



# still waters

home church studies

## Psalms 67

[Worship]

1 May God be gracious to us and bless us and make his face to shine upon us,

Selah

2 that your way may be known upon earth, your saving power among all nations. 3 Let the peoples praise you, O God; let all the peoples praise you. 4 Let the nations be glad and sing for joy, for you judge the peoples with equity and guide the nations upon earth.

Selah

5 Let the peoples praise you, O God; let all the peoples praise you. 6 The earth has yielded its increase; God, our God, has blessed us. 7 May God continue to bless us; let all the ends of the earth revere him.

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### Consider:

[Words]

Easter is an invitation to homecoming. The big picture of homecoming concerns “the healing of the nations,” a time when the nations will not be fearful and aggressive, because all will be safe and cared for (Revelation 22:2). The small picture is of this woman Lydia in Macedonia where Paul came to preach. We are told that Lydia “opened her heart to listen eagerly”; she was in a moment of readiness, disposed to listen as “a worshiper of God” (Acts 16:14). As she listened, she responded by inviting Paul to stay “in my home.” She practiced hospitality, opened her home in welcome. Perhaps the practice of hospitality is the ultimate outcome of the Easter season, when there is no fear of others, but readiness to host (see Romans 12:13).

The connection between *the healing of the nations* and *Lydia’s welcome* is the gospel news that God will make *God’s own home* in our midst (John 14:23). God’s readiness to take up residence in our habitat contradicts all the fearful aggressiveness of the world. The risen Christ came and said “peace” (John 14:27). Where he comes, there is peace. The news of Easter is that the enlivened Christ invites us away from the deathliness of the world, not to withdraw, but to listen and host and

welcome, and so to reverse the vicious cycles that keep wounding nations, communities, and persons.

God’s power for life is at work in the world. This news contradicts the common assumption that the world, in its deathliness, has refused and rejected that power for life—and that our proper stance in the world is therefore one of fear enacted as anxiety, greed, selfishness, and violence. The text tells otherwise! The text attests that the world continues to be the venue where the gift of life is given. The God given to us in this trustworthy text is one who makes no distinctions, who authorizes hospitality, who opens prisons, who breathes the world new, who assures good order in the world. In sum, the text defies the belittling of God’s world and invites us to live in the world boldly, freely, in peace, at home, practicing generative hospitality. We may be home-makers, following the God who makes a home among us.

—Walter Bruggemann

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[Scripture]

John 14.23-29

23 Jesus answered him, “Those who love me will keep my word, and my Father will love them, and we will come to them and make our home with them. 24 Whoever does not love me does not keep my words; and the word that you hear is not mine, but is from the Father who sent me.

25 “I have said these things to you while I am still with you. 26 But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you everything, and remind you of all that I have said to you. 27 Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled, and do not let them be afraid. 28 You heard me say to you, ‘I am going away, and I am coming to you.’ If you loved me, you would rejoice that I am going to the Father, because the Father is greater than I. 29 And now I have told you this before it occurs, so that when it does occur, you may believe.

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Question:

Where has your willingness to keep Jesus’ word, in delivering peace to the nations (cultures), been actively at work in the avenues of hospitality, as we endeavor to follow the risen Christ, through the Holy Spirit among us?

If a “Paul” were to speak to you today, would you be “eager” to listen, and open your home to him and his Spirit led movement?

Also, read for yourself this week,  
**Revelation 21.10, 22 - 22.5**