

“King of All”  
Psalm 47  
(Preached at Trinity, November 21, 2010)

I’m supplying these notes for the benefit of busy pastors who may be engaged in bi-vocational work, feeling the pressure of preparing to preach twice on the Lord’s Day while trying to balance full-time secular work as well as caring for their families. While the notes of another man are no substitute for personal study, I pray that these may aid in the process of preparing to preach.

**Disclaimer:** These are the actual notes I bring with me to the pulpit, which I follow loosely. They are not designed for publication. While I try to make every effort to give proper credit to my sources from the pulpit, adequate citations will sometimes be absent from my notes. If anyone feels their intellectual material has been used without adequate citation, please contact me and I’ll make immediate correction giving credit.

1. Psalm 47 has a single theme. The worship of God. But in the OT God is usually referred to as the God of Israel. The God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Over and over they were warned against serving other gods.
2. But God isn’t the God of a single nation or a single people. He is the God of all the earth. He is the Creator of all.  
He rules with absolute sovereign authority and dominion over all.  
To worship any other god is idolatry and an assault upon the one true God.
3. Paul told the Athenian philosophers:  
**Acts 17:28-30** – “For in him we live, and move, and have our being; as certain also of your own poets have said, For we are also his offspring. <sup>29</sup> Forasmuch then as we are the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Godhead is like unto gold, or silver, or stone, graven by art and man's device. <sup>30</sup> And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent:”
4. God owns all things. He rules all that lives. He has absolute authority and dominion. He works all things after the counsel of His own will.
5. The First Commandment declares God’s supremacy, “Thou shalt have no other gods before Me” – God has no rivals.
  - A. Of the Five Solas of the Reformation none screams louder than *soli Deo Gloria* – To God alone be the glory.
  - B. God is the God of all whether they acknowledge Him or not.  
The sum of the duty of every human being is the worship of God.  
God is man’s chief source of happiness and joy
  - C. God's grand purpose for man is for him to embrace his Creator and worship Him.  
Man is at his highest end when he is worshipping and truly enjoying God.  
Spurgeon’s Catechism:  
*Question 1:* What is the chief end of man?  
*Answer:* Man's chief end is to glorify God and enjoy Him forever.
6. The nation that knows and understands the sovereign majesty of this great God is truly blessed.  
**Psalm 33:12** – “Blessed is the nation whose God is the LORD”
  - A. God alone is the King of glory.
  - B. Egypt and Babylon were powerful nations, but they fell. Greece and Rome were mighty nations, but they fell. The Soviet Union was a mighty nation, but it fell.  
The United States is in the twilight of its greatness and is in serious decline. It too has failed to recognize this essential truth.
  - C. God will have no rivals. He will be worshiped by all the earth.

7. This is what we find in this Psalm. God is God over all the earth.  
**Psalm 47:1** – “O Clap your hands, all peoples”  
**Psalm 47:2** – “*he is* a great King over all the earth.”
8. This psalm is a psalm of worship  
 There are two aspects to Biblical Worship
- A. The first is Submission  
**Psalm 47:2** – “For the LORD most high *is* terrible; *he is* a great King over all the earth.”  
 Such a King demands falling down in absolute submission  
**Psalm 95:6** – “O come, let us worship and bow down: let us kneel before the LORD our maker.”  
 The Hebrew word for worship is שָׁחָה (shachah) – to bow down, to prostrate oneself
- B. The second aspect of worship is praise – seeing God in His majesty, splendor and glory and responding in expressions of adoration.  
 Verse 1 – “Clap your hands.”  
 Verse 1 – “shout unto God with the voice of triumph”  
 Verse 6 – “Sing praises to God, sing praises: sing praises unto our King.”  
 Verse 7 – “sing ye praises with understanding.”
1. Praise is an expression of thanksgiving
  2. True worship is motivated by gratitude
- C. This is the highest duty of mankind  
*Shorter Catechism:*  
 Q. What is the chief end of man?  
 A. Man’s chief end is to glorify God and to enjoy Him forever.  
**1 Corinthians 10:31** – “Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.”  
 The word translated “glory” is δόξα which can also be translated praise.
9. Ultimately this psalm looks ahead to God’s rule through Jesus Christ. Jesus has been exalted to the right hand of majesty. His dominion is absolute.  
 It also has a prophetic element as it looks forward when all the nations *will* bow before the King of Kings.  
**Philippians 2:9-11** – “Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: <sup>10</sup> That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of *things* in heaven, and *things* in earth, and *things* under the earth; <sup>11</sup> And *that* every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ *is* Lord, to the glory of God the Father.”  
**Psalm 110:1-2** – “The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool. <sup>2</sup> The LORD shall send the rod of thy strength out of Zion: rule thou in the midst of thine enemies.”  
**Revelation 11:15** – “And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become *the kingdoms* of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever.”
10. Dividing this psalm into a specific outline is difficult but there are some general divisions:
- I. God is to be worshipped in all His greatness – **Verses 1-4**  
**Psalm 47:2** – “For the LORD most high *is* terrible”
  - II. God is to be worshipped in His ascension to His throne – **Verses 5-7**

