they might know him, or does God give his people blessings *to share with* the nations, so that they might know him? The psalm doesn’t say for certain, but in light of God’s commandments regarding foreigners in the law, it seems reasonable to believe that God didn’t give his people blessings for others to look at. He told his people in Leviticus 19:33-34, “When a foreigner resides among you in your land, do not mistreat them. The foreigner residing among you must be treated as your native-born. *Love them as yourself*, for you were foreigners in Egypt. I am the LORD your God.” What’s more, he includes foreigners in provisions made for widows and orphans. In Deuteronomy 14:28-29 he commanded, “At the end of every three years, bring all the tithes of that year’s produce and store it in your towns, so that the Levites (who have no allotment or inheritance of their own) and *the foreigners, the fatherless and the widows* who live in your towns may come and eat and be satisfied, and so that the LORD your God may bless you in all the work of your hands.” God expects his people to share his blessings, not hoard them.

One commentator ironically observes: “Since the coming of Christ, the roles of the Jews and Gentiles have been reversed. The church of Christ as the people of God is largely composed of Gentiles who have come to know God’s ‘ways’ in salvation, the kingdom of Christ, and God’s sovereign rule in the affairs of this world. Our joy is now full in Jesus Christ. We have reason to sing for joy as our heavenly Father blesses us by providing for our needs (Mt 6:25-34). Our prayer must always include a petition to the Father that Israel, too, will fear him by believing that Jesus is the Messiah. Then ‘all the ends of the earth will fear him,’ and the goal of the messianic kingdom will be closer to realization” (VanGemeren, 513).

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## Word Studies/Notes

v. 1 **May** “The Hebrew text (using imperfections) leaves the question open: should we read each verse as a humble request (‘May God be gracious,’ so NIV) or as confident assertions (‘God is gracious to us’)? The familiar echo of the Aaronic blessing (Num. 6:24-26) in the opening verse immediately implies that the NIV’s rendering in verses 1, 3-5 is correct. The notion of the peoples praising God repeated in verses 3 and 5 is thus correctly translated as a wish or request” (Craig C. Broyles, *Psalms*, NIBC, 277).

v. 1 **be gracious** I.e., “show us his favor” (NET) as implied by the *parallelism*, “make his face shine upon us.”

v. 1 **face shine** “A ‘shining’ face is an expression of pleasure and delight . . . To make one’s face shine forth towards another person means to *show him favor*, as in Prov. 16:15 ‘In the light of a king’s face there is life, and his favor is like the clouds that bring spring rain’. The same idea would be even more appropriate to the grace of God” (A. A. Anderson, *The Book of Psalms*, NCBC, 1:472 italics added). “An Oriental monarch revealed in his facial expression either his pleasure or displeasure with the party who sought an audience with him” (Willem A. VanGemeren, *Psalms*, vol. 5, *The Expositor’s Bible Commentary*, rev. ed., 510).

vv. 1, 4 **Selah** Omitted in the NIV©2011. “This occurs 71 times (and a further three times in Hab. 3), predominantly in Books I-III of the Psalter. Probably it is the signal for an interlude (cf. LXX) or change of musical accompaniment. It is usually thought to come from a root *sll*, to lift up (cf. 68:4, Heb 5), i.e., perhaps, to strike up with the instruments or voices; but a root *slh*, supposedly corresponding to an Aramaic verb ‘to bend’, i.e. bow down, has alternatively been suggested” (Derek Kidner, *Psalms 1-72*, TOTC, 51; cf., Anderson, 48, 49).

v. 1 **on us** Lit., “with us.” “The Aaronic benediction has God’s face shining ‘toward’ or ‘upon’ you, but Psalm 67 has it shining ‘with us’ (lit.). This may imply that ‘we,’ the recipients of God’s blessing, will ourselves shine” (Broyles, 279).

v. 2 **so that** Verse 2 should not be read as an *independent* request, “May your ways be known” (NLT). It should be read as a *dependent* clause indicating *purpose* (“that” or “so that”; cf., NRSV, ESV, NKJV, NASB, TEV) or perhaps *result* (“then”; cf., NJB, the NET Bible). “The worshipers’ reason for seeking God’s blessing is not to be self-centered; it is to serve a wider purpose of revealing internationally God’s characteristic ways of doing things” (Broyles, 279).

