

The Great King

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- [0 : 0 0] Morning all. I was smiling because we did that story last week with the kids and I don't think Caleb could last 45 seconds waiting for something that he had been promised.
- ! So the other Caleb did well, waiting for 45 years and God fulfilling his promises. And as I was just reflecting on what Pete was saying this morning, there's actually quite a lot of what we are going to think about today that is echoed in that story of Caleb and in the little series that the boys and girls are going through.
- But as we come to our passage this morning, we have, as Stuart has already alluded to, a very small but yet powerful.
- It may not appear much at first reading, but there's so much that's going to be packed in here that we will probably just scratch the surface as we look at it this morning. And I'm kind of glad that we started with a clap in this morning. I don't promise to be as charismatic as Wayne was.
- But as you can see here in our opening verse, we're encouraged to be a little bit more responsive and a little bit more demonstrative in our response to what we know and understand about God.
- [1 : 2 3] My father-in-law was here a couple of weeks ago and he said, well, I would have given a few more amens, but Brunfield is a hard crowd. So I don't know what necessarily he meant by that, but if you want to say an amen this morning, then that is completely fine.
- But before we leave today, I want to ask you two questions. And I hope that by what I'm about to say over the next half hour or so will help us to answer those questions and to feel the challenge that this chapter, this psalm is going to bring to us.
- But first, let me ask you a different question. And the question is, what were you doing on Saturday the 6th, 2023? Saturday the 6th, 2023.
- Now, as you're thinking about that, let me just tell you what I was doing. It was a beautiful day. I went up to the Cairngorms with some of my friends. In fact, it was the folks that were in the kitchen at Faskerley.
- So Bill and Donna and Marianne and Julian was there and possibly Alexei. But one other friend was there and we had a nice breakfast and we went a good walk and we paddleboarded in Lockgarten in the afternoon.
- [2 : 3 1] And then we went for a nice steak. That's what I did. And Rachel, on the other hand, was working the back shift and I'm sure not as pleasant for her. But what were you doing? Now, for those who have a good memory, you'll know what you were doing that day.
- For those of you who have a sharp mind, you probably have guessed what you were doing that day if you have thought about where we are in the Book of Psalms here.
- But I can tell some of you what you were doing that day. And that was that you were watching this gentleman here being crowned as King Charles III. And that was on the 6th of May, 2023.

I might have misspoke a wee minute ago and said March, but I meant May. 6th of May, 2023, this chap before us was crowned and there was a coronation. And as I say, I wasn't there.

I didn't watch it. I didn't even watch it afterwards. So I'm not a very good subject in the King's Kingdom, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. But I'm going to take a guess and say that on that day, the majority of kings and queens and heads of nation states would have been there in person or watching on TV.

[3 : 46] And in fact, if you believe the reports, then it says up to 400 million people, which is pretty crazy when you think there's only about 80 million people in Britain. But 400 million people would have watched that live.

And since that time, maybe up to two billions, a quarter of the planet, we have witnessed the crowning of our king here in the United Kingdom. And I'm sure that that coronation might have brought much joy to some people and happiness.

And as an expression of that, then the likelihood would have been there'd be a lot of clapping. But I don't know because I didn't watch it, but I'm going to take a good guess at that this morning. So now our psalm starts in a similar vein this morning.

And I'm going to have to assume that I'm hoping that most people here have a little bit of Bible knowledge. I'll try and make this easy for us to understand because I'm aware that we don't spend a huge amount of time in the Old Testament.

And sometimes the chronological history of the Old Testament can get a little bit mixed up, especially if we're going to take a stab at who wrote this psalm this morning. But it starts in a similar vein.

[4 : 58] And Israel is inviting all the peoples to clap and to sing and to shout with joyful applause. But in stark contrast to what we see in King Charles, the second verse tells us, For he is a great king over the whole earth and one that we should reverence.

Not only is there a universal summons, so not just two billion people, but there's a universal summons in this, that clap your hands, all peoples, and shout to God with loud songs of joy.

For the Lord, the Most High, is to be feared, a great king over all the earth. So not just a universal summons, an invitation to praise and to worship God, but there's a universal reign, a universal sovereignty over the whole earth.

