

Psalms 57:9

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

I will praise thee, O Lord, among the people: I will sing unto thee among the nations.

Analysis

I will praise thee, O Lord, among the people: I will sing unto thee among the nations. This verse expands worship's scope from personal (v.7) to public, from private cave refuge to international declaration. David's commitment to praise extends beyond private devotion to public witness before peoples and nations. "I will praise thee" (odekha, אֹדֵךְ) means to give thanks, confess publicly, acknowledge—not merely feeling grateful but declaring God's goodness openly.

"Among the people" (ba'ammim, בְּעָמִים) refers to peoples, nations, ethnic groups—plural emphasizing multiple people groups. "Among the nations" (bal'ummim, בְּלָאָמִים) similarly refers to national entities, Gentile nations, the peoples of the earth. This wasn't mere personal testimony among fellow Israelites but proclamation before surrounding nations. David's praise would have international audience and impact.

This missionary vision is remarkable for Old Testament context. While Israel was chosen as God's special people, the ultimate purpose was blessing all nations (Genesis 12:3). Israel's role was to be "a light to the Gentiles" (Isaiah 49:6), displaying Yahweh's character and deeds so nations would recognize Him as the one true God. David understood his deliverance wasn't merely for personal benefit but for God's glory among nations.

Paul quotes this verse in Romans 15:9 as proof that God's plan always included Gentile salvation. Alongside Deuteronomy 32:43, Psalm 18:49, and Isaiah 11:10,

Paul demonstrates that Christ's inclusion of Gentiles fulfills Old Testament promises. Messiah would receive praise not only from Israel but from all nations. David's vow anticipates the global church worshiping the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob through Jesus Christ.

The verse also reflects David's recognition that his story transcended personal drama. God's deliverance of David from Saul wasn't merely private favor but revelation of divine character—God who protects the vulnerable, opposes the proud, fulfills His promises, and establishes His purposes despite opposition. Such character deserves proclamation among all peoples.

Historical Context

David's reign marked Israel's zenith as regional power, with influence extending from Egypt to the Euphrates. As king, David's testimony reached surrounding nations through diplomatic relations, military conquests, and international trade. When David publicly attributed his victories to Yahweh, neighboring peoples heard witness to Israel's God. The psalm's language suggests David intended this testimony as part of his kingly role.

Ancient Near Eastern kings typically credited their gods for military victories through public inscriptions, monuments, and proclamations. However, pagan rulers often portrayed their gods as tribal deities protecting particular peoples. David's proclamation differed by presenting Yahweh as sovereign over all nations, worthy of universal worship. This challenged prevailing polytheism with revolutionary monotheism.

The theme of God's praise among nations appears throughout the Psalms. Psalm 18:49 (quoted by Paul alongside Psalm 57:9) declares similar commitment. Psalm 96 commands: 'Declare his glory among the heathen, his wonders among all people' (v.3). Psalm 117, shortest psalm, calls all nations to praise Yahweh. This international vision prepared for Christ's Great Commission: 'Go ye therefore, and teach all nations' (Matthew 28:19).

For exilic and post-exilic Israel, this verse offered hope. Though dispersed among

nations, Jews could fulfill David's vow by praising Yahweh in diaspora communities. Their worship witnessed to surrounding pagans that Israel's God remained faithful despite their scattered condition. This prepared the ground for Gentile inclusion when gospel spread throughout Roman Empire.

Early church fulfilled this verse through international missions. Believers scattered by persecution (Acts 8:4, 11:19-21) praised God among nations, establishing churches across the Mediterranean world. Paul's missionary journeys brought praise of Israel's Messiah to Gentile nations, fulfilling both David's vow and God's promise to Abraham that all nations would be blessed through his seed.

Related Passages

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Study Questions

1. How does David's commitment to praise God 'among the nations' reflect understanding that God's works deserve international proclamation, not merely private gratitude?
2. What is the relationship between personal experience of God's deliverance and public witness to others, and how does this verse call believers to move from private faith to public testimony?
3. How does Paul's use of this verse in Romans 15:9 demonstrate that God's plan always included bringing Gentiles to worship Him through the Messiah?
4. In what ways might believers today fulfill David's commitment to praise God 'among the nations' through missionary work, evangelism, or cultural engagement?
5. How does public praise for God's works serve not only to honor God but also to invite others to trust Him?

Interlinear Text

אָזְבָּע אָדָן בְּעֵמִים אָדָן אָזְמָרָב
I will praise among the people thee O Lord I will sing

H3034

H5971

H136

H2167

בְּלִאָמִים:

unto thee among the nations

H3816

Additional Cross-References

Psalms 96:3 (Parallel theme): Declare his glory among the heathen, his wonders among all people.

Psalms 2:1 (Parallel theme): Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing?

Psalms 138:1 (Resurrection): I will praise thee with my whole heart: before the gods will I sing praise unto thee.

Psalms 18:49 (Resurrection): Therefore will I give thanks unto thee, O LORD, among the heathen, and sing praises unto thy name.

Romans 15:9 (Sin): And that the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy; as it is written, For this cause I will confess to thee among the Gentiles, and sing unto thy name.

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