

PSALMS

Chapter 117

The LORD's Faithfulness Endures Forever

Praise the LORD, all nations! Extol him, all peoples! 2 For great is his steadfast love toward us, and the faithfulness of the LORD endures forever. Praise the LORD!

Ps 117 The shortest psalm in the Psalter—and the shortest chapter in the Bible—Ps 117 is an expanded Hallelujah (sometimes joined with Ps 118). It may originally have served as the conclusion to the preceding collection of Hallelujah psalms (Ps 111–116)—of which it is the seventh. All nations and peoples are called on to praise the Lord (as in 47:1; 67:3–5; 96:7; 98:4; 100:1; see note on 9:1) for his great love and enduring faithfulness toward Israel (see Isa 12:4–6). Thus the Hallelujahs of the OT Psalter, when fully expounded, express that great truth, so often emphasized in the OT, that the destiny of all peoples is involved in what God was doing in and for his people Israel (see, e.g., 2:8–12; 47:9; 67:2; 72:17; 102:15; 110; Ge 12:3; Dt 32:43; 1Ki 8:41–43; Isa 2:2–4; 11:10; 14:2; 25:6–7; 52:15; 56:7; 60:3; 66:18–24; Jer 3:17; 16:19–21; 33:9; Am 9:11–12; Mic 5:7–9; Zep 3:8–9; Hag 2:7; Zec 2:10–11; 8:20–23; 9:9–10; 14:2–3; Mal 3:12). See introduction to Ps 113. (CSB)

Only two verses, this shortest of all psalms has an unlimited range of vision. It celebrates God's grace, which began in Israel but is extended to all nations through Christ. (TLSB)

The 117th psalm is a prophecy of Christ, that the entire world should praise him and worship him in his kingdom. In this kingdom, nothing reigns but grace and truth, that is, the forgiveness of sins, eternal life, and all joy and comfort over sins, death, and all evil.

I certainly believe that there is not one who truly knows everything the Holy Spirit says in this short psalm. If they were forced to teach or instruct someone from it, they would not know at which end to begin. To put these vicious people to shame and to honor God's Word, I have taken it upon myself to interpret this psalm, so that one may see how clear God's Word is, how simple, and yet how altogether...inexhaustible in power and virtue. It renews and refreshes the heart, restoring, relieving, comforting, and strengthening us constantly. (LW 14:8 – Reading the Psalms with Luther)

117:1 Quoted in Ro 15:11 as proof that the salvation of Gentiles and the glorifying of God by Gentiles was not a divine afterthought. (CSB)

Luther and Augustine refer to the Gentile saints who believed and praised God, even though they did not follow the Law of Moses: Job, Lot, Naaman, and the widow of Zarephath (AE 14:19; *NPNF* 1 2:389–90). St Paul quotes this psalm together with other passages from the OT to proclaim that God's plan of salvation became a full reality in Christ Jesus (Rm 15:9–12; cf Gal 3:28; Col 3:11). (TLSB)

The opening verse of the psalm is expressed in the form of a command, but it is really an invitation to the nations of the world. (PBC)

117:2 The reason for the praise. *love ... faithfulness*. That is, love-and-faithfulness. (CSB)

The love and faithfulness revealed in the gospel covenant are great. God loved the world so much that he gave his only Son. Nothing can change God's plan of salvation. No one who believes in the gospel will be lost. (PBC)

love. This little gem sweeps across space and time. It is for all people. It celebrates love which is forever. (PBC)

Ps 117 If God's love had to be merited, there would be no reason to praise Him. His love would also be severely limited. But because His love is His alone to give, it is great, and it reaches to people of all nations. • O Lord, I praise You for Your steadfast love for me and for all people. Amen. (TLSB)