

Praise To The Lord The King Over All The Earth

Psalm 47

Intro. 1) He is called “Lord Most High” (*Yahweh Elyon*), “great King over all the earth,” and “God of Abraham.” From these titles alone in Psalm 47 we see that our God is both transcendent and immanent. He is above us but He is also with us. He is a powerful God but He is also a personal God. He is the God of Creation but He is also the God of the Covenant. He truly is the God who “is the King of all the earth” (v.7).

2) Amazingly some persons try and hide from this great God. Others refuse to acknowledge His Lordship, denying and rejecting His rightful place in their lives. Still others like the great Albert Einstein redefine Him saying, “I believe in a God who reveals himself in the lawful harmony of all that exists, but not in a God who concerns himself with the fate and the doings of mankind” (*Time*, 4-16-07, p.47).

3) The Sons of Korah see God in an all-together different light. In the 2nd of a trio (Ps 46-48) of songs of Zion, we are led to celebrate the kingship of the Lord over all things. We are challenged to praise Him with a shout (vs. 1-4) and with a song (vs.5-9). Praise, thunderous and joyful praise, is the proper response to a God this awesome, this great and this faithful. He reigns over the nations, “for all authority in heaven and earth” is His. “He sits on His holy throne,” because He has ascended on high having completed once and for all His perfect work of atonement. This Lord Most High, this great King over all the earth is none other than King Jesus!

Trans. How then should we respond to this great one, this famous one? Two wonderful truths drive out text.

I. We should shout with praise to God our King.

47:1-4

- Some people who cannot keep quiet or control themselves at a sporting event will not get excited about worshipping our Lord even if you offered them a million dollars or threatened to put a gun to their head. Why is this so?
 - They fear being irreverence and are embarrassed by emotional excess.
 - They do not know what the Bible says on the matter.
 - They do not properly know and love God as they ought.

The psalmist has a word to cure out confusion and help our hesitation.

1) Praise Him with hands and voice. 47:1-2

- Gathered to worship the one true God who revealed Himself to the fathers (v.9), the people are invited to worship Him with enthusiasm and joy. First, they are told to “clap” their hands, an invitation extended to “all.”

Psalm 98:8 says, “Let the rivers clap their hands; let the hills be joyful together before the Lord.

Isaiah 55:12 says, “For you shall go out with joy, and be led out with peace: the mountains and the hills shall break forth into singing before you, and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands.”

Second, they are to “shout to God with the voice of triumph” (or victory). The *NIV* says “with cries of joy.” The *ESV* says “with loud songs of joy.” Van Gemeren says, “While clapping the people “shout” joyously a victory cheer” (p.358).

- And why can they clap and shout in such a way? The answer is found in vs. 2 with a 2-fold declaration.

1) “For the Lord Most High is awesome.” Lord Most High is *Yahweh Elyon*.

The covenant name of God revealed to His people is combined with a majestic title. This God is like no other. He is awesome or as the *NASV* has it, He is “to be feared.”

2) “He is a great King over all the earth.” This explains why He is “Lord Most High.” This God is a king. No, He is a great King and His kingdom extends to the whole earth (v.7). Now, if this is true, then there are no other kings and no other kingdoms! He alone is King and He alone is to be honored, respected and obeyed. The whole earth is His. All of humanity is responsible to Him. I am responsible to Him. You are accountable to Him.

2) Praise Him for sovereignty and love. 47:3-4

- A great king will broker no rivals, and neither does this King. Indeed He has a historical track record as again and again He has acted on behalf of His people Israel. He has subdued the peoples under us (His people), and the nations under our feet.”
- Look at what He did in the Exodus.
Look at what he did in the conquest of the Promised Land.
Look at what He did for David and Solomon in building their kingdoms.
Look at what He promised Abraham, Moses and David in His covenants with them.
- Indeed as v. 4 proclaims, He chose our inheritance for us. We did not earn it, He gave it. And what an inheritance it is, “the excellence (or “pride”) of Jacob

(NASV, “the glory of Jacob”) whom He loves. He promised them a land, a law and a coming Lord! Jacob and his descendants have been graced by God.

- What we have in terms of goodness and blessings and joy was providentially and sovereignly given to us by the God who loves us in covenant relationship. He gave it in grace because he loves us.

This God is not a tyrant, He is gracious.

