

Psalms
God's Rule Over the Nations
Lesson Text: Psalm 47

Aim for Change

By the end of the lesson, we will: **IDENTIFY** reasons to praise God's rule over all the earth; **BE FILLED** with joy that God rules over all the earth; and **PRAISE GOD** for His sustaining leadership.

In Focus

Today's lesson we are reminded above every earthly leadership is God, who reigns as Lord over all of heaven and earth.

Keep In Mind

"Sing praises to God, sing praises! Sing praises to our King, sing praises!"⁷ For God is the King of all the earth; Sing praises with understanding." (Psalm 47:6-7 KJV)

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1. Oh, clap your hands, all you peoples! Shout to God with the voice of triumph!
2. For the Lord Most High *is* awesome; *He is* a great King over all the earth.
3. He will subdue the peoples under us, And the nations under our feet.
4. He will choose our inheritance for us, the excellence of Jacob whom He loves. *Selah*
5. God has gone up with a shout, the Lord with the sound of a trumpet.
6. Sing praises to God, sing praises! Sing praises to our King, sing praises!
7. For God *is* the King of all the earth; Sing praises with understanding.
8. God reigns over the nations; God sits on His holy throne.
9. The princes of the people have gathered together, the people of the God of Abraham. For the shields of the earth *belong* to God; He is greatly exalted.

The Lesson

The People, Places and Times

Kings: From the earliest days of written history in the Ancient Near East, people were organized under kings. The first monarchies arose from city–states. Rural living did not need the rules, regulations, or organization cities required, so monarchies first began in urban areas.

Israel was slower in adopting a monarchy because it began as a group of mostly rural clans. But from as early as Genesis 17:6, God promised Abram he would become the father of kings, and so it was assumed Israel would be ruled by kings. The major problem Israel had, when they first asked Samuel for a king like all the other nations, was they were breaking off the covenant relationship with God as their King (1 Samuel 8:4–8). They did not trust Him to lead them and protect them, and they desired leaders just like the nations around them.

Christ, the King: When God chose David to be the king of Israel, the people had a charismatic leader, a great military man, and a man after God’s own heart (1 Samuel 16:12–13; 2 Samuel 5:1–5; Acts 13:22). It was through the line of David our Lord and Savior, Christ our King came. The Old Testament made it very clear that this King would be called “Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace” (Isaiah 9:6). Jesus Christ fulfilled the Old Testament prophecies of God as King.

Jesus announced with His coming, His kingship began (Luke 17:21). At this time, He is King in the hearts of those who follow Him. He is also ruling over the physical world, which He created and sustains (John 1:3). But in the future, everyone everywhere will see Jesus as the King and all things will come under His rule (Revelation 11:15).

Background

When the Israelites settled in the Promised Land, they were surrounded by idol-worshipping nations and living among people who had numerous gods. The Gentile nations thought of their gods as ruling over the areas in which they lived. This idea often filled the hearts of the Israelites, and they began worshiping the gods they found in their land. The Canaanites had gods of fertility (Baal and Asherah) the Israelites thought would help them in their farming. The people worshiped the gods of fertility in many decadent ways, such as in religious prostitution.

The Moabites, who were descendants of Lot and lived just to the southeast of Israel, worshiped Chemosh, a god who demanded child sacrifice. We even read that King Ahaz, a descendant of King David, burned his own children as sacrifices to foreign gods (2 Chronicles 28:1–3). Molech, the god of the Ammonites, was also worshiped with human sacrifice. No wonder God detested these religions!

In Depth

1. God Is King Over All the Earth (Psalm 47:1–4) This psalm presents the coronation of our God, the King over all. No wonder everyone everywhere is commanded to clap! This psalm was composed during the period when Israel had kings, but always needed to be reminded that the Almighty God was their King.

The sons of Korah (temple assistants) wrote Psalm 47 for a Jewish religious festival, probably for the Feast of Tabernacles, in which Jews fashioned structures of branches and lived in them for one week, once a year, to commemorate the 40 years they lived in tents in the wilderness. First Kings 8:2 reveals that when the temple was inaugurated, Solomon led the people in celebrating the Feast of Tabernacles. According to Oxford Universal Dictionary, a “tabernacle” is a temporary dwelling place made of canvas, branches, or boards. It is a hut, a tent, or a booth. During the wilderness years, God dwelt with His people in a tent called the Tabernacle.

