

Praising God for Who He is
Psalm 47:1-9

INTRO:

What is the point of **Psalm 47**? This Psalm teaches us to rejoice in the greatness and majesty of our God. In some ways it is akin to the song we like to sing. *“How great is our God? Sing with me how great is our God/, and all will see how great, how great is our God!”* The Sons of Korah tell us how great our God is.

I. Praise God for His Greatness and His Grace (v. 1-4)

II. Praise God for His Victory and His Sovereignty (v. 5-8)

III. Praise God for His Plan and His People (v. 9)

I. Praise God for His Greatness and His Grace (v. 1-4)

Psalm 47:1-4 *“To the Chief Musician. A Psalm of the Sons of Korah.*

Oh, clap your hands, all you peoples! Shout to God with the voice of triumph! For the LORD Most High is awesome; He is a great King over all the earth. He will subdue the peoples under us, And the nations under our feet. He will choose our inheritance for us, The excellence of Jacob whom He loves. Selah”

A. Different commentators place the writing of this Psalm at different places in Israel’s history. Many of them think this Psalm was written after the victory in **2 Chronicles 20**.

1. Let me refresh your memory a little about what took place there. Jehoshaphat is the king of Judah. He is a godly king and one day some folks came and told Jehoshaphat that an overwhelming force from the lands of Edom, Moab, and Ammon have banded together to come up against Judah.

2. Upon hearing of this threat, Jehoshaphat calls the people together to pray. In his prayer Jehoshaphat reminded the Jewish people of what God had done and of how powerful God is.

2 Chronicles 20:5–9 *“Then Jehoshaphat stood in the assembly of Judah and Jerusalem, in the house of the LORD, before the new court, and said: ‘O LORD God of our fathers, are You not God in heaven, and do You not rule over all the kingdoms of the nations, and in Your hand is there not power and might, so that no one is able to withstand You? Are You not our God, who drove out the inhabitants of this land before Your people Israel, and gave it to the descendants of Abraham Your friend forever? And they dwell in it, and have built You a sanctuary in it for Your name, saying, “If disaster comes upon us—sword, judgment, pestilence, or famine—we will stand before this temple and in Your*

presence (for Your name is in this temple), and cry out to You in our affliction, and You will hear and save”””

Only after this Jehoshaphat make a request of God for deliverance. And God gave that deliverance. Jahaziel, a prophet, brought a message from God that they would not have to fight the battle. The battle was the LORD'S and He would fight it. So, they went to battle with a choir at the front. When they came to where this giant force was camped they found them all dead because they had fought each other and killed each other. After spoiling the bodies, they returned to Jerusalem singing praises to God for what He had done!

B. Listen to the nature of the praise in this psalm.

“Oh, clap your hands, all you peoples! Shout to God with the voice of triumph!”

God alone deserves all of our adoration and praise. Why? **Verse 2** gives us the reason.

“For the Lord Most High is to be feared; He is a great King over all the earth.”

You can probably tell that I do not like the modern translation ***“awesome.”*** The idea is that God is not someone to be toyed with. He is to be feared and respected. Awe contains fear or it isn't Awe.

C. God's greatness makes His grace so marvelous.

vs.3-4 “He will subdue the peoples under us, and the nations under our feet. He will choose our inheritance for us, the excellence of Jacob whom He loves.

Selah.”

1. The Psalmist is looking backward to look forward. He is recalling God giving them the victory in the conquest of the land and from that seeing that His plan will come to fulfillment in the future. There are millennial possibilities in this statement.

2. Notice especially this Great God has chosen them and their future for them. This is grace. The God who needs no one and nothing has attached Himself to them. He has likewise committed Himself to us. He has given us His Son and the Spirit of God who lives in us as the down payment on our future blessing.

II. Praise God for His Victory and His Sovereignty (v. 5-8)

A. Having finished stanza one, now let us find a further reason to praise and glorify our God in the next verse of the Psalmist's song. First, we praise Him because He gone up after His victory.

v.5 “God has gone up with a shout, the LORD with the sound of a trumpet.”

1. The fact that He has gone up implies that He has first come down to take some task in hand. An example of this is **Isaiah 31:4**

“For thus the Lord has spoken to me: ‘As a lion roars, and a young lion over his prey . . . so the Lord of hosts will come down to fight for Mount Zion and for its hill.’”

The picture the Psalmist is painting is God returning to His throne in victory.

2. Because God has gotten His victory, we too should be praising Him.

v.6 *“Sing praises to God, sing praises! Sing praises to our King, sing praises!”*

We sing songs of praise to Him because He is Elohim our powerful God. We also sing praises to Him because He is OUR King! He rules over us!

B. Second, we sing praise Him specifically because He is king and ruler over all the earth and specifically ruler over us. There is a word for this, sovereignty.

vs.7-8 *“For God is the King of all the earth; sing praises with understanding. God reigns over the nations; God sits on His holy throne.”*

1. Quite often, we humans have a big problem with this. We don't want a King. We want to run our lives and our futures and we would like God to leave us alone. Really, we will take the salvation that He offers now, after all who wants to go to a Christless eternity? Someday, we will be ready to make Him Lord and King in our lives, but only in our time and on our terms.

2. We need to wake up to the fact that God is already King and Lord and we can't tell Him what to do with His World.

3. God said through Isaiah.

Isaiah 43:13 *“Indeed before the day was, I am He; and there is no one who can deliver out of My hand; I work, and who will reverse it?”*

4. This is why we need to sing praises with understanding. Our God is King over all the earth. He is reigning over all the nations. He is sitting on His Holy throne. When your world is falling apart, you need to take hold of this reality and never let go of it! It is God who is in control.

III. Praise God for His Plan and His People (v. 9)

v.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.”*

A. This concluding verse is somewhat cryptic. However, the majority of the commentators see it as an affirmation that God will successfully gather all of His people to Himself at the end of the age.

B. There is a reference to three groups of people here. First, the leaders of the people are gathered together (unto the Lord). Second, then the Jewish people are specifically mentioned, the people of the God of Abraham. Finally, the shields, which many commentators see as those who protect God's people are also said to belong to God.

C. Whether this is what the Psalmist meant or not, there is a strain of truth in this that we must not forget. God has an eternal plan and that plan involves His calling out a people for His name. Remember what James said in the council in **Acts 15:13-18**

“And after they had become silent, James answered, saying, ‘Men and brethren, listen to me: Simon has declared how God at the first visited the Gentiles to take out of them a people for His name. And with this the words of the prophets agree, just as it is written: ‘After this I will return and will rebuild the tabernacle of David, which has fallen down; I will rebuild its ruins, and I will set it up; as that the rest of mankind may seek the Lord, even all the Gentiles who are called by My name, says the Lord who does all these things.’ Known to God from eternity are all His works.”

Finally, then we should praise God because His eternal plan will be accomplished.

Why is this important?

First, without knowing that God is so great we cannot believe in His promises. If Abraham had not believed God was able to call life out of death and to call into existence things that which did not exist, he could not have held on to the promise.

Second, if we do not know God is this powerful and great, we will not feel or comprehend the impact of Paul's statement in **Ephesians 3:20**.

“Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us”

Third, we have no anchor for the storms of life.

Hebrews 6:17-20 ***“Thus God, determining to show more abundantly to the heirs of promise the immutability of His counsel, confirmed it by an oath, that by two immutable things, in which it is impossible for God to lie, we might have strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold of the hope set before us. This hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which enters the Presence behind the veil, where the forerunner has entered for us, even Jesus, having become High Priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek.”***

If we have no relationship with the living God incarnate in Christ we will live an anchorless existence.

How big is your God?