

Psalm 47

To the chief Musician, A Psalm for the sons of Korah.

Psalm 47:

One of the six psalms of the divine kingdom, the psalm celebrates the LORD's kingship over all the earth (verse 9).

It begins with a universal call to praise Israel's God (verse 1).

This is reinforced with reasons:

He is an awe-inspiring God (verse 2), He redeemed Israel and settled them in their land (verses 3-4), and He presently is ruling in Israel.

A second call renews the need for praise (verse 6).

It is likewise reinforced with a reason: the revelation that His kingship is destined to be universal (verses 7-9).

These last verses speak prophetically of the time when the Lord Jesus will reign on the earth.

Verses 1-9:

The main concepts of Psalm 47 develop around key words and phrases, e.g., "peoples" and "nations" (verses 1, 3, 8, 9); "earth" and "all the earth" (verses 2, 7, 9); and "king" or "reigning as king" (verses 2, 6, 7, 8).

The major message of this psalm is that God is the unique Sovereign over all.

Structurally, there are two choruses of worship in this Psalm 47, which celebrate this universal kingship of the LORD God Most High.

- I. First Chorus: God as the Victorious King-Warrior (47:1-5).
 - A. Its Call to Worship (47:1);
 - B. Its Causes for Worship (47:2-5).
- II. Second Chorus: God as the Sovereign King-Governor (47:6-9).
 - A. Its Call to Worship (47:6);
 - B. Its Causes for Worship (47:7-9b);
 - C. Its Code of Worship (47:9c).

Psalm 47:1 "O clap your hands, all ye people; shout unto God with the voice of triumph."

Here is figured Christ to whom all his should give willing obedience, and who would show himself terrible to the wicked.

Meaning the Gentiles more especially (see Psalm 117:1), compared with (Rom. 15:9).

Who had reason to rejoice and be glad, since the ascended Lord and King here spoken of was given to be their Savior.

Was the propitiation for their sins, and had given himself a ransom price for them.

And now the Gospel was preached among them, by an order from him after his resurrection.

And upon his ascension gifts were bestowed on his apostles, qualifying them for it.

When many of them were converted by it, and were made partakers of the same grace and privileges with the Jews that believed in Christ, and were formed into Gospel churches.

Wherefore they are called upon to declare their joy and gladness by "clapping their hands"; which is a gesture expressive of exultation and joy (see Psalm 98:8, Nah. 3:19).

It was used at the unction and coronation of a king (2 Kings 11:12).

And so very proper to be used on occasion of the Messiah being made or declared Lord and Christ, as he was at his ascension (Acts 2:36).

“All ye people”:

The call to worship is universal.

"Shout unto God with the voice of triumph":

As when triumphs are made on account of victories obtained, which was now the case.

Christ having conquered sin, Satan, and the world, by his sufferings and death.

And having spoiled principalities and powers, made a show of them, openly triumphing over them, when he ascended on high, and led captivity captive.

And he having sent his apostles into the Gentile world with his Gospel, they were caused to triumph in him wherever they came.

And now these external actions of clapping hands, and shouting with the voice, are expressive of inward spiritual joy.

Which those among the people who were conquered by the grace of God, and had a sight of their ascended Lord and Savior, were filled with.

And who are exhorted to express it in this manner, unto God: not to angels, nor to men, no, not to ministers, who brought the joyful tidings to them.

But to God, either to God the Father, for all their temporal and spiritual blessings; especially for the unspeakable gift of his Son, to suffer and die for them: or to the Son of God, God manifest in the flesh (John 1:14).

God that was gone up with a shout (Psalm 47:5); and was now at the right hand of God, crowned with glory and honor.

Who, by the sufferings of death, had obtained eternal redemption for them.

The battle is over.

The victory is won.

To clap the hands shows extreme joy.

Notice, that this is not just a few that are to clap, but all the people of the world.

To shout is to rejoice with great enthusiasm.

Jesus will rule over all the earth and all people.

Those of us who have decided to make Jesus our Lord as well as our Savior now, will be ahead of those who must submit to His rule by force.

We of our own free will have submitted to the will of the Lord now.

This is enough to make the most stayed person begin to shout.