So unlike, as I say, unlike Charles, where some people might say he's like Marmite, you might love him or hate him. And he certainly has a very diminished reign in the United Kingdom and certainly across the world in our day and age.

Well, the psalms is, the cis psalm is completely different. This psalm is about a great king seated on his throne and the praise and the worship that is due to him.

[6 : 17] Now, interestingly, we sang, Behold our God seated on his throne. Come, let us adore him. Behold our king. Nothing can compare. Come, let us adore him.

And you'd be forgiven if you mistook us for the nation of Israel, witnessing God's great hand in victory and over the mighty enemy and the people coming to sing praises to him.

Now, what I want to do this morning is just start with some simple observations from this chapter. And despite regularly being asked to keep your Bibles open and then never looking at them, we are going to look at it this morning.

I want you to cast your eye in this chapter 47. So keep your Bibles open and we're going to have a look at that today. Now, just as I was, it might have been late last night, I was having a little flick through the reels to my shame.

And there was a little reel that came up from Keswick Convention. And the lady that was interviewed said that she was really reminded that God is the God of the past, the present and the future.

[7 : 18] He's the same yesterday and today and forever. And in this psalm that we are going to look at this morning, we are going to have a little think about the past. We're going to have a think about the present and we're going to have a think about the future.

But let's just have a look at these, the psalm itself and just observe. And it's on the screen for anybody that's taking notes, but hopefully this will help you just to work out what the psalm is all about, because there's a lot of repetition in the psalm.

And we see there in verses one and two that there's an encouragement for us to praise God. First of all, we see that there's this rejoicing, loud songs of joy, and it's a universal invitation to all people to come and to praise.

And the reason for that, as we see in verse two, is that he is a king over all the earth, a great king. And it's a universal sovereignty. So we see this encouragement to praise.

Then we see in verses three and four, a display of power. God is the king in this. Sam is subduing the people under us and the nations under our feet, choosing a heritage for us, which is the pride of Jacob, whom he loves.

[8 : 28] And we see in this a sort of restoration of Israel. Now, we'll see that in the past, and we'll also have a think about what that means for the future. And then we see this exaltation.

Now, I'm going to use that word, exaltation of God. If you don't know what that means, it just simply means the elevation that God is elevated. And we see there that God has gone up with a shout, the Lord with the sound of a trumpet.

And there's an exaltation, an elevation of God. And this refers to him ascending to a royal throne. The idea here is that the great king has taken his throne and therefore receives the shout of praise as he does so.

And then we always have this repetition. We've got another encouragement to praise. You'll see that, an invitation to sing praises to God, to sing praises, sing praises to our king, sing praises.

And the reason for God is the king of all the earth. And then again, we've got a second invitation or a third invitation to sing praises with a psalm.

[9 : 31] And we're told again, the reason for that, because God reigns over the nations and he sits on his holy throne. And then in verse 9, we see this allegiance, this display of allegiance.

And you see there all of the heads of states, all of the kings, all of the, if you read the King James, obviously the shields you might have in your Bible, princes.

I have in my Bible shields. And I forget what Stuart read in the NIV. But this is a display of the Gentiles coming and showing allegiance to the king who is on the throne.

It's this invitation that Israel has given to the Gentiles to come. And we see there that they are also gathered as the people of the God of Abraham are gathered alongside them. And they are there before the king.

And then lastly, we have that exaltation again, where it says this, he is highly exalted. He has been lifted up. He is elevated. Now, this poem is obviously being penned by somebody who has witnessed the display of God's sovereign power.

[10 : 45] And if we spend any time pondering this, then it could be any, it could be one or two people that we come to. Now, in our chapter here, we see that God has subdued the people.

So this is not something that the Judah or Israel have done on their own accord. They've gone out and won a mighty battle. It's very much something that the Lord has done for them. And it might have been after a victory like we see in 2 Chronicles 20, when the Moabites and the Ammonites and the great multitude that came from Syria came up against Jehoshaphat the king, and they were defeated without a battle.

It could be David that penned this. If you read Charles Spurgeon, then he thinks that David might have penned the psalm, and that could have been after the defeat of the Philistines and that story that we recite about Goliath.