Perhaps Solomon was reminding the people that when they lived in tents in the wilderness, so did their God. But now that they lived in the Promised Land in houses of mud, brick, and stone, the temple was to be a permanent facility for His presence. And as Solomon dedicated the brand new temple to the Lord, He saw God symbolically living in the temple. However, as the King of all nations, God is enthroned in heaven above. We read these words in Solomon’s prayer of dedication for the temple: “Behold, the heaven and heaven of heavens cannot contain thee” (1 Kings 8:27). Even Solomon’s beautiful temple was not the throne of God; heaven itself is not big enough to contain Him.

All of God’s people worship the Lord Most High, who is the King over all the nations; but Psalm 47:3–4 reminds us that He chose the Jews specifically. God was the one who empowered them to subdue the nations in Canaan and around them. He gave them an inheritance, that is, the Promised Land. And He took great pride in them and loved them.

But when we look back at verse 1, we see the anticipation of the evangelization of every nation, which is happening right now. Imagine the day when we will all be praising our God together!

2. God Has Ascended (vv. 5–6)

Bantu, Dr. Vince L.. Precepts for Living: The Entire Bible in a Year (p. 305). UMI (Urban Minisries, Inc.). Kindle Edition. Verses 5 and 6 are the center of this psalm, which was composed as a liturgical procession. When Solomon dedicated the temple, the Ark of the Covenant was solemnly carried on the proscribed poles to bring it to the temple. The ark symbolized God’s throne and the temple as His heavenly palace, so it is not hard to imagine that this psalm was used or composed for this occasion. Other processions portrayed in the book of

Psalms are meant to be sung as the pilgrims made their way toward the temple in Jerusalem to celebrate the special festivals.

However, many Christians today like to read Psalm 47 on Ascension Sunday, the day that commemorates the day that Christ ascended from earth back to heaven. Angels sang songs of praise when our Savior came to earth as a baby. Surely the whole heavenly host welcomed Him back with shouts of joy, sounds of trumpets, and songs of heavenly praise.

In verse 6, we are commanded four times to sing praises to our King. This is more than the enthusiastic, raucous praise of verse 1. This is the more formal singing of praise. Now we are commanded to make beautiful music to our King.

3. God Is Reigning Over All the Earth (vv. 7–9) Faith These verses portray the grand finale of history. God is now sitting upon His throne, King over all the earth. Once more we are commanded to sing praises to Him.

This is a missionary psalm. It views the day when God’s plan for all people is finally accomplished. God is the King over all the earth. This reminds us of Isaiah 52:7, NIV, which commissions us as missionaries, “How beautiful on the mountains are the feet of those who bring good news, . . . who proclaim salvation, who say to Zion, ‘Your God reigns!’” We have an important part in the installation of our God as King over all the earth. Our job is to bring the Good News of salvation to people all over the earth. Psalm 46:10 tells us that God will be exalted among people all over the earth. The book of Revelation speaks over and over again about the Lord Jesus sitting upon the throne. Angels encircle His throne and sing, “Worthy is the Lamb, who was slain, to receive power and wealth and wisdom and strength and honor and glory and praise!” (5:12).

Liberating Lesson

When we look around, it’s plain to see that Satan still has control over our world today. As believers, we are the ambassadors for the kingdom of God. We represent the interests of our King. Discuss some of the things that God cares about and how we can lobby for His kingdom and do our part to reflect God’s kingdom in our society.

Application for Activation

Today, God wants to be King of our lives. What are some areas of your life that you need to more fully turn over to Him?

Take Aways

Closing Prayer

Week of 26 Nov 2023
Daily Bible Readings



Monday - 1st Samuel 21-34

Tuesday – 1st Samuel 25-27

Wednesday 1st Samuel 28-31

Thursday – 2nd Samuel 1-3

Friday – 2nd Samuel 4-7

Saturday - 2nd Samuel 8-12

Sunday – 2nd Samuel 13-15