Psalm 47:2 "For the LORD most high [is] terrible; [he is] a great King over all the earth."

Yahweh, the "Most High" God; that is, who is exalted above all other beings (compare Exodus 18:11; 1 Chron. 16:25; Psalms 96:4; 95:3; 2 Chron. 2:5).

"Is terrible":

Literally, is to be feared; that is, revered and adored.

There is an idea in the words "terrible" and "terror" which is not contained in the original, as if there were something harsh, severe, stern, in his character.

The word in the original does not go beyond the notion of inspiring reverence or awe, and is the common word by which the worship of God is designated in the Scriptures.

The meaning is, that he is worthy of profound reverence or adoration.

"He is a great King over all the earth":

As he must be, since he is the great God and our Savior; and is King of kings, and Lord of lords.

He is now King of Zion, and head over all things to the church.

And before long the kingdoms of this world will become his, and he will take to himself his great power and reign.

And shall be King over all the earth openly and visibly.

He shall be one, and his name One (Zech. 14:9).

Which is another reason for joy and gladness among the people.

This whole chapter is about the 1000 year reign of Jesus Christ on the Earth as Lord of lords and King of kings.

This rule will not be like the meek and mild Jesus that was here to save the world.

He will rule with a rod of iron.

Revelation 2:27 "And he shall rule them with a rod of iron; as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers: even as I received of my Father."

His rule is absolute dominion over all the people of the earth.

Psalms 47:3 "He shall subdue the people under us, and the nations under our feet."

"He shall subdue":

An axiomatic truth about the past, present, and future.

We shall rule with Him as His subordinates.

He is King and we Christians will rule and reign with Him.

Revelation 20:6 "Blessed and holy [is] he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years."

We did not win the battle, the Lord did.

He places us in a position of authority over the heathen.

Psalm 47:4 "He shall choose our inheritance for us, the excellency of Jacob whom he loved. Selah."

"He shall choose":

Again, "He shall choose" serves as a timeless truth.

Compare the election of Israel in (Deut. 7:6; Psalm 135:4).

On the land of promise as "inheritance", compare (Deut. 32:8-9; Psalm 105:11).

See notes (of Eph. 1:4; 1 Peter 1:2), for a discussion of the doctrine of divine election.

"The excellency of Jacob whom he loved":

The "glory" or "pride" of Jacob also refers to the land of Canaan (compare the term illustratively in Isa. 13:19; then in Isa. 60:15; Nahum 2:2).

"Whom he loved":

Is a signal terminology for God's special, elective, covenantal "love" (compare e.g., Mal. 1:2).

This special focus on God's covenant with Israel does not negate the bigger picture involving blessing to all nations sketched out in the original Abrahamic Covenant of (Gen. 12:1-3).

We will not rule wherever we choose.

He will choose the place for each of us.

I do not desire to choose for myself.

I have previously made Jesus my Lord and His will is my will.

I do not want to choose.

I want Him to choose for me, and then tell me where He wants me to be.

It is inheritance enough to be with Him.

We know that just as God gave Israel the Promised Land, He will give us our inheritance and the place that is best for us.

He loved physical Israel, but He also loves spiritual Israel who came to Him by choice and not by birthright.

We should stop and think on these things.

Verses 5-9: The root word for “gone up” is translated (in verse 9), as “exalted”.

The people of God will shout in triumph on the day when the rightful “King of all the earth” reigns (68:24-25; 1 Chron. 16:31).

Psalm 47:5 "God is gone up with a shout, the LORD with the sound of a trumpet."

“God is gone up with a shout”:

The imagery likely refers to God’s presence, after having gone into battle with His people, now ascending victoriously to His imminent residence on Mt. Zion and to His transcendent residence in heaven.

This procession with the ark of God was accompanied by great shouts and blasts of celebration in (verses 5 and 6).

This is Jesus who goes up with a shout.

Matthew 24:31 "And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other."

The voice of the LORD and the sound of the silver trumpet of redemption are very close to the same.

They are very hard to separate.

1 Thessalonians 4:16 "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first:"

We do not know the exact events, but praise God! He knows.

I trust Him completely, and I know in my heart that the return of the Lord Jesus to heaven had to be shouted about by the angels.

God (in verse 5 above), is Jehovah.

