

God's Rule Over the Nations and the People of Abraham:
An Exposition of Psalm 47
by Ward Fenley

Psalm 47 addresses the New Covenant kingdom with specific references to the nations, or Gentiles. During the time of Christ it was evident the Jews were consumed with the thought of Messiah conquering Rome. Their idea of the kingdom was outward and involved a physical dominion by the Jews over the Gentiles. Jesus made sure Pilate and the Jews understood He had not come to conquer Rome: "My kingdom is not of this world." Paul wrote of the Colossians having been "delivered from the power of darkness and translated into the Kingdom of His dear Son." (Colossians 1:13). Paul understood the work of Christ was for this purpose in the next verse: "In whom we have redemption through His blood, even the forgiveness of sins." But what is key in Paul's theology concerning the nations is that the nations were previously alienated from the life of God and any promises to the Israelites:

Ephesians 2:11-14 Wherefore remember, that once ye, the Gentiles in the flesh, who are called Uncircumcision by that which is called Circumcision, in the flesh, made by hands; 12 that ye were at that time separate from Christ, alienated from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of the promise, having no hope and without God in the world. 13 But now in Christ Jesus ye that once were far off are made nigh in the blood of Christ. 14 For he is our peace, who made both one, and brake down the middle wall of partition..."

Somehow in God's unique plan of redemption He included the Gentiles. But Paul refers to this inclusion as a mystery that was previously kept hidden:

Ephesians 3:1-6 For this cause I Paul, the prisoner of Christ Jesus in behalf of you Gentiles,-- 2 if so be that ye have heard of the dispensation of that grace of God which was given me to you-ward; 3 how that by revelation was made known unto me the mystery, as I wrote before in few words, 4 whereby, when ye read, ye can perceive my understanding in the mystery of Christ; 5 which in other generations was not made known unto the sons of men, as it hath now been revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets in the Spirit; 6 [to wit], that the Gentiles are fellow-heirs, and fellow-members of the body, and fellow-partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel,

It is curious that though Paul was the minister to the Gentiles (Acts 9:15; Galatians 2:9), he never makes reference to a future day when God would cause the Jews to have physical dominion over the Gentiles. Yet the Old Testament prophecies of the Messianic kingdom are filled with this concept. It must be contended, therefore, that for Paul, the Gentiles coming to faith in the God of Israel was the fulfillment of all of those prophecies concerning the Jews having dominion over them. Paul cites passages to confirm that he was to be a light to the Gentiles:

Acts 13:47 For so hath the Lord commanded us, [saying], I have set thee for a light of the Gentiles, That thou shouldest be for salvation unto the uttermost part of the earth.

In Romans Paul quotes Isaiah 11 as being fulfilled through the Gospel:

Romans 15:8-12 For I say that Christ hath been made a minister of the circumcision for the truth of God, that he might confirm the promises [given] unto the fathers, 9 and that the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy; as it is written, Therefore will I give praise unto thee among the Gentiles, And sing unto thy name. 10 And again he saith, Rejoice, ye Gentiles, with his people. 11 And again, Praise the Lord, all ye Gentiles; And let all the peoples praise him. 12 And again, Isaiah saith, There shall be the root of Jesse, And he that ariseth to rule over the Gentiles; On him shall the Gentiles hope.

Paul declares the "rule" of the Root of Jesse over the Gentiles is fulfilled through the truth of God. He also confirms this rule is the reason the Gentiles are praising the Lord, and glorifying Him for His mercy. Such a *rule*

2 Corinthians 10:4 (for the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh, but mighty before God to the casting down of strongholds),

Of course Paul declared the power of God in the Gospel: was foreign to the Jews, and of course to Pilate. The Jews tried to take Jesus by force (John 6:15). Jesus had to explain to Pilate: "If My kingdom were of this world, My servants would fight." (John 18:36). This would seem to harmonize well with Paul's exhortation to the Corinthians:

Romans 1:16 For I am not ashamed of the gospel: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.

