

Plural Nouns & the Praise of Yahweh

Sermon Series: **Singing with the Psalmist—Learning to Feel Our Faith**



Series Goal

That Mercy Hill Church would not only have *informed minds* but *enflamed hearts*!



Key Text

Psalm 117

→ “For great is his steadfast love toward us, and the faithfulness of the Lord endures forever” (v. 2a).



Big Idea

God’s love is wild and free. It cannot be tamed or contained. It has come for us in Christ and it is moving through us to others.

(1) A Love as Wide as the World

What are we to make of the plural nouns: “nations” and “peoples”? What are they doing praising God for His steadfast love and faithfulness? Contextually (Exo 34:5-8), it would appear steadfast love of the Lord was for Israel and not for the nations. But we come to find that “the whole purpose of God in choosing Israel was so that the nations would eventually do so. The overall thrust of the Old Testament is not Israel against the nations, but Israel for the sake of the nations.”

Further investigation yields the truth that the steadfast love and faithfulness of the Lord, while for Israel, is also (and especially) for the world. It has been this way from the very beginning and will be this way to the final, climactic, and eternal end!

(2) A Joy as High as the Heavens

The proper response to such revelation of God’s steadfast love for us is praise. The Psalmists can’t get over this! The steadfast love of the Lord is for them! When they are feeling guilty, they meditate on the steadfast love of the Lord for them. When they are overwhelmed with trial, they meditate on the steadfast love of the Lord for them. When they are overjoyed, it is because of the steadfast love of the Lord for them. Our prayer and devotional life ought to orbit around this reality. It is the merging of that Pauline triad: praying always, giving thanks always, rejoicing always!

Next Action

“Welcome one another as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God” (Rom 15:7)!



Reflection Questions

- Are their boundaries in your relationship with God? Are there sins you just don’t think He will forgive, trials you just don’t think He has good plans for? Is His love limitless and wild for you?
- Are their boundaries in your relationships with others? Who are your Ninevites, your Gentiles? Are there people you wish God would leave outside? What do you do when you feel these things? What is God calling you to do?
- What does your prayer and devotional life typically orbit around? Are you like the Psalmist, always centering in on the steadfast love of the Lord for you, or do you find you are orbiting around something else? How does this affect your ability to give thanks and rejoice always?
- What is the point of the Old Testament? How is Israel’s story relevant to yours? How has God, in blessing them, mediated blessing to you?
- Is Mercy Hill obeying the command to welcome the outsider in? Where are we doing well at this? Where are we not? How can we do better, for the glory of God?!