v. 2 **ways . . . salvation** “The Hebrew term [*derekh*, ‘way’] refers here to God’s characteristic behavior, *more specifically*, to the way he typically saves his people” (*the NET Bible*, 5tn on Ps 67:2 italics added). The term “salvation” is used here in its broad sense of “deliverance,” “help,” “victory.” “The word [salvation] is rich, as it pertains to all the benefits of God – his kingship, rule, blessings, and promises (cf. 98:3; Isa 52:10)” (VanGemeren, 511).

v. 2 **earth** A figure of speech called *metonymy*, which involves naming one thing to refer to another associated with it, e.g., naming “the White House” to refer to “the President.” The psalmist doesn’t have the planet on his mind; rather those who live on it (cf., “all nations” v. 2b). “Then those living on earth will know what you are like” (NET).

v. 3 **May the peoples . . .** The bracketing of a passage of text with the same set of words at the start and end as in verse 3 and verse 5 is called *inclusio*. It’s a powerful literary device used to emphasize what the psalmist deemed most important.

v. 4 **rule** Lit., “judge” (ESV, TEV, NRSV, NKJV, NJB). “This judgment is not something negative (which is the common perception); it is a cause for joy because it ensures fair treatment for all” (Broyles, 279).

v. 4 **justly** “We must be clear that the statement, **for you rule** (or ‘will rule’) **the peoples justly**, is a claim about how God characteristically rules, not a claim about world affairs (i.e., that justice now prevails). According to the psalms of Yahweh’s kingship, the international manifestation of Yahweh’s judgment is future: Yahweh ‘is about to come to judge the earth; he will judge . . . peoples with equity’ (lit., 98:9; also 96:10, 13)” (Broyles, 279).

v. 4 **guide** The term suggests “a shepherd-like concern” (Kidner, 255). The verb means “to guide, lead” or “to treat kindly, care for” (as in Job 31:18b). “Usually God is the subject of the verb (cf. Gen. 24:48; Dt. 32:12; Ps. 78:14, 107:30; Isa. 57:18, etc.) and he is often depicted as guiding his people like a shepherd (23:3, 78:52f.)” (Anderson, 480).

v. 7 **so that** Indicates *purpose* or perhaps *result*. “Then all ends of the earth will give him the honor he deserves” (NET).

# 4

## APPLY THE TEXT

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### CENTRAL MESSAGE OF THIS PASSAGE

God blesses his people to be a blessing to the nations so that all peoples might know him and his salvation.

### CENTRAL MESSAGE FOR YOUR LIFE

(Rewrite the Central Message above to personally apply to your own life)



### 3 LIVING QUESTIONS

The “Living Questions” are simple questions we may ask of any text in order to apply the Bible to our life. Answer the questions below as personally as you can.

1. What does this passage teach me about God?

2. What does this passage teach me about myself?

3. What does this passage lead me to do?



## PARENT CONNECTION

My kids loved having piggy banks. They couldn't wait to make a little money and watch their savings grow. They almost always had outlandish dreams to buy big-ticket items with their savings like the latest gaming system or a new mac daddy four-wheeler. One year our church launched a mission-centered giving initiative, and to our surprise, our middle son brought his entire piggy bank to us, asking to contribute. Honestly, my temptation was to encourage him to give some and save some. My husband, who is much more generous than I am, encouraged our son to give fully and from the heart. God's people are blessed so they can be a blessing to others. Second Corinthians 9:8 tells us, "... God is able to bless you abundantly, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work." In other words, the money needed to further the Kingdom, whether through tithe, mission support or Bible translation, is in your pocket. The encouraging words that saw you through a particular time of trouble are in the vault waiting to be passed to another. The car you were blessed with 10 years ago is the car a young adult launching out on their own desperately needs. The land you've been given is an open invitation for others to explore God's world and Word. Our praise to our sovereign God is a response, an overflow, of our abundant blessings. Are the people around you hearing praise or complaints? Look around and consider the many blessings from the Lord. Offer your praise so others will know and fear Him.

### What Does The Bible Say?

Read Psalm 67.

1. What is the psalmist asking God to do in verses 1 and 7?
2. What does God do that cause the people to praise Him?
3. Why is the psalmist asking God to bless the people? (See verses 2 and 7.)

### What Do You Think?

Who are all the people?

### What Do You Do?

You are blessed by God so you can be a blessing to others. Each day this week, look for opportunities to bless someone in your neighborhood, community, church and nation.

## CORE COMPETENCY: Evangelism

I share Jesus with others with my words and actions.

## MEMORY VERSE: Hebrews 4:12

*"For the word of God is alive and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart."*

## KidPIXCOUPON

Earn 1 KidPIX Token by completing the CENTRALKids Bible Study on this page and another token by memorizing and reciting the memory verse for this week.