The Psalmist predicted that through this *power* God's enemies would submit themselves to Him:

Psalms 66:3-4 Say unto God, How terrible are thy works! Through the greatness of thy power shall thine enemies submit themselves unto thee. 4 All the earth shall worship thee, And shall sing unto thee; They shall sing to thy name.

Paul seems to conclude that the Gospel fulfills this rule or victory over the Gentiles. We know that the Gospel went first to the Jew first and then to the Greeks (Gentiles). But we must understand it went to the Jew first. The Gentiles were simply following after the God of the Jews in order to fulfill prophecy:

Zechariah 8:23 Thus saith Jehovah of hosts: In those days [it shall come to pass], that ten men shall take hold, out of all the languages of the nations, they shall take hold of the skirt of him that is a Jew, saying, We will go with you, for we have heard that God is with you.

So, it is within this framework that we approach Psalm 47. Paul enlightens us concerning the nature of this fulfillment. Therefore, upon examination of Psalm 47 we find it is a passage which has been fulfilled through the preaching of the Gospel instead of the ever-so-popular view that this would be fulfilled during a literal millennium in our future. Here is the passage in its context:

Psalms 47:1-9 For the Chief Musician. A Psalm of the sons of Korah. Oh clap your hands, all ye peoples; Shout unto God with the voice of triumph. 2 For Jehovah Most High is terrible; He is a great King over all the earth. 3 He subdueth peoples under us, And nations under our feet. 4 He chooseth our inheritance for us, The glory of Jacob whom he loved. 5 ¶ God is gone up with a shout, Jehovah with the sound of a trumpet. 6 Sing praise 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. 8 God reigneth over the nations: God sitteth upon his holy throne. 9 The princes of the peoples are gathered together [To be] the people of the God of Abraham: For the shields of the earth belong unto God; He is greatly exalted.

We must note that this Psalm is prophetic in nature though its language may suggest it was fulfilled at the time of its writing. However, this is not problematic, especially when we consider other passages which appear to have been fulfilled during the time of David but are said to be fulfilled in Christ:

Psalms 22:16-18 For dogs have compassed me: A company of evil-doers have inclosed me; They pierced my hands and my feet. 17 I may count all my bones; They look and stare upon me. 18 They part my garments among them, And upon my vesture do they cast lots."

Most Christians agree this is referring to Christ. We should also be aware that many other Psalms refer to Christ and His kingdom rather than the period during which those Psalms were written.

Psalm 47 is a Messianic Psalm. As a result of the Messiah coming the people of God are encouraged to praise Him and shout with a voice of triumph. Under the Old Testament economy the Israelites were rarely victorious. We see the victories of Joshua and a few victories during the reign of the kings, but that was gone by 586 B.C. Samaria and the northern kingdom were taken in 721 B.C. by the Assyrians. Then when the Babylonians came to power they usurped the southern kingdom and Jerusalem. Though they returned from exile, they would be dominated through the Medo-Persians, the Grecians, and the Romans until the time of Christ. So there was no real triumph, choosing of their inheritance, or God reigning over the Gentiles. Yet, again, Paul says that through the Gospel God was ruling over the Gentiles. Paul speaks of the triumph as well:

2 Corinthians 2:14-15 But thanks be unto God, who always leadeth us in triumph in Christ, and maketh manifest through us the savor of his knowledge in every place. 15 For we are a sweet savor of Christ unto God, in them that are saved, and in them that perish;

The triumph is "in Christ." According to Paul there is victory whether people are saved or whether they perish. This seems to be a thorough victory. We must also ask the question: If the prophecy in Psalm 47 was fulfilled at that time, and the nations were literally subdued by the Israelites, then is this triumph of which Paul speaks greater or lesser than the previous fulfillment? In other words, could any literal triumph over physical nations be superior to an inward triumph over the hearts of people? Furthermore, would it not seem somewhat anticlimactic to have this, the

greatest of all triumphs, fulfilled in Christ, and then hope for something future that is clearly inferior? We must conclude that the victory of the Gospel of Christ, the word of God, is the climax of God's reigning power over the Gentiles. Through this power the victory is accomplished. Fulfillment of the subduing of the Gentiles has transpired and is ongoing through the preaching of the everlasting Gospel:

Revelation 14:6 And I saw another angel flying in mid heaven, having eternal good tidings to proclaim unto them that dwell on the earth, and unto every nation and tribe and tongue and people;

Paul and John agree concerning the power of this Gospel to wage war and gain victory:

Revelation 11:15 And the seventh angel sounded; and there followed great voices in heaven, and they said, The kingdom of the world is become [the kingdom] of our Lord, and of his Christ: and he shall reign for ever and ever.

