

Psalm 108:3

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

I will praise thee, O LORD, among the people: and I will sing praises unto thee among the nations.

Analysis

This verse expands the scope of worship from personal resolution to public testimony: 'I will praise thee, O LORD, among the people.' The commitment moves beyond private devotion to public declaration. 'Among the people' and 'among the nations' creates a parallel structure showing that testimony to God's greatness transcends tribal, ethnic, and national boundaries. 'I will sing praises unto thee among the nations' anticipates the universal scope of God's glory. This international witness is particularly significant given Israel's calling to be a 'light to the nations' (Isaiah 49:6). The verse implies that God's character and works are worthy of proclamation in every cultural and national context. Paul quotes similar language in Romans 15:9-11 to demonstrate that the gospel's inclusion of Gentiles fulfills Old Testament promises. True worship cannot remain privatized but naturally overflows into public testimony.

Historical Context

In the ancient world, most religions were tribal or national, with gods considered territorial. By declaring intention to praise YHWH 'among the nations,' the psalmist asserts the LORD's universal sovereignty. If this is Davidic, it may reflect David's international reputation through military victories and diplomatic relationships (2 Samuel 5:11, 8:1-14). During David's reign, Israel interacted with surrounding nations - Philistines, Moabites, Ammonites, Edomites, Arameans - and these victories were occasions to demonstrate YHWH's superiority over pagan deities. The verse also anticipates Israel's mission during and after exile, when

Jews were dispersed among the nations and their faithfulness served as testimony. In the Second Temple period, synagogues throughout the Roman Empire became centers where 'God-fearers' (Gentiles) learned of YHWH. The verse ultimately finds fulfillment in the Great Commission (Matthew 28:19), where worship and testimony to God extend to all nations.

Related Passages

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Study Questions

1. What is the relationship between personal worship and public testimony in the life of faith?
2. Why is it significant that praise to God should cross ethnic and national boundaries?
3. How does the call to witness 'among the nations' challenge tribal or nationalistic approaches to faith?
4. In what ways did Israel succeed or fail in their calling to be a light to the nations?
5. How does this verse foreshadow the New Testament vision of worship from every tribe, tongue, and nation?

Interlinear Text

אָזְנָב	בְּעֵמֶת יִמְלָא	וְיִתְהַלֵּל	וְאָזְמַרְבָּב	I will praise among the people thee O LORD and I will sing praises
H3034	H5971	H3068	H2167	
בְּלָאָמִים:				
unto thee among the nations				

Additional Cross-References

Psalms 22:27 (Worship): All the ends of the world shall remember and turn unto the LORD: and all the kindreds of the nations shall worship before thee.

Psalms 22:22 (Resurrection): I will declare thy name unto my brethren: in the midst of the congregation will I praise thee.

Psalms 117:1 (Resurrection): O praise the LORD, all ye nations: praise him, all ye people.

Zephaniah 3:14 (Sin): Sing, O daughter of Zion; shout, O Israel; be glad and rejoice with all the heart, O daughter of Jerusalem.

Psalms 96:10 (References Lord): Say among the heathen that the LORD reigneth: the world also shall be established that it shall not be moved: he shall judge the people righteously.

Zephaniah 3:20 (Resurrection): At that time will I bring you again, even in the time that I gather you: for I will make you a name and a praise among all people of the earth, when I turn back your captivity before your eyes, saith the LORD.