

Studies in Psalms by [John T Polk II](#)
For [The Fellowship Room](#)

Psalms 47

11/20/12

Vs. 1-2 praise God for being God;
Vs. 3-4 tell what God does;
Vs. 5-7 praise God for being God;
Vs. 8-9 tell what God does.

When Jerusalem was surrounded by Assyrians led by King Sennacherib, then Judah's King Hezekiah takes his appeal to the LORD. The Assyrians then are mightily defeated (2 Kings 19:14-37) and Jerusalem saved (2 Chronicles 32:20-22). Psalm 47 is thought to have been written on this occasion of relief and rejoicing.

Verse 1 praises God with clapping and shouting, neither of which is used in New Testament Christian worship. There are only two verses in Psalms which apply to music in the churches of Christ: Psalm 18:49, quoted in Romans 15:8-9; and Psalm 22:22, quoted in Hebrews 2:12, both of them specify "singing," or vocal music! "Singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord" (Ephesians 5:19) is the only authorized music in Christian worship.

Verse 2 describes the covenant Deity ("LORD") as "Most High," for there is no other god equal to Him. He is the same God Abram respected (Genesis 14:18-22) and Christians serve (Luke 6:35). He is "King over all the earth," so Jesus Christ today is "King of kings" (1 Timothy 6:15; Revelation 17:14).

Verses 3-4 use Israel's victory to demonstrate what spiritual victory would later come in the name of "the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ" who "is able even to subdue all things to Himself" (Philippians 3:20-21). "Nations" is a common term for "Gentiles," and the Gospel of Jesus Christ "is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek" (Romans 1:16). That Jews came first in God's plan to save through Jesus Christ "subdued" the Gentiles, who came next (Acts 13:44-49). For Christians, Jesus provides "an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away, reserved in heaven for you" (1 Peter 1:4).

Verse 5 says "God has gone up with a shout, The LORD with the sound of a trumpet." If in verses 3-4, there is the triumph of the Gospel over Jews, and also Gentiles, then this could naturally refer to Jesus ascending back into Heaven when His work here had ended (Acts 1:9-11). At the Second Coming, "the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God" (1 Thessalonians 4:16), to be heard on the earth. Psalm 47:5 may be speaking of a "shout" and "trumpet" heard in Heaven when He returned from the earth.

Verses 6-7 say "sing praises" some 5 times, and they are to be directed toward "God," "our King," "of all the earth." Since these praises must be "with understanding," and since no instrument of accompaniment has "understanding" except our hearts, then to "sing"

All Scriptures and comments are based on the New King James Version, unless otherwise noted.



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here must mean "praises" must come from human hearts without external accompaniment! If not, why not? Please read 1 Corinthians 14:15; Colossians 3:16.

Verse 8 powerfully states what Babylonian King Nebuchadnezzar had to learn the hard way (Daniel 4:28-37), and the resurrected Jesus Christ claimed (Matthew 28:18-20). When "God reigns over the nations," He, Himself, is untarnished by those nations, for "God sits on His holy throne."

Verse 9 helps us understand that Jesus commanded His followers "make disciples of all the nations" (Matthew 28:19) knowing that "the Most High rules in the kingdom of men, and gives it to whomever He chooses" (Daniel 4:25).

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