- Psalm 47:5** – “God is gone up with a shout”
- III. God is to be worshipped in His universal dominion – **Verses 8-9**  
**Psalm 47:8** – “God reigneth over the heathen”
- I. God is to be worshipped in all His greatness – **Verses 1-4**  
**Psalm 47:2** – “For the LORD most high *is* terrible” (NASB – “to be feared”)
- A. These verses speak of the grand awe of God
1. He is to be approached with holy fear
  2. It speaks to the holy “otherness” of God
- B. **Verses 3-4** describe why God elicits such reverence. They speak of God as the conquering King of Israel
1. **Verse 3** speaks of God subduing the nations under their feet  
Of course, this happened as they conquered Canaan
  2. **Verse 5** speaks of God granting Jacob the inheritance promised to Abraham.
  3. Of course, all of this pointed to the ultimate victory and the ultimate inheritance in Christ
- C. The passage has a universal ring to it.  
“O clap your hands, all ye people”  
“*For the LORD most high is terrible; he is a great King over all the earth.*”
1. **Verse 2** declared God to be “most terrible.” The word for “terrible” literally means “fearful.”  
ESV “For the LORD, the Most High, is to be feared”  
NAS “For the LORD Most High is to be feared”
  2. It means to hold God in the highest of awe. This is the heart of worship. The person who views God lightly will worship lightly. Where there is a lack of fear and reverence worship will be reduced to mere religion.
  3. When you entered the sanctuary today did you feel a sense of awe?
- D. We can lose sight of the heart and substance if we get bogged down in the outward expression  
“shout unto God with the voice of triumph” – or NASB “joy”
1. Attention to the outward expression should not reduce your attention to the inner heart. “Shout with joy!”
  2. There was an expression particular to Temple worship  
The instruments were different with crashing cymbals, harps, lyres and various stringed instruments. There was dancing.
  3. With the introduction of the synagogue these things were replaced with simple singing and the exposition of Scripture. This became the pattern of the NT church.
  4. But the heart of worship hasn’t changed. Is God being approached with holy reverence?
- D. Notice the description of God in **Verse 2**
1. He is LORD – self-existent – the great I Am
  2. “Most High” – One of the names of God - עֶלְיוֹן 'elyown  
“Most High” – incomparable.  
Spurgeon – “most great in power, lofty in dominion, eminent in wisdom, elevated in glory.”

3. He is the “great King over all the earth.”  
God alone is worthy of worship. The great sin of all the earth is a refusal to bow before Him.  
**Romans 1:21** – “Because that, when they knew God, they glorified *him* not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened.”

- E. The ultimate fulfillment of **Verse 4** is the church
1. We are the beloved ones
  2. We have received a glorious inheritance. God is our God and we bow before Him in worship.
  3. Selah – Pause to consider, meditate upon these things  
Is He your God? Do you fall before Him in submission? Do you worship Him in all His glory?