Through the Gospel the nations are subdued and brought into subjection to Christ. The kingdoms of the world are the kingdoms of Christ. It is a kingdom of the heart. We remember that Paul said we have been "delivered from the power of darkness and translated into the kingdom of His dear Son." This is a powerful passage and hard to swallow for those who maintain the kingdom of Christ has not been fulfilled and we are not living in that kingdom.

Both John and Jesus frequently taught the kingdom was "at hand." Throughout the New Testament Scriptures Paul and John speak of this kingdom. The *word* or *Gospel* is the power which brings one into the kingdom. From the very beginning we are told, "Man does not live by bread alone but by every *word that proceeds out of the mouth* of the Lord." (Matthew 4:4). Therefore, when the writer of Hebrews speaks of the word of God being sharper than a two-edged sword (Hebrews 4:12), and when the Psalmist speaks of God's people executing vengeance and judgment with a two-edged sword:

Psalms 149:6-9 [Let] the high praises of God [be] in their mouth, And a two-edged sword in their hand; 7 To execute vengeance upon the nations, And punishments upon the peoples; 8 To bind their kings with chains, And their nobles with fetters of iron; 9 To execute upon them the judgment written: This honor have all his saints. Praise ye Jehovah.

...and when John writes of the nations being slain with the sword which *proceeds out of the mouth of the Lamb*:

Revelation 19:13-15 And he [is] arrayed in a garment sprinkled with blood: and his name is called The Word of God. 14 And the armies which are in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white [and] pure. 15 And out of his mouth proceedeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness of the wrath of God, the Almighty.

...we realize that we are not dealing with a physical victory but rather a victory which

is accomplished through the power of the Gospel. This is why it is called "the Gospel of the kingdom":

Matthew 4:23 And Jesus went about in all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all manner of disease and all manner of sickness among the people.

It is this Gospel that brings believers into the kingdom of God. Again, Paul exclaims:

Romans 1:16 For I am not ashamed of the gospel: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek."

Paul says the Gospel is the power of God. If Paul is consistent, we must conclude that the Gospel is Christ, for Paul also calls Christ *the power of God*:

1 Corinthians 1:23-24 but we preach Christ crucified, unto Jews a stumblingblock, and unto Gentiles foolishness; 24 but unto them that are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God.

Paul tells the Corinthians that he and they preach Christ (preach the Gospel) who is the power of God ("I am not ashamed of the Gospel (of Christ), for it is the power of God unto salvation.")

Ephesians 6:19 And on my behalf, that utterance may be given unto me in opening my mouth, to make known with boldness the mystery of the gospel,

The making known the mystery of the Gospel was Paul preaching Christ to the Gentiles and that through the power of Christ (the Gospel) the Gentiles were brought under the subjection of the message preached by the Jews. This is why it was prophesied the nations would take hold of the skirt of him that is a Jew and say "We will follow you, for we have heard that God is with you (Zechariah 8:23). Continuing in Psalm 47, the prophecy not only declares the Gentiles would fall under the rule of the Gospel, but it also says God would choose the inheritance for the Israelites:

Psalms 47:4 He chooseth our inheritance for us, The glory of Jacob whom he loved.

Again, what inheritance did the Israelites receive while under the dominion of the Gentiles? The passage is clearly teaching the inheritance would be given to the Israelites when the Gentiles would be subdued. We must answer the question: What, or Who, is the inheritance?

From the very beginning God promised:

Genesis 15:1 After these things the word of Jehovah came unto Abram in a vision, saying, Fear not, Abram: I am thy shield, [and] thy exceeding great reward.