He is Jehovah, LORD God Almighty.

Psalm 47:6 "Sing praises to God, sing praises: sing praises unto our King, sing praises."

That is gone up with a shout, Christ Jesus, our ascended Lord and King.

As the apostles did at the time of his ascension (Luke 24:52).

"Sing praises; sing praises unto our King, sing praises":

Who was then made Lord and Christ, declared King of saints, and was then crowned with glory and honor.

The repetition of the phrase sing praises denotes frequency, constancy, fervency, and great devotion in the performance of this service.

And that the ascension of Christ, the occasion of it, is of the greatest moment and importance, and requires it to be performed in such a manner.

The type of song here, would be a song of adoration.

From the four praises above, I would believe this to be universal, since four means universal. Then this would be sung all over the world, and not just once, but over and over.

Psalm 47:7 "For God [is] the King of all the earth: sing ye praises with understanding."

He is not just God of the Jews, but of all mankind.

The praises with understanding would be singing of His truth, and His love, and His majesty, and all the wonderful truths in the Bible.

Philippians 2:10 "That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of [things] in heaven, and [things] in earth, and [things] under the earth;"

His rule is universal and forever.

Psalm 47:8 "God reigneth over the heathen: God sitteth upon the throne of his holiness."

He reigned over Israel under the former dispensation, and now he reigns over the Gentiles under the Gospel dispensation.

As appears by the numerous instances of conversion among them in the first ages of Christianity.

And by the many churches that were planted by the means of the apostles.

And by the destruction of the Roman Pagan empire under the sixth seal (Rev. 6:12).

And which will still more appear by the destruction of Rome Papal, when all the Heathens shall perish out of the land.

And by the fullness and forces of the Gentiles being brought into a submission to him.

All which are reasons to sing praises to him.

"God sitteth upon the throne of his holiness":

Or his holy throne, which is heaven; on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens; on his Father's throne.

Having done his work on earth he is received up into heaven, and is set down on a throne at the right hand of God, an honor which none of the angels have.

He has ceased from his work and entered into his rest, and sits and sees of the travail of his soul.

All which is matter of joy to his people, and a reason why they should sing praises.

And the rather, since they are set down with him in heavenly places.

Not only will He reign during the 1000 years upon the earth, but He actually reigns now.

The heathen does not know at this time, that God rules over all.

Jesus is even now seated at the right hand of the Father in heaven.

He will sit on His throne in full view of everyone when this verse comes to fulfillment.

Sometimes people who sit on thrones on the earth, are not honest and upright.

In fact, sometimes they are down-right unholy.

The throne that the Lord sits upon is holy in every way.

It is based on truth and righteousness.

Psalm 47:9 "The princes of the people are gathered together, [even] the people of the God of Abraham: for the shields of the earth [belong] unto God: he is greatly exalted."

"The shields of the earth":

This imagery stands parallel with "the princes of the people".

Illustratively, there may be a loose analogy to God's sovereignly appointed human governors (compare Rom. 13:1-7) as protectors for the masses.

Galatians 3:29 "And if ye [be] Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise."

We Christians are the people of the God of Abraham.

We like Abraham, had faith and it was counted unto us for righteousness.

All of the Christians in the world will be gathered together, when we are all are resurrected from the earth.

All of us will shout praises to Him.

We all get our strength and power from Jesus who is our protector.

Psalm 47 Questions

1. Why are they to clap their hands in verse 1?
2. Shout unto God with the voice of _____.
3. Who is this saying should do this?
4. What is the difference in the Christian shouting praise to the Lord and the rest of the world?
5. What is chapter 47 about?
6. What describes the way Jesus will rule over them?
7. What will the Christians be doing during this 1000 year reign of Jesus?
8. Who does the second death have no power over?
9. Where will we rule?
10. Spiritual Israel came to the Lord by _____, and not by birth right.
11. Who shall descend from heaven with a shout?
12. Who shall rise first?
13. God, in verse 5, is who?
14. Why was sing praises said 4 times in verse 6?
15. Verse 7 says, sing praises with _____.
16. Verse 8 says God reigns over whom?
17. Where does God sit?
18. What is the throne of God based upon?
19. What was counted unto us for righteousness?