## II. God is to be worshipped in His ascension to His throne – **Verses 5-7**

### **Psalms 47:5** – “God is gone up with a shout”

- A. God has gone up – He has ascended His throne
1. The throne room of God is a sight that brings us to our knees
  2. Listen to Isaiah  
**Isaiah 6:1-3** – “In the year that king Uzziah died I saw also the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple. <sup>2</sup> Above it stood the seraphims: each one had six wings; with twain he covered his face, and with twain he covered his feet, and with twain he did fly. <sup>3</sup> And one cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy, holy, *is* the LORD of hosts: the whole earth *is* full of his glory.”
- B. This envisions the risen Christ who ascended to His throne
1. In His triumphal entry into Jerusalem the multitudes shouted with great fanfare but days later crucified Him  
“We have no king but Caesar!”
  2. But God raised Him up to sit upon His throne.  
This was with great pomp as all heaven rejoiced  
He is gone up “with a shout, the LORD with the sound of a trumpet.”  
The trumpet sounds the splendor of His ascension.
  3. The response of all who witness such a glorious ascension to the throne is Praise - “Sing praises to God, sing praises: sing praises unto our King, sing praises.”
- C. Notice the praises were sung with understanding  
**Psalms 47:7** – “For God *is* the King of all the earth: sing ye praises with understanding.”
1. I think the KJV has the proper translation here -
    - a. Other translations  
ESV – “sing praises with a psalm!”  
NASB – “Sing praises with a skillful psalm.”
    - b. It is from the word שָׁכַל  
It points to insight or comprehension.

2. The Hebrew word is actually מִשְׁכִּיל  
It is speaking of a Maschil – a psalm of instruction.
3. Spurgeon – “Sound doctrine praises God. Even under the economy of types and ceremonies, it is clear that the Lord had regard to the spirituality of worship, and would be praised thoughtfully, intelligently, and with deep appreciation of the reason for song.”
4. Worship cannot be separated from truth

### III. God is to be worshipped in His universal dominion – **Verses 8-9**

#### **Psalm 47:8** – “God reigneth over the heathen”

- A. The psalmist returns to the main theme – God rules over all and thus should be worshipped by all.
  1. God’s throne is a throne of holiness  
“God sitteth upon the throne of his holiness.”  
His justice is perfect – never will there be injustice from His throne
  2. God’s rule is a rule of graciousness  
He is worthy to be praised. His goodness should cause any reasonable person to bow in praise and homage.
- B. The psalm ends with a vision to the future
  1. It prophetically looks to a time when all kings and princes will bow before the King of kings.  
**Psalm 47:9** – “The princes of the people are gathered together”
  2. Every power, every fortress, every bulwark rests in Him  
**Psalm 47:9** – “the shields of the earth *belong* unto God”

#### Conclusion:

1. Jesus Christ is worthy of worship. All authority has been delivered into the hands of Christ as our Mediator  
Jesus Christ has absolute power and dominion over all things
2. Where is He today? He is on His throne. What is a throne but a symbol of dominion?  
**1 Peter 3:22** – “Who is gone into heaven, and is on the right hand of God; angels and authorities and powers being made subject unto him.”  
**Hebrews 1:3** – “Who being the brightness of *his* glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high;”  
**Hebrews 8:1** – “Now of the things which we have spoken *this is* the sum: We have such a high priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens;”
3. This is one thing seriously missing from today’s evangelism.  
Jesus Christ is Lord and King  
**Acts 2:36** – “Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ.”
4. When Jesus returns He will return as Judge endowed with absolute power and authority to judge the nations.

5. He is worthy to be worshipped now – by all, by you.  
Worship demands subjection.  
A woman who was deathly sick was asked if she was willing to live or die. She replied, “Which God pleases.” But then she was asked again “but if God should refer it to you, which would you choose?” Truly,” she replied, “I would refer it to Him again.”
6. Are you submitted to Him as the Lord of lords? And is He worthy of praise? Do you praise Him with your lips and with your life?