The Israelites were used to any *inheritance* referring to land. When one studies the significance of Christ, however, it is evident that the phrase 'in Christ' is the New Testament equivalent of the Old Testament's 'in the land.' This is why we have many

references in the New Testament of dwelling in Christ or being in Christ. "If any man be *in Christ*, he is a new creation." The writer of Hebrews clarifies any misunderstanding first-century Jews may have had concerning the inheritance when he speaks forcefully concerning that for which Abraham longed:

Hebrews 11:8-16 By faith Abraham, when he was called, obeyed to go out unto a place which he was to receive for an inheritance; and he went out, not knowing whither he went. 9 By faith he became a sojourner in the land of promise, as in a [land] not his own, dwelling in tents, with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise: 10 for he looked for the city which hath the foundations, whose builder and maker is God. 11 By faith even Sarah herself received power to conceive seed when she was past age, since she counted him faithful who had promised: 12 wherefore also there sprang of one, and him as good as dead, [so many] as the stars of heaven in multitude, and as the sand, which is by the sea-shore, innumerable. 13 These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them and greeted them from afar, and having confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. 14 For they that say such things make it manifest that they are seeking after a country of their own. 15 And if indeed they had been mindful of that [country] from which they went out, they would have had opportunity to return. 16 But now they desire a better [country], that is, a heavenly: wherefore God is not ashamed of them, to be called their God; for he hath prepared for them a city.

This city or country represents the inheritance. Now, the writer of Hebrews remains consistent with his perspective of the inheritance:

Hebrews 9:15 And for this cause he is the mediator of a new covenant, that a death having taken place for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first covenant, they that have been called may receive the promise of the eternal inheritance.

The writer wants to express that whatever the inheritance is, it is accomplished through the redemption Christ brought about through His death. But this particular context is revealing:

Hebrews 9:11-17 But Christ having come a high priest of the good things to come, through the greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this creation, 12 nor yet through the blood of goats and calves, but through his own blood, entered in once for all into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption. 13 For if the blood of goats and bulls, and the ashes of a heifer sprinkling them that have been defiled, sanctify unto the cleanness of the flesh: 14 how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without blemish unto God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God? 15 And for this cause he is the mediator of a new covenant, that a death having taken place for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first covenant, they that have been called may receive the promise of the eternal inheritance. 16 For where a testament is, there must of necessity be the death of him that made it. 17 For a testament is of force where there hath been death: for it doth never avail while he that made it liveth.

An inheritance is gained through the death of the Testator, or will writer. There is no

inheritance while the will writer remains alive. Therefore, if Jesus has died and the people of God have not received the eternal inheritance, then God has not made good on His promise. The passage clearly teaches, "a testament is of force (goes into effect) where there has been death). If there has been no effect, then Christ died in vain. The enormity of the problem of eschatology which thrusts an imaginary kingdom or eternal inheritance 2000 years into the future of Paul and the first-century Christians must not be minimized. To say the inheritance promised to Abraham has not been fulfilled is, in essence, to deny the power of the cross. To deny the power of the cross is to deny the Gospel. But what does Paul say:

Colossians 1:12-13 giving thanks unto the Father, who made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light; 13 who delivered us out of the power of darkness, and translated us into the kingdom of the Son of his love;

In Galatians Paul refutes the idea that the inheritance would be gained through circumcision. But he plainly declares it is received through faith. Paul uses "promise," "promises," and "inheritance" interchangeably (and states this inheritance would come to Jews as well as Gentiles):

Galatians 3:8- 9 And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel beforehand unto Abraham, [saying,] In thee shall all the nations be blessed. 9 So then they that are of faith are blessed with the faithful Abraham.

Galatians 3:14 that upon the Gentiles might come the blessing of Abraham in Christ Jesus; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.

