

Psalms 67:2

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

That thy way may be known upon earth, thy saving health among all nations.

Analysis

That thy way may be known upon earth, thy saving health among all nations. This verse reveals the missional purpose behind the blessing requested in verse 1. The word "That" (lada'at, לְדַעַת) indicates purpose or result: "in order that, so that." Israel doesn't request blessing for selfish enjoyment but as instrumental means to accomplish God's global purposes. This establishes theology of blessing: God blesses His people not merely for their benefit but so they become channels of blessing to all nations, fulfilling the Abrahamic covenant (Genesis 12:2-3).

"Thy way" (darkekha, דַּרְכֶּךָ) refers to God's path, manner, character, and purposes. Derek (דַּרְכָּה) means road, path, journey, way—but also course of life, moral character, and manner of action. God's "way" encompasses His character (righteousness, justice, mercy), His methods (how He acts in history), His commandments (how He instructs humans to live), and His purposes (His plan for creation and redemption). The psalm prays that God's way—His entire revelation of Himself—would be known globally, not just in Israel.

"May be known" (lada'at, לְדַעַת) uses yada (יְדַעַת), meaning to know intimately, experientially, relationally. This isn't mere intellectual awareness but personal, experiential knowledge involving relationship. The psalm prays that all nations would know God's ways through relationship with Him, not merely hear about Him secondhand. This echoes Jeremiah's new covenant promise: "And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour...saying, Know the LORD: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them" (Jeremiah 31:34).

"Upon earth" (ba'aretz, בָּאָרֶץ) emphasizes geographical universality. Not merely in Israel or among Jews but across all earth—every continent, every culture, every people group. This global vision appears throughout prophetic literature. Isaiah prophesied: "For the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea" (Isaiah 11:9). Habakkuk echoed: "For the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea" (Habakkuk 2:14). The psalm participates in this prophetic hope of universal knowledge of God.

"Thy saving health" (yeshu'atekha, יְשׁוּעָתֶךָ) or "thy salvation" uses yeshuah (יְשׁוּעָה), the word from which Jesus's name (Yeshua) derives. It means salvation, deliverance, rescue, victory, welfare. God's saving health encompasses physical healing, spiritual redemption, national deliverance, and ultimate salvation from sin and death. The phrase indicates more than information about God but experience of His saving power.

"Among all nations" (bekhol-hagoyim, בְּכָל-הָגּוּיִם) extends the scope to every people group. Goyim (גּוּיִם) means nations, peoples, Gentiles—all ethnic groups outside Israel. The vision is comprehensive: all nations, all peoples, every ethnicity experiencing God's salvation and knowing His ways. This anticipates the Great Commission (Matthew 28:19—"make disciples of all nations") and Revelation's vision of every tribe, tongue, people, and nation worshiping before God's throne (Revelation 7:9). What Old Testament believers anticipated, New Testament believers participate in fulfilling.

Historical Context

This verse articulates Israel's missionary calling, though Israel often failed to embrace it. God chose Abraham to father a nation through whom all earth's families would be blessed (Genesis 12:3). Israel was to be "a kingdom of priests" (Exodus 19:6), mediating between God and nations. Solomon's temple dedication prayer asked God to hear foreigners who pray toward the temple "that all people of the earth may know thy name, to fear thee, as do thy people Israel" (1 Kings 8:43). These texts establish Israel's role as light to nations, testimony to God's

character, and channel of blessing to all peoples.

Israel's actual history reflects tension between particular election (chosen people) and universal mission (blessing to nations). During periods of faithfulness, Israel welcomed foreigners (Ruth the Moabite, Rahab the Canaanite) and testified to God's greatness (Jonah reluctantly). During periods of apostasy, Israel adopted surrounding nations' idolatry rather than drawing nations to Yahweh. Post-exilic Judaism developed significant missionary impulses (Jewish communities throughout Roman Empire), but also strong boundary maintenance separating Jews from Gentiles.

Jesus fulfilled this mission, coming as light to Gentiles and glory of Israel (Luke 2:32). His ministry included Gentiles (Roman centurion, Syrophoenician woman, Samaritans), and His final command commissioned disciples to make disciples of all nations (Matthew 28:19). Peter's vision of the sheet with unclean animals (Acts 10) demonstrated that salvation extended to all peoples. Paul became apostle to Gentiles, establishing churches throughout the Roman Empire. The early church's expansion fulfilled Psalm 67's prayer—God's saving health becoming known among all nations.

Christian missionary movements throughout history have been motivated by this vision. From Patrick evangelizing Ireland to Hudson Taylor in China to contemporary missions reaching unreached people groups, the church continues pursuing this goal: that God's ways be known on earth and His salvation among all nations. Every generation of believers participates in this mission through prayer, financial support, going, or sending, until every tribe and tongue worships before God's throne.

Related Passages

1 John 4:8 — God is love

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

Study Questions

1. How does understanding blessing as instrumental (for spreading God's ways) rather than terminal (for our enjoyment) change your view of prosperity and provision?
2. What does it mean for God's 'way' (character, purposes, and commands) to be known, rather than just information about God?
3. How does the church today continue this pattern of receiving blessing in order to make God's salvation known among all nations?
4. In what practical ways can believers live so that God's ways become known through their lives to those around them?
5. How does the global scope ('earth,' 'all nations') challenge individualistic or culturally-limited approaches to faith and mission?

Interlinear Text

לֹא עַת בָּא כָּי דַּרְךָ בָּהּ בְּכָל אָנוֹת אָשְׁר תָּשִׁיבְתָּה:
may be known upon earth That thy way among all nations thy saving health
H3045 H776 H1870 H3605 H1471 H3444

Additional Cross-References

Titus 2:11 (Parallel theme): For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men,

Acts 18:25 (Parallel theme): This man was instructed in the way of the Lord; and being fervent in the spirit, he spake and taught diligently the things of the Lord, knowing only the baptism of John.

Isaiah 52:10 (Parallel theme): The LORD hath made bare his holy arm in the eyes of all the nations; and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God.

Luke 3:6 (Parallel theme): And all flesh shall see the salvation of God.

Psalms 43:5 (Parallel theme): Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted within me? hope in God: for I shall yet praise him, who is the health of my countenance, and my God.

