

The LORD our King

Psalm 47: 1-9

Like the previous Psalm, many scholars attribute this psalm to King Hezekiah. It is widely believed he wrote Psalm 46 and Psalm 47 during the siege of Jerusalem by the Assyrians, under the leadership of Sennacherib.

As King Hezekiah and Jerusalem fearfully awaited the imminent attack of the Assyrians, no doubt it was a long, sleepless night. The city was surrounded, and the enemy had promised total annihilation. As the morning broke with the dawn, surely their hearts sank with fear, as they prepared for the worst. However, the camp of the enemy was eerily silent and still. As they waited, the enemy did not advance toward the city. In fact, there was no movement at all. Eventually spies returned with the miraculous news – the enemy lay dead within the camp. God had moved against the Assyrians, killing 185,000 as they slept in the night. God had delivered His people once again.

This too is a song of worship, as you can imagine. For generations, the Jews have recited this song on Rosh Hashanah, the Jewish New Year. It celebrates God's divine hand of mercy and deliverance in an hour of desperation. One cannot overlook the fact that this too is a Messianic psalm, pointing toward Jesus' triumphant return to rule and reign in power and great glory.

As we examine the [declarations](#) of the psalmist, I want to consider: [The LORD our King](#). First, we discover the psalmist referred to:

I. The Grace in His Provision (1-4) – The opening stanza of this psalm sings of the gracious provision shown to Judah by the mighty hand of God. Consider:

A. The Rejoicing (1) – [O clap your hands, all ye people; shout unto God with the voice of triumph](#). In light of the context of this psalm, the opening statement should come as no surprise. Jerusalem and the people of Judah faced certain death, but God intervened on their behalf, defeating the enemy and delivering their lives. Surely, they were compelled to worship and praise Him.

- While we have not faced similar circumstances, we too have reason to rejoice. We were all under the sentence of death due to sin, but our Lord provided for our deliverance, redeeming us from sin and saving us by His marvelous grace! We too should be compelled to worship Him.

B. The Reverence (2) – [For the LORD most high is terrible; he is a great King over all the earth](#).

Hezekiah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem recognized the majesty and power of their God. They

declared him King over all the earth, knowing He was sovereign over all. The reference to God being “terrible” may be a bit confusing in our day. We do not use this term the same as the translators did using old English. *This reveals an awareness of the need to revere God and stand in awe of His might and glory. It reveals a righteous fear of the holy God.*

- These attributes of God are eternal and they will never change, regardless of man’s willingness to recognize Him. We need a sense of awe of wonder, like those within Jerusalem. Our Lord is sovereign over all. There are none His equal, and none can rival His power and majesty. Whether mankind admits it or not, the Lord is King of all the earth. One day, every knee will bow and every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father!

C. The Reliability (3) – *He shall subdue the people under us, and the nations under our feet.* Bear in mind, Jerusalem had been under siege by one of the mightiest and most brutal armies recorded in human history. By themselves, they stood no chance of survival. As the siege wore on, Judah never fired a shot. No man engaged the enemy in battle. The mighty God delivered the enemy into their hands. He subdued the mightiest nation on the earth, laying them under Judah’s feet.

- We cannot consider these words and fail to see the prophecy they share. The Lord will come again as the reigning King. All the nations of the earth will gather in war against Him, and He will defeat them with the word of His mouth. He will subdue the nations and establish the Millennial Kingdom, having His throne in Jerusalem. He is our Lord and our King!

D. The Redemption (4) – *He shall choose our inheritance for us, the excellency of Jacob whom he loved. Selah.* Hezekiah recorded a powerful and compelling statement. He declared that God had chosen them according to His sovereign will, having loved them, and choosing their inheritance for them. He rejoiced to be chosen by God and secured within His gracious provision.

- The Jews rejected Jesus during His first advent. They did not embrace Him as the Christ, but one day they will. When He comes again in power and great glory, they will see Him as He is. God has set aside Israel for a season, choosing to deal with the Gentiles, but He has not forsaken His chosen people.

- This verse holds great significance for the body of Christ as well. While it deals with the relationship of Israel with God, it also reveals an abiding principle for the redeemed. We too were chosen by God’s grace. He provided the means of our salvation through the sacrifice of His Son. He has chosen our inheritance, preparing a place for us in heaven, declaring us His heirs and joint-heirs with Christ! We have been redeemed by Christ through the gracious provision of God.