We are reminded of Psalm 47:

"The princes of the peoples are gathered together [To be] the people of the God of Abraham: For the shields of the earth belong unto God; He is greatly exalted."
(Psalms 47:9 ASV)

Paul expresses clearly that through faith we are the people of Abraham:

Galatians 3:16-29 Now to Abraham were the promises spoken, and to his seed. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ. 17 Now this I say: A covenant confirmed beforehand by God, the law, which came four hundred and thirty years after, doth not disannul, so as to make the promise of none effect. 18 For if the inheritance is of the law, it is no more of promise: but God hath granted it to Abraham by promise. 19 What then is the law? It was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise hath been made; *and it was* ordained through angels by the hand of a mediator. 20 Now a mediator is not *a mediator* of one; but God is one. 21 Is the law then against the promises of God? God forbid: for if there had been a law given which could make alive, verily righteousness would have been of the law. 22 But the scriptures shut up all things under sin, that the promise by faith in Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe. 23 But before faith came, we were kept in ward under the law, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed. 24 So that the law is become our tutor *to bring us* unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith. 25 But now that

faith is come, we are no longer under a tutor. 26 For ye are all sons of God, through faith, in Christ Jesus. 27 For as many of you as were baptized into Christ did put on Christ. 28 There can be neither Jew nor Greek, there can be neither bond nor free, there can be no male and female; for ye all are one *man* in Christ Jesus. 29 And if ye are Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, heirs according to promise.

Paul speaks of this same concept to the Romans:

Romans 4:8-16 Blessed *is* the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin. 9 *Cometh* this blessedness then upon the circumcision *only*, or upon the uncircumcision also? for we say that faith was reckoned to Abraham for righteousness. 10 How was it then reckoned? when he was in circumcision, or in uncircumcision? Not in circumcision, but in uncircumcision. 11 And he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which *he had yet* being uncircumcised: that he might be the father of all them that believe, though they be not circumcised; that righteousness might be imputed unto them also: 12 And the father of circumcision to them who are not of the circumcision only, but who also walk in the steps of that faith of our father Abraham, which *he had being yet* uncircumcised. 13 For the promise, that he should be the heir of the world, *was* not to Abraham, or to his seed, through the law, but through the righteousness of faith. 14 For if they which are of the law *be* heirs, faith is made void, and the promise made of none effect: 15 Because the law worketh wrath: for where no law is, *there is* no transgression. 16 Therefore *it is* of faith, that *it might be* by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed; not to that only which is of the law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham; who is the father of us all,

This blessing or fulfilling of the promises made to Abraham are exactly that, according to Paul—fulfilled. This is why Paul and the Psalmist associate *gathering* with being Abraham's people. It is through faith in Jesus Christ that this takes place. This is why Paul says "we are all one in Christ Jesus." That is, we have been gathered together. There is no distinction. The middle wall of partition has been broken down and we are brought together through the blood of Christ.

Paul continues this theme and associates the receiving of the inheritance with the translation into the kingdom of Jesus Christ. Perhaps Paul's most powerful testimony of the accomplishment of this inheritance is found in the book of Ephesians:

Ephesians 1:3-12 Blessed [be] the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly [places] in Christ: 4 even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blemish before him in love: 5 having foreordained us unto adoption as sons through Jesus Christ unto himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, 6 to the praise of the glory of his grace, which he freely bestowed on us in the Beloved: 7 in whom we have our redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace, 8 which he made to abound toward us in all wisdom and prudence, 9 making known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he purposed in him 10 unto a dispensation of the fulness of the times, to sum up all things in Christ, the things in the heavens, and the things upon the earth; in him, [I say,] 11 in whom also we were made a heritage, having been foreordained according to the purpose of him who worketh all

things after the counsel of his will; 12 to the end that we should be unto the praise of his glory, we who had before hoped in Christ:

Ephesians 1:3-12 Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly *places* in Christ: 4 According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: 5 Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, 6 To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved. 7 In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace; 8 Wherein he hath abounded toward us in all wisdom and prudence; 9 Having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself: 10 That in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; *even* in him: 11 In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will: 12 That we should be to the praise of his glory, who first trusted in Christ:

This was such a profound blessing on the people of God (and of course a reality), that Paul prayed earnestly:

