

Listening for the Promise

WEEKLY DEVOTIONAL

Twelfth Sunday after Pentecost (Proper 15) – August 16, 2026

***May God be gracious to us and bless us and make his face to shine upon us,
(Selah)***

that your way may be known on earth your saving power among all nations.

Let the peoples praise you, O God; let all the peoples praise you!

***Let the nations be glad and sing for joy, for you judge the peoples with
equity and guide the nations upon earth. (Selah)***

Let the peoples praise you, O God; let all the peoples praise you!

The earth has yielded its increase God, our God, shall bless us.

God shall bless us; let all the ends of the earth fear him!

- Psalm 67 -

Can you recall a moment when your parent, teacher, or someone you looked up to, smiled at you in such a way that you knew instantly they were pleased with you? Pause for a moment and try to remember how that felt. To see the approval on the face of someone you admire, or love is such a great feeling. When we share these moments with others, we spread happiness and joy.

Psalm 67 is also a song and as you can see, contains the word “Selah” twice, which is believed to be included as a pause in the music. But why? In a beautiful melody or hymn, there is usually a moment in a song that the music director wants to draw your attention to, so there is a pause included. Consider the placement of the pauses in today’s reading: “May God be gracious to us and bless us and make his face to shine upon us,” (Selah). Pause for a moment and imagine God’s face shining upon us. Remember, there’s nothing we did to earn God’s grace or to have his face shine upon us, but how wonderful to know he loves us so much that we are in his favor.

Psalms were written in such a poetic style that several have been sung or chanted throughout history, which is evident in the next pause we see in Psalm 67:4. “Let the nations be glad and sing for joy, for you judge the peoples with equity and guide the nations upon earth.” (Selah) Imagine singing this with fellow believers as you made your way to a feast or celebration.

Psalms are rich in the history of Israel, but also relevant for our praise and worship today as part of the body of Christ. Just as we are reminded throughout the Psalms (with Selah) to draw us into the words, let us remember to pause every day to give God praise and sing his glories out loud so that others may be drawn to him! Amen.