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Psalm 117

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Psalm 117

(NRSV)

- 1 Praise the LORD, all you nations!
Extol him, all you peoples!**
- 2 For great is his steadfast love toward us,
and the faithfulness of the LORD endures forever.
Praise the LORD!**

Psalm 117 is the shortest Psalm in the Psalter, the shortest chapter in the Bible, and also the middle chapter in the Bible. This anonymously written Psalm is a missionary call or summons to all nations, and therefore also to us, to praise the LORD Yahweh, the covenant God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, the God of Moses and the prophets. The apostle Paul quotes the first verse of this Psalm in Romans 15:11 to show that God's salvation is for all people, not just for the Jews.

Two great reasons to praise and extol (worship) God are specified in verse 2: God is steadfast in his love to us, and his faithfulness (righteousness) is everlasting. If God did nothing else for us, he would still be worthy of our highest praise.

Prayer to accompany Psalm 117:

Lord God, you have revealed your kindness to all people. Gather the nations into your Church, that in all the various tongues of the world one hymn of praise may be offered to you; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Savior and Lord. Amen.

Footnote:

In its present form, Psalm 117 consists of a call to praise, a statement of the grounds of praise, and a conclusion. The Septuagint (the Greek translation of the Hebrew Bible) places the concluding "Praise the LORD" at the beginning of Psalm 118. If the Septuagint tradition is correct, Psalm 117 is left without a conclusion. If the Hebrew tradition is correct, the conclusion is an invitation to praise God, addressed to the congregation.