Ephesians 1:15-23 Wherefore I also, after I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus, and love unto all the saints, 16 Cease not to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers; 17 That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him: 18 The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints, 19 And what *is* the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, 20 Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set *him* at his own right hand in the heavenly *places*, 21 Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age, but also in that which is to come: 22 And hath put all *things* under his feet, and gave him *to be* the head over all *things*

Paul links this inheritance with the victory of Christ in verse 22. As the first-century believers were making their transition from the Old Covenant age to the New Covenant age, Paul assured them this inheritance was real. Though the completion of its development at the destruction of the Old aeon ("world"), the inheritance would be effectual for the remnant of unbelieving Jews who were ordained to believe before the dissolution of the Jewish economy: to the church, 23 Which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all.

Romans 11:5 Even so then *at this present time* also there is a remnant according to the election of grace."

The words *at this present time* are italicized to emphasize it was *at that present time* during which Paul and the first-century church were awaiting the last of God's elect Jews to believe before Christ would come to destroy them and their city and temple.

At the time of the destruction of the Temple the people of God would then know the last of the elect Jews had believed and they all had crossed completely into the holiest of all:

Hebrews 9:6-10 the Holy Spirit this signifying, that the way into the holy place hath not yet been made manifest, while the first tabernacle is yet standing; 9 which [is] a figure for the time present; according to which are offered both gifts and sacrifices that cannot, as touching the conscience, make the worshipper perfect, 10 [being] only (with meats and drinks and divers washings) carnal ordinances, imposed until a time of reformation.

Many students of the Bible do not see the significance of the destruction of the first temple to bring about the completion of bringing God's people into the *true* Temple. All of this was accomplished through the high priestly ministry of Jesus Christ:

Hebrews 10:1-3 For the law having a shadow of the good [things] about to come, not the very image of the things, can never with the same sacrifices year by year, which they offer continually, make perfect them that draw nigh. 2 Else would they not have ceased to be offered? because the worshippers, having been once cleansed, would have had no more consciousness of sins. 3 But in those [sacrifices] there is a remembrance made of sins year by year."

But the writer continues:

Hebrews 10:4-14 But in those [sacrifices] there is a remembrance made of sins year by year. 4 For it is impossible that the blood of bulls and goats should take away sins. 5 Wherefore when he cometh into the world, he saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, But a body didst thou prepare for me; 6 In whole burnt offerings and [sacrifices] for sin thou hadst no pleasure: 7 Then said I, Lo, I am come (In the roll of the book it is written of me) To do thy will, O God. 8 Saying above, Sacrifices and offerings and whole burnt offerings and [sacrifices] for sin thou wouldest not, neither hadst pleasure therein (the which are offered according to the law), 9 then hath he said, Lo, I am come to do thy will. He is taking away the first, that he may establish the second. 10 By which will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all. 11 And every priest indeed standeth day by day ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins: 12 but he, when he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God; 13 henceforth expecting till his enemies be made the footstool of his feet. 14 For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified.

The inheritance, the enemies (in this passage, and also correlating with Jesus' words referring to the Jews who crucified the Lord of glory), and the purifying (or making innocent) the conscience go hand in hand because they are all inseparable from the death, resurrection, and presence of Jesus Christ. Yet so many theologies partition and compromise these soteriological benefits in order to argue for a future, physical, and fleshly kingdom. This, again, seems to be contrary to the power of the cross and the Gospel.

Psalm 47 predicted that God would choose the inheritance for God's people. The

inheritance is Christ. Through him all the promises concerning a heavenly country are fulfilled. Follow the logic in interpreting these two passages:

Ephesians 1:20 Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set [him] at his own right hand in the heavenly [places]

Ephesians 2:5-6 Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;) 6 And hath raised [us] up together, and made [us] sit together in heavenly [places] in Christ Jesus:

Paul said the Father set Christ at his own right hand *in heavenly places*. Paul says of believers that He "hath raised us up together (with Christ) and made us sit together (with Christ) in heavenly places." Paul believed that through the blessings of redemption these words of Christ were fulfilled:

John 14:3 And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, [there] ye may be also.

Christ was praying that we would be in heavenly places with Him. We should not diminish the power of this reality, namely, that we are with Christ in heavenly places (or heaven itself).