II. The Glory in His Position (5-9) – As we conclude this song of worship by Hezekiah, it is evident that he is grateful for the current blessing he and Judah had received. He is aware of the preeminent position of the Lord. We also need to understand that these words are prophetic regarding the second coming of Christ. Consider the fact:

A. He is Risen (5) – *God is gone up with a shout, the LORD with the sound of a trumpet.* Hezekiah and Judah rejoiced that God had shown Himself mighty in their defense, defeating the enemy, and returning to the eternal abode in heaven. He had graciously visited them in their time of need, and as quickly as He came, He returned to His glorious abode.

- Surely not fully comprehending the beauty of which he spoke, we know the prophetic words of Hezekiah were fulfilled. Like God in Hezekiah's day, Jesus came to this earth to visit among men. He had not come to stay, but to defeat the enemies of sin and death. Having fulfilled God's plan of redemption, securing our salvation, Jesus rose triumphant over sin, hell, and death. He ascended back to the right hand of the Father with the promise of coming again!

B. He is Reigning (6-7) – *Sing praises to God, sing praises: sing praises unto our King, sing praises.* ^[7] *For God is the King of all the earth: sing ye praises with understanding.* Following the miraculous deliverance, Hezekiah instructed the people to sing praises unto their God and King. He reminded them of the sovereign position God held. He was the King of all the earth, reigning over all. None rivaled His power and none could unseat Him from His throne.

- Our Lord has gone away, but He has promised to return. His second coming will be much different from the first. He will come again in great power and glory. He will rule the earth with a rod of iron in righteousness. He is the sovereign King over all the earth. What have we to fear in this life or the life to come? Our Lord reigns and that will never change! Sing praises unto His glorious name!

C. He is Righteous (8) – *God reigneth over the heathen: God sitteth upon the throne of his holiness.* The people of Judah had faced a terrifying enemy. The Assyrians were very brutal and wicked. They conquered nations through sheer force, brutality, and terror. There was no concern for the well-being of others and they regarding no man or God. They may have enjoyed a season of dominance, but they were no match for the Lord. He conquered them, reigning over the heathen. God is seated upon the throne of His holiness. He is pure and righteous. There is no measure of sin or iniquity in Him. Hezekiah knew He served the true, living, righteous God.

- We live in a world tainted by the curse of sin. Wickedness and iniquity abound in our day. There seems to be no end to the depths that humanity is willing to go in order to achieve their sinful, deviant lusts. Sin and wickedness will reign upon the earth until the Lord returns. When He comes again, He will rule in complete righteousness. That is His very nature. He is holy and pure, unable to fellowship with sin. The sinful and depraved will one day bow in humble submission to the ruling, righteous King!

D. He is Returning (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.* Naturally, Hezekiah spoke of the current blessing enjoyed by Judah. When it appeared they would cease to exist, God delivered them. God defeated the enemy and allowed Judah to remain. He was a shield of protection in their time of greatest need. God was worthy of praise and exaltation.

- This word is also prophetic in nature. The people of God were scattered throughout the world. Israel had been conquered by the Assyrians. Judah was eventually conquered by the Babylonians and carried away into captivity. A remnant would return following the captivity. Eventually the Romans would destroy Jerusalem, and the people of God were cast out of the homeland. In 1948, Israel became a sovereign nation again. The Jews began their return home. One day the Lord will return to establish His Millennial Kingdom. At that time the people of God will be gathered again entirely to the land promised Abraham. Our Lord has gone away, but He is coming again! We can rest in the certain promise of eternal life with Him!

Conclusion: This psalm was written in the context of victory provided by God alone. We cannot identify with the circumstances Judah faced, but we can rejoice in the victory Christ obtained for us. He defeated the enemy and delivered us from the punishment of eternal death. I am thankful for His gracious provision in my life and rest in His preeminent position. The world continues to deny and reject the Lord, but He will come again!

Are you prepared to meet the Lord when He comes? We must make preparation in this life. Salvation by grace through faith in His finished work is our only hope. If you are yet unsaved, I urge you to respond to His offer of salvation.