Or it may have been, as I think it was, when the Assyrians under the king Sennacherib were camped out against Judah during the reign of King Hezekiah. And the army was besieged in Jerusalem, as we read about in 2 Kings 19.

And the angel of the Lord smote 185,000 of the Assyrian army while they slept. And that was in the days of King Hezekiah.

[12 : 04] So I think, and I think it's probable, that Hezekiah wrote this psalm, along with 46 and 48. These are a little trilogy of psalms that are often sung together. And I also think he might have penned 45, but let's not get distracted by that.

But in between these two great kings that we thought about, David and King Hezekiah, all of the psalms were pretty much penned in that three, not exclusively, but in general, all of the psalms were penned in that 300-year reign.

So somewhere between David and Hezekiah. And it's written, as we see at the top of our psalm there, it says to the choir master, a psalm of the sons of Korah. It's written to the sons of Korah to sing.

And as you know, the sons of Korah, as you read about, have come through the Levitical line. So that means that they have the honor of serving in the temple. And they played a significant role in the worship, in the music, in the praises.

They served as gatekeepers and custodians, and more importantly, as the choir. And this is a song that's been written to them to sing. And then, in addition to this, the Hissabrooks would tell us that the Jewish people still sing that today, especially on Rosh Hashanah, which is the Jewish New Year.

[13 : 16] And that is just a reminder to them that God is on his eternal throne. But there's no doubt about it, even though that we see that there's a historical context to this.

It has been penned after one of these mighty victories of God, that there's a prophetic aspect in mind with the ascension of the Messiah to his throne.

And as he does so, he celebrates his reign over the whole earth. Now, as we know, that hasn't happened. So it's something that is going to happen in the future.

It's a prophecy that is still to be fulfilled at the second coming of the Lord Jesus. But Jesus, we've thought about the past, and we've kind of thought about what's going to happen in the future.

Not in great detail, and we'll maybe get into some more of that in a little bit. But Jesus reigns today. And not in the way that we see as a physical throne here, but he reigns in the lives of those of us who are willing to submit to him.

[14 : 14] Those of us who have accepted him as Lord and Saviour. And his rule is a spiritual kingdom. You know, we're told that the world lies in the lap of the wicked one, and we are in no doubt as we look across our land of that this morning.

But when he, that is Christ, the Messiah, when he comes to set up his kingdom on this earth, and to rule in righteousness, the rule, he will rule the whole earth.

There's no earthly king that is doing that today. But when he comes, he will rule the whole earth. And he will subdue the nations that rage against him and his people. And the Bible tells us that he will rule with an iron rod.

He will defeat the people that come up against us. In fact, in Psalm 2, it says this, As for me, I have set my king on Zion, my holy hill, I will tell of the decree the Lord said to me, You are my son.

Today I have begotten you. Ask of me, and I will make the nations your heritage, and the ends of the earth your possession. You shall break them with an iron rod, and dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel.

[15 : 17] And we're in no doubt that this is referring to the Lord Jesus, because it tells us that in Hebrews chapter 1, as we thought about when Wayne was speaking a fortnight ago. But what does this psalm have for us today?

You know, as we saw in our study in Psalm 46 last week, there are some practical and some spiritual lessons for us today. You know, we saw the elevation of God as their king in a historical setting, in this poetic form that we have before us.

And it has, with a view of the Messiah, who despite being rejected by the Jews, they said, we will not have this to reign over us, and they rejected him. Despite being rejected by the Jews at his first coming, his first advent, he will fulfill that literally in the future.

That is what the Jews are waiting for. They're waiting for a king to come and to set up his throne and to set up his kingdom. And he will be elevated on a reigning throne in Jerusalem, on that holy Mount of Zion.

And as we've seen in our little passage here, not only will the people of the God of Abraham be there, but the nations will be there as well as the people, as the nation tells the Gentiles, invites them to come and to sing praises to God for all that he has done and for all that he is going to do.

[16 : 41] But for now, as Craig puts it last week, we're in the bit in the middle. I think he referenced that a few times. Well, that is the church age. That is what we know as the church age, a day of God's grace to all men, a day in which all who call upon the Lord will be saved.

Even though there's an invitation here in the future to all men to come and to see the Lord, there's an invitation for us today. And that invitation is extended to us because Christ died upon a cross.