Here is the context of Psalm 47 again, in light of what we have just learned:

Psalms 47:1-9 For the Chief Musician. A Psalm of the sons of Korah. Oh clap your hands, all ye peoples; Shout unto God with the voice of triumph. 2 For Jehovah Most High is terrible; He is a great King over all the earth. 3 He subdueth peoples under us, And nations under our feet. 4 He chooseth our inheritance for us, The glory of Jacob whom he loved. 5 God is gone up with a shout, Jehovah with the sound of a trumpet. 6 Sing praise 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. 8 God reigneth over the nations: God sitteth upon his holy throne. 9 The princes of the peoples are gathered together [To be] the people of the God of Abraham: For the shields of the earth belong unto God; He is greatly exalted.

Obviously the resulting praise is to be expected from the people of God. The shout and trumpet of God are none other than that predicted in Matthew 24:

Matthew 24:31-34 And he shall send forth his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other. 32 Now from the fig tree learn her parable: when her branch is now become tender, and putteth forth its leaves, ye know that the summer is nigh; 33 even so ye also, when ye see all these things, know ye that he is nigh, [even] at the doors. 34 Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass away, till all these things be accomplished.

At the sound of the trumpet God's people would be gathered together. Psalm 47 predicts this:

Psalm 47:5,9 God is gone up with a shout, Jehovah with the sound of a trumpet... 9

The princes of the peoples are gathered together [To be] the people of the God of Abraham:

Just as the trumpet in Moses' and Joshua's time referred to a calling together of the people of God and a destruction of a city (respectively), so the New Testament trumpet would be a calling together of the spiritual people of God and a shout for the destruction of the earthly Jerusalem:

Exodus 19:13 There shall not an hand touch it, but he shall surely be stoned, or shot through; whether it be beast or man, it shall not live: when the trumpet soundeth long, they shall come up to the mount.

Joshua 6:5 And it shall come to pass, that when they make a long *blast* with the ram's horn, *and* when ye hear the sound of the trumpet, all the people shall shout with a great shout; and the wall of the city shall fall down flat, and the people shall ascend up every man straight before him.

Compare with the present passage:

1 For the Chief Musician. A Psalm of the sons of Korah. Oh clap your hands, all ye peoples; Shout unto God with the voice of triumph.

At the historically and redemptively significant time of the destruction of Jerusalem, we see fulfillment of these various prophecies. It was all a part of the short work in righteousness that the Lord would perform for the complete redemption of His people from the power of sin and the accusations of the enemy. Paul says this was a fulfillment of Old Testament prophecy:

Romans 9:27-33 And Isaiah crieth concerning Israel, If the number of the children of Israel be as the sand of the sea, it is the remnant that shall be saved: 28 for the Lord will execute [his] word upon the earth, finishing it and cutting it short. 29 And, as Isaiah hath said before, Except the Lord of Sabaoth had left us a seed, We had become as Sodom, and had been made like unto Gomorrah. 30 What shall we say then? That the Gentiles, who followed not after righteousness, attained to righteousness, even the righteousness which is of faith: 31 but Israel, following after a law of righteousness, did not arrive at [that] law. 32 Wherefore? Because [they sought it] not by faith, but as it were by works. They stumbled at the stone of stumbling; 33 even as it is written, Behold, I lay in Zion a stone of stumbling and a rock of offence: And he that believeth on him shall not be put to shame.

Psalm 47 declares God to be a "great King over all the earth." Zechariah testifies this would be fulfilled at the time living waters would flow:

Zechariah 14:8-9 And it shall come to pass in that day, that living waters shall go out from Jerusalem; half of them toward the eastern sea, and half of them toward the western sea: in summer and in winter shall it be. 9 And Jehovah shall be King over all the earth: in that day shall Jehovah be one, and his name one.

We know that Living Waters began flowing at Pentecost:

John 6:38-39 For I am come down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. 39 And this is the will of him that sent me, that of all that which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up at the last day.