This God is not evil, He is good.

This God is not stingy, He is generous.

Trans. Therefore with hands and voice we should shout with praise to God our King. for His sovereignty and love.

II. We should sing with praise to God our King. 47:5-9

There is an important praise that dominates the 2nd stanza of Psalm 47, occurring 5 times. It is the phrase “sing praises.” The victory shout of v.1 is now complemented with victorious singing! What joy! What a celebration by God’s people as they bask in the glory, greatness and goodness of the King of all the earth (vs. 2, 7). Two wonderful affirmations are trumpeted concerning our great King.

1) He is properly enthroned. 47:5-8

- Our Lord has conquered (vs. 3-4) and now ascends victoriously. He goes up “with a shout” (*NIV*, “amid shouts of joy”), “with the sound of a trumpet.” The inhabitants of heaven are in view I believe, and they rejoice as Jehovah ascends to His heavenly palace, having won a great victory. Ephesians 4:8-10 provides a N.T. fulfillment of Psalm 47 when speaking of the Lord Jesus’ victory at the cross and by resurrection. There Paul writes, “When He ascended on high, He led

- captivity captive...He who descended is also the one who ascended far above all the heavens, that He might full all things.”
- Having defeated death, hell and the grave, having as Col 2:15 says, “disarmed the rulers and authorities and put them to an open shame, by triumphing over them,” (ESV) He, the Lord Jesus, went up with a heavenly shout. Our earthly response is clear and simple. Sing praises (5X). Proclaim in praise songs that our “God is the King of all the earth.” (v.7). He is Lord of lords and King of kings.
 - The end of vs. 7 in the *NKJV* says we should “sing praises with understanding.” The *NASV* says “sing praises with a skillful song.” The *ESV* says “sing praises with a psalm.” Kidner notes for us that the Hebrew work is *maskil* whose root meaning contains “the idea of wisdom and skill...[something] which Paul seems to have in mind in 1 Cor. 14:15” when he says, “I will sing with the mind also” (p. 178).
 - Thus head and heart come together in genuine praise of our God. It is not, it must not be pure emotion. No, the mind must be engaged as well. As Jesus said in Matt. 22:37, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.”
 - Indeed with our minds we embrace and contemplate the truth of v. 8: “God reigns (He is King and Sovereign) over the nations. God sits on His holy throne.” Van Gemeren wisely notes, “In the Apocalypse, John sees Jesus exalted on the throne. (Rev. 4:9-10; 5:1, 7, 13; 6:16; 7:10; 15; 19:14). He has received the same prerogatives of kingship and authority as the Father...” (p.360).
 - Yes, our God, our Lord, He is properly enthroned.

2) He is greatly exalted.

47:9

Verse 9 carries us into the world of eschatological expectancy, a day in the future.

Here we see an anticipation of Rev. 21:24 where we are told, “the kings of the earth bring them honor and glory” into the New Jerusalem. Here in Psalm 47, the princes of the earth come together as do the people of the God of Abraham. Once enemies, they are now blood bought brothers who join in one heart and voice to worship and praise the great King of all the earth. God has been true to His word. He has blessed all the nations thru the seed of Abraham (Gen 12:1-3) in King Jesus. Thus the “shields”, probably here a synonym for “kings,” of the earth belongs to God. The logic is clear as the psalm concludes: If all the kings are His servants, “He (and He only) is greatly (*ESV, NASV*, “highly”) exalted. Spurgeon, commenting on this final phrase says it well, “In nature, in power, in character, in glory, there is none to compare with him. Oh, glorious vision of a coming era! Make haste, ye wheels of time!” (p. 355).

Conclusion: When my boys were little, like many of you I would tuck them into bed at night. I would pray with them and read the Bible. On one occasion one of the boys, I think it was Paul, asked me if I was afraid to go to sleep at night because some evil person might push a button and destroy earth with nuclear bombs. I gently smiled, reached over and gave him a hug, and told him no. I told him God is in control and not man. I told him I’ve read in the Bible how it is all going to end, and that in the end “God wins!” What I said to him in words a child could understand is what Psalm 47 is all about. Our God is the Lord Most High, a great King over all the earth and the God of Abraham who keeps His word! His plan will come to pass. His

will, will be done. Let us join with the sons of Korah and shout and sing: “praise the Lord, the King over all the earth.”