He took the punishment for your sin and for mine. And he invites us to trust him this morning. Paul pens in Romans, he says, to confess with our mouths that he is the Lord Jesus and to believe in our hearts that he was resurrected from the grave by God, our Father.

And he's ascended. He's gone up. He's been elevated. And again, as a Hebrew writer would tell us that he is seated at the right hand of the majesty on high and he is interceding for his people.

You know, he promises those who trust him salvation. He promises them sanctification. And if we submit to him and we allow him to rule in our hearts, then God has a list of promises for us.

[17 : 56] And just as the nation are waiting for the fulfillment of the promises that God has given to them, as God's people in this church age, there is promises that God has given to us that some of them will be partly witnessed and seen and experienced by us, like we have seen as a parallel to what the nation saw as God defeated enemies in those days.

Like the promises that we're going to think about here, we can experience somewhat of them today, but there'll be a full, there'll be a full fulfilling of them in the future. And God promises us salvation to all who believe in his son.

We read about that in Romans chapter one. And there's no greater blessing for us than the blessing of salvation. He promises that all things will work out for good for his children.

Again, that's something that Paul writes in Romans. And I know that could be slightly difficult and a lot of people go through very tough times. Both spiritually and physically and emotionally.

But this is a view of the broader picture that keeps us from being dismayed at our present circumstances. You know, he promises us comfort in our trials. You know, again, that most of these promises come through what Paul has written to us in his letters.

[19 : 11] In 2 Corinthians 5, he promises us new life in Christ. Salvation is the beginning of a brand new existence. He promises, again, when we come to Ephesians, every spiritual blessing in Christ.

You know, whereas the Old Testament, Israel had the promise of physical blessings, the church today has been promised spiritual blessings in the heavenly realms. And as Ian reminded us in the breaking of bread last week, in 1 Peter in chapter one, our inheritance is reserved for us.

God promised to finish the work that he starts in us in Philippians in chapter one. You know, God doesn't do anything by half measures. He doesn't just half save us as we've thought about. In fact, I think Jamie McEldin maybe mentioned this when we're in Fascal.

Not only has he justified us in salvation and he is sanctifying us, that is, he is cleansing us, he is purifying us and one day that he will, it glorifies us.

What he has started, he will complete and that is a promise for each and every believer for the future. And he's also promised, just the last one in Philippians in chapter four, he's promised that when we pray that he will grant us peace.

[20 : 26] You know, his peace is our protection. It will guard our hearts and our minds in Christ. And because of all of this, then we should sing his praises. We should worship God.

You know, there's a time and a place for emotions. And as I say, you know, or as Jim said, you know, we might be a tough crowd at Brunsfield, but there's a time and a place for emotions.

Last week, we were thinking about in Psalm 46, be still and know that I am God. And we were thinking about the trials and the tribulations that were happening at this time.

But today, there's an invitation to clap and to shout and to be joyful. Now, when it comes to the gospel, we're actually reminded to be ready in every season and at every turn and every emotion to give an account of the hope that is within us.

The hope of that God will carry out what he has promised us. You know, we should preach the gospel even when we don't feel like it. For God is a mighty God.

[21 : 30] In all that we do and all that we say, we should live lives that worship him. You know, it brings me back to verse 7 in this chapter, if you want to have a look at it.

In verse 7, it says, Sing ye praises with a psalm or a maschal. Now, or as the King James puts it, with understanding or instruction.

Now, a maschal is a psalm that is didactic. It means that it is meant to teach us something or it's contemplative in its nature and it's suggesting that the psalm is intended to impart some kind of wisdom or instruction.

And we are encouraged here to sing praises with a psalm or a maschal or with understanding. The idea here is that when we praise God and we worship him, we do so with the knowledge of what God has already performed as a proof of the promise that he can and will deliver what he has promised us.

Now, for the nation of Israel, as they sing this every year at their New Year Day festival, they are looking forward to a time where there will be a physical blessing for him.

[22 : 40] But for us, we know that God will carry out the promises that we have thought about about our salvation and our sanctification and one day that we will go to be with him and as we've thought about already this morning in the breaking of bread that we will be like him for we will see him as he is.