The passages in Psalm 47 and Zechariah 14 are obvious parallels:

Psalm 47:2 For Jehovah Most High is terrible; He is a great King over all the earth.

Zechariah 14:9 And Jehovah shall be King over all the earth

So if Living Waters were flowing at Pentecost, then we can at least suppose that Jesus began reigning then. Therefore we must conclude that the reign was in the heart, as Jesus said: "Out of his belly (heart) shall flow rivers of living water."

So the Psalmists (the sons of Korah) finish this beautiful Messianic predication:

Psalm 47:7-9 For God is the King of all the earth: Sing ye praises with understanding. 8 God reigneth over the nations: God sitteth upon his holy throne. 9 The princes of the peoples are gathered together [To be] the people of the God of Abraham: For the shields of the earth belong unto God; He is greatly exalted.

We might suppose that the Psalmist knew that praises for these things would need to be with understanding, since these prophecies would be fulfilled in the hearts of God's people through the humble sacrifice of Christ and not through a carnal dictator. God sits upon the throne of our hearts. God reigns over the hearts of the Gentiles. We are gathered together, and according to John this gathering would be through the cross:

John 11:48-52 If we let him thus alone, all men will believe on him: and the Romans will come and take away both our place and our nation. 49 But a certain one of them, Caiaphas, being high priest that year, said unto them, Ye know nothing at all, 50 nor do ye take account that it is expedient for you that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not. 51 Now this he said not of himself: but, being high priest that year, he prophesied that Jesus should die for the nation; 52 and not for the nation only, but that he might also *gather together into one* the children of God that are scattered abroad.

Paul mentions this gathering of God's people:

Ephesians 1:9-10 Having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself: 10 That in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; [even] in him:

This gathering was predicted in other prophets. It is significant when we see the other elements which would also be fulfilled at this gathering:

Jeremiah 32:37 Behold, I will *gather* them out of all countries, whither I have driven them in mine anger, and in my fury, and in great wrath; and I will *bring* them again unto this place, and I will cause them to dwell safely:

Ezekiel 34:11-16 For thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I, even I, will both search my sheep, and seek them out. 12 As a shepherd seeketh out his flock in the day that he is among his sheep that are scattered; so will I seek out my sheep, and will deliver them out of all places where they have been scattered in the cloudy and dark day. 13 And I will *bring* them out from the people, and *gather* them from the countries, and will *bring* them to their own land, and feed them (the bread of life) upon the mountains of Israel by the rivers (of living water), and in all the inhabited places of the country. 14 I will feed them in a good pasture ("they shall go in and out and find pasture-John 10), and upon the high mountains of Israel shall their fold be: there shall they lie in a good fold, and in a fat pasture shall they feed upon the mountains of Israel. 15 I will feed my flock, and I will cause them to lie down, saith the Lord GOD. 16 I will seek that which was lost ("the Son of man came to seek and save that which was lost), and bring again that which was driven away, and will bind up that which was broken ("the Spirit of the Lord God is upon me...to heal the brokenhearted), and will strengthen that which was sick: but I will destroy the fat and the strong; I will feed them with judgment.

Ezekiel 36:24 For I will take you from among the heathen, and gather you out of all countries, and will bring you into your own land.

Ezekiel 37:11-12 Then he said unto me, Son of man, these bones are the whole house of Israel: behold, they say, Our bones are dried, and our hope is lost: we are cut off for our parts. 12 Therefore prophesy and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, O my people, I will open your graves, and cause you to come up out of your graves, and bring you into the land of Israel.

Ezekiel 37:21 And say unto them, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I will take the children of Israel from among the heathen, whither they be gone, and will gather them on every side, and bring them into their own land:

It seems reasonable that if all these things have been fulfilled for us in the kingdom of God through the death, resurrection, rule and presence of Jesus Christ among his people, we must respond by echoing the praises of Psalm 47. These prophecies connect in a miraculous way which shows forth the importance Christ's work and the accomplishment of His kingdom, as well as the subsequent praise offered in thanksgiving for His finished work. We have been subdued by the King and brought under His rule. He has given us an inheritance that never fades away. He has gathered us together as the people of Abraham.