

The Missionary Message in Psalms

By

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Reading through the Book of Psalms, it is amazing there are so many missionary references. Missions is a central theme that runs throughout the entire Bible, from cover to cover and is not limited to a few Scriptures highlighting the Great Commission in the New Testament. "May God be gracious to us and bless us and make his face shine upon us, Selah, that your ways may be known on earth, your salvation among all nations" (Psalm 67:1-2, NIV). This Psalm is often called the "Missionary Psalm" because of its global viewpoint on God's blessings. It goes on to state, "O let the nations be glad and sing" (verse 4). "Then shall the earth yield her increase (verse 6). "God shall bless us, and all the ends of the earth shall fear him" (verse 6).

The Psalmist promised, "Ask of me, and I will make the nations your inheritance, the ends of the earth your possession" (Psalms 2:8). Why do I pray for worldwide evangelism? Scripture commands it, and it has eternal dividends. Not, only here in Psalms are we encouraged to pray, but also in Matthew 9:37-38.

George Peters in his book, *A Biblical Theology of Missions*, rightfully claims that Psalms is one of the greatest missionary books. Nearly half of the Psalms were written by David and give a close up analysis of his awareness of God's promises to both him and Israel. It contains over 175 references to the nations of the world. Peters shows how entire psalms provide a missionary message (Psalm 2; 33; 66; 72; 98; 117; 145), bring hope of salvation to the nations, and is "missionary preaching par excellence" (Peters 1972, 116).

"All the earth shall worship thee" (Psalm 66:4). I'm ready for that. I look forward to worshipping with those from all over the globe and enjoy the worship of every nation I visit. We will proclaim together, "O LORD, our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth!" (Psalm 8:1). This will happen because, "All the ends of the world shall remember and turn unto the LORD" (Psalm 22:27). "Yea, all kings shall fall down before him: all nations shall serve him" (Psalm 72:11).

At the time of the merger establishing the UPCI, we had forty missionaries, five hundred ministers, working among 240 churches in nine nations. Recent annual reports show we have over 891 missionaries, thirty nine-regional missionaries, 17,020 ministers, working in 192 nations among 24,947 churches. We are quickly approaching two million constituents with over 100,000 people being baptized and receiving the Holy Ghost every single year.

My desire is included in the Book of Psalms. I desperately, determinedly want to see and proclaim, "The whole earth has seen the salvation of our God" (Psalm 98:3, NLT). This is strategically becoming possible thanks to our host of missionaries, ministers, and members

proclaiming the Gospel in the regions beyond. This includes the faithful prayerful and financial support of our churches, ministers, and members in the homeland.