You know, Paul, I think, sums this up in 1 Corinthians 14 and in verse 15 it says this, What am I to do? I will pray with my spirit and I will pray with my mind also.

I will sing with my spirit but I will sing with my mind also. And I wanted to leave you with a quote from John MacArthur this morning.

I'm sure that many of you will know that he has been called home to be with the Lord this week and he says this, he is doing, he's doing a series in John and he's talking about worship and he references the phrase that we have here in Psalm 47 and it says, Sing ye praises with understanding.

Sing ye praises with understanding. All worship must be based on truth. Worship is not simply holding hands and swaying back and forward or having ecstatic experiences, having experiences that have no meaning or content.

[23 : 52] No, that is not worship. You know, worship is not even a good feeling as good as good feelings are. Worship is an expression of praises from the depth of the heart towards God who is understood as he is truly revealed.

Sing ye praises with understanding. And, you know, not only should we worship God for his sovereign rule, but we should worship him for keeping all of his promises and in doing so we should think about what we are praising God for.

It's easy to come and sing the words on the screen on a Sunday morning but are they from our heart? Is it from a response of what God has done for us? Each and every one of us here, if he's saved us, if he has strengthened us, if he's comforted us this week and we come as an act of worship.

You know, when we come and we break bread on a Sunday morning, we're not really telling God anything new. We're offering to him worship that we have taken from his scripture, the things that we have learned about the Lord Jesus that has been revealed to us in his word.

And yes, we experience them in our walk with the Lord, in the day-to-day living and in the good times and the bad. But really, if we're going to know who God is, what he's done, what he will do for us in the future, we come back to scripture and we learn from it.

[25 : 12] And when we come to remember the Lord Jesus on a Sunday morning upstairs, we give back to God what he has given us. In fact, a slight tangent here, but David this morning talked about the loaves and the fishes that were brought to the Lord Jesus and he multiplied them.

Well, ultimately, that provision that was given back to God was only a provision that he had given in the first place. And that is what we do when we come to worship the Lord Jesus, to sing praises to him.

And when we really see that our egos, that our stature, how big we think about ourselves, all we're really doing is coming back to worship him and praise him for who he is and what he has done and everything that he has given us in his provision.

So in conclusion to our psalm this morning, there is a king that is coming and he will set up a kingdom and he will reign in that kingdom for a thousand years. You know, Psalm 47 is not just a piece of ancient poetry.

It's also a prophecy. In fact, the whole of the Old Testament is really a prophecy when you start to dig into it. This psalm looks forward to a day when every tribe and every tongue and every nation will bow before the king of all the earth.

[26 : 26] But until then, what should we do? We should wait and we should worship and we should witness to those who are without. Now, at the beginning I said I wanted to leave you with two questions this morning and the two questions are this.

Do I live like Jesus has sovereign reign in my life? One day he's going to reign this whole earth and yet we think we are going to keep back a little bit of our lives for ourselves.

Have we surrendered our all to him for all that he has done for us? Do I live like Jesus has sovereign reign in my life? That's a question I want you to take away and ponder this week as you reread this psalm.

And then this last question that I've got for you is this. Is my worship joyful? Is it scriptural? Is it expectant that God will fulfil the promises that he has given to us?

Shall we pray? Our Heavenly Father we come before you this morning and we thank you that you are a good God. We thank you that you are a great God and in your love and in your care and in your provision for us our Father we thank you that you have offered us salvation through your son the Lord Jesus.

[27 : 41] Our Father as we come to worship and to praise you this morning we come because of all that Jesus has done. Our Father we thank you that he has saved us that he has redeemed us that he has put a new song in our mouths that he has given us a hope that we will one day go to be with him and to be like him and our Father we come this morning to say thank you for all that you have blessed us with and given us in the Lord Jesus.

Our Father we just ask that as we have thought about this psalm this morning that you will grant us ears to hear that you will grant us understanding and as we come to worship and to praise you in the week and the weeks that lie ahead our Father we just pray that we might see something of your beauty and of your majesty as we see you high and lifted up and so our Father we thank you for this time that we've had this morning and we just pray that you will bless us now for we ask these things giving thanks in Jesus name Amen
Amen