Questions: [kids@wearecentral.org](mailto:kids@wearecentral.org)

- \_\_\_\_\_ I completed my Bible Study
- \_\_\_\_\_ I memorized this week's verse
- \_\_\_\_\_ I brought my Bible to church
- \_\_\_\_\_ I brought a friend



CHILD'S NAME

GRADE

PARENT SIGNATURE

# OUR CORE COMPETENCIES

## CENTRAL BELIEFS

**Authority of the Bible** (2 Timothy 3:16-17)  
*I believe the Bible is the Word of God and has the right to command my belief and action.*

**Church** (Ephesians 4:15-16)

*I believe the church is God's primary way to accomplish His purposes on earth today.*

**Eternity** (John 14:1-4)

*I believe there is a heaven and a hell and that Jesus Christ is returning to judge the earth and to establish His eternal kingdom.*

**The Holy Spirit** (Romans 8:9)

*I believe the Holy Spirit convicts, calls, converts and changes me as a child of God.*

**Humanity** (John 3:16)

*I believe all people are loved by God and need Jesus Christ as their Savior.*

**Identity in Christ** (John 1:12)

*I believe I am significant because of my position as a child of God.*

**Jesus Christ** (Hebrews 1:1-4)

*I believe Jesus Christ is the Son of God who became man, died for sinners and rose from the dead.*

**Life Purpose** (Acts 20:24)

*I believe I am a steward of God's resources and have been redeemed to participate in His Kingdom purposes for His glory.*

**Personal God** (Psalm 121:1-2)

*I believe God is involved in and cares about my daily life.*

**Salvation by Grace** (Ephesians 2:8-9)

*I believe a person comes into a right relationship with God by His grace, through faith in Jesus Christ.*



## CENTRAL VIRTUES

**Love** (1 John 4:10-12)

*I sacrificially and unconditionally love and forgive others.*

**Joy** (John 15:11)

*I have inner contentment and purpose in spite of my circumstances.*

**Peace** (Philippians 4:6-7)

*I am free from anxiety because things are right between God, myself and others.*

**Patience** (Proverbs 14:29)

*I take a long time to overheat and endure patiently under the unavoidable pressures of life.*

**Kindness/Goodness** (1 Thessalonians 5:15)

*I choose to do the right things in my relationships with others*

**Faithfulness** (Proverbs 3:3-4)

*I have established a good name with God and with others based on my long-term loyalty to those relationships.*

**Gentleness** (Philippians 4:5)

*I am thoughtful, considerate and calm in dealing with others.*

**Self-Control** (Titus 2:11-13)

*I have the power, through Christ, to control myself.*

**Grace** (Colossians 3:13)

*I demonstrate forgiveness, mercy and generosity to others, even when they have offended me.*

**Hope** (1 Peter 1:3-5)

*I have a growing anticipation of God's promises and my secure eternity with Him.*

**Humility** (Philippians 2:3-4)

*I choose to esteem others above myself.*



## CENTRAL PRACTICES

**Bible Study** (Hebrews 4:12)

*I study the Bible to know God, the truth, and to find direction for my daily life.*

**Biblical Community** (Acts 2:44-47)

*I fellowship with other Christians to accomplish God's purposes in my life, others' lives, and in the world.*

**Compassion** (Psalm 82:3-4)

*I seek to serve the last, the least and the lost in my community.*

**Disciple-Making** (2 Timothy 2:2)

*I multiply godly beliefs, virtues and practices in others to encourage their spiritual growth in Christ.*

**Evangelism** (Acts 1:8)

*I share Jesus with others through personal proclamation and demonstration of the gospel.*

**Generosity** (2 Corinthians 9:6-11)

*I gladly give my resources to fulfill God's purposes.*

**Prayer** (Psalm 66:16-20)

*I pray to God to know Him, to lay my request before Him and to find direction for my daily life.*

**Single-Mindedness** (Matthew 6:33)

*I focus on God and His priorities for my life.*

**Spiritual Gifts** (Romans 12:4-6)

*I know and use my spiritual gifts to accomplish God's purposes.*

**Worship** (Psalm 95:1-7)

*I worship God for who He is and what He has done for me.*

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**Stephanie Thomas** (B.B.A University of Texas at Arlington). Stephanie is married to James and they have five children: Elijah, Levi, Bo, Ella and Simon. Stephanie has attended Central Bible Church for more than 20 years, has been on staff since 2014, and now serves as Children's Minister.

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BIBLE CHURCH**

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**OUR MISSION**  
Making God known by making disciples who are changed by God to change their world.