

Thought for Today: November 12, 2007

Psalm 67 (NASB)

**God be gracious to us and bless us,
And cause His face to shine upon us—(Selah.)**

**That Your way may be known on the earth,
Your salvation among all nations.
Let the peoples praise You, O God;
Let all the peoples praise You.
Let the nations be glad and sing for joy;
For You will judge the peoples with uprightness
And guide the nations on the earth. (Selah.)**

**Let the peoples praise You, O God;
Let all the peoples praise You.
The earth has yielded its produce;
God, our God, blesses us.
God blesses us,
That all the ends of the earth may fear Him.**

“God, if you will bless us, everyone around us will see the effects of your graciousness, and they will praise you!” That seems to be a primary thought in the mind of this psalmist. But why would the people living around us praise God for what He has done for us? Jealousy seems to be a more common response when we see God pouring blessings on our neighbors. Why would God bless them? Why not me? Most of us have wondered about these things at some time or another. But the psalmist isn't really focusing on issues of fairness or justice here.

A more important question relevant to this psalm is, “How would our neighbors even know what God has done for us?” People can't praise God if they aren't aware of His praiseworthy nature and actions. And people may not be aware of God's praiseworthy nature and actions unless we become the channel through which that information flows. God's blessings are not simply for our benefit; they are also for the benefit of those around us whom God is trying to reach. We, and those around us, would be better off if we started thinking about the gifts we receive from God as tools rather than as commodities for our own consumption.

“God, when you bless us, we will be sure that the people around us have reason to praise You!” This should be our attitude. And it should color the way we live. Let the coloring of the autumn leaves remind us of this. Let their falling remind us of the blessings which God continually pours down on us. As we spend extra time thinking about our blessings and the reasons we have to give thanks, let's commit to sharing God's blessing with the people around us. After all, this is a reason why God blesses us in the first place.

God bless you,
Patrick Barber