

(Through the Bible) Psalms 47-50

by Chuck Smith

The sermon emphasizes the importance of worship and praise, the folly of trusting in wealth and material possessions, and the significance of giving to God out of a heart of love.

Duration: 43:48

Scripture: Psalm 49:14-17, Psalm 50:7-15, Psalm 50:23, Hebrews 2:1-3

Topics: "Redemption", "Praise Worship"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher begins by questioning why one should fear in times of evil when their own sins surround them. He emphasizes that wealth and riches cannot save or redeem a person, as the redemption of the soul is precious and eternal. The preacher warns those who forget God and continue in wickedness that there will be no one to deliver them. The sermon concludes with the importance of ordering one's life in the right way and offering praise to God, as it glorifies Him and leads to experiencing His salvation.

Transcript

Psalm 47 is a psalm for the new year. This psalm is read seven times before the blowing of the trumpet to announce the holy day, the beginning of the Jewish new year. Oh, clap your hands all ye people, shout unto God with the voice of triumph.

For the Lord Most High is awesome, He is a great King over all the earth. He shall subdue the people under us and the nations under our feet. He shall choose our inheritance for us, the excellency of Jacob, whom he loved.

God is gone up with a shout, the Lord with the sound of the trumpet, sing praises to God, sing praises, sing praises unto our God, sing praises. For God is the King of all the earth, sing ye praises with understanding. God reigneth over the heathen, God sitteth upon the throne of His holiness, the princes of the people are gathered together, even the people of God, of Abraham, for the shields of the earth belong unto God, and He is greatly exalted.

This again is looking into the glorious new age. The Jews looked at it as their new year, but it is a psalm really by which we will usher in the new age. The age in which Jesus establishes His kingdom and reigns over the earth.

It's going to be a whole new age. And so, it's significant that they would use it for a new year, because always in a new year, there's a hope of things better, a new day dawning and so forth. A new year dawning, new opportunities, but this is a new age, the kingdom age that is dawning.

And this is the psalm that will usher in the glorious kingdom age as we clap our hands and shout unto God with a voice of triumph, because He has now established His kingdom over all of the earth. And we are there with Him. He is the King over the earth.

Sing praises. Psalm 48, Great is the Lord and greatly to be praised in the city of our God, in the mountains of His holiness. Beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth is Mount Zion, on the sides of the north, the city of the great King.

This is still looking forward into the kingdom age. When Jesus, the great King, will dwell in Jerusalem, His throne will be upon Mount Zion. So, it's always so exciting to me when I go over to Jerusalem.

One of my favorite places in all of Israel is Mount Zion. I love to just stand on Mount Zion and just say, wow, this is the place. I wonder where on this mount He's going to put His throne.

The glorious King is coming. He's coming soon. He's going to establish His kingdom over the whole earth and Mount Zion will be the place of His throne.

Beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth is Mount Zion, on the sides of the north, the city of the great King. And so, the north side of the Mount of Zion actually slopes down into the city of Jerusalem. And somewhere, somewhere around there, He's going to establish His throne.

God is known in her palaces for a refuge, for lo, the kings were assembled, they passed by together. They sought and so they marveled, and they were troubled and hasted away. Fear took hold upon them there and pain as of a woman in travail.

Thou breakest the ships of Tarshish with an east wind. As we have heard, so have we seen in the city of the Lord of hosts, in the city of our God. God will establish it forever.

We have thought of Thy lovingkindness, O God, in the midst of Thy temple. According to Thy name, O God, so is Thy praise unto the ends of the earth. Thy right hand is full of righteousness.

Let Mount Zion rejoice. Let the daughters of Judah be glad because of Thy judgments. Walk about Zion and go round about her.

Tell the towers thereof. Mark well the bulwarks. Consider her palaces, that ye may tell it to the generation following.

For this God is our God forever and ever. He will be our guide even unto death. So, walk about Zion.

Go round about her. Look at the towers and all. And I do this every time I go over there.

I love to just walk around Mount Zion and just think ahead of God's glorious plan. Oh, what a thrill. Hear this, all ye people.

Give ear, all ye inhabitants of the world, both low and high, rich and poor together. My mouth shall speak of wisdom and the meditation of my heart shall be of understanding. I will incline mine ear to a parable.

I will open dark sayings upon the heart. So, I'm going to play my harp and accompany myself and I'm going to give you some things to think about, some dark parables. Wherefore should I fear in the days of evil when the iniquity of my heels shall come past me about? They that trust in their wealth and boast themselves in the multitude of their riches, none of them can by any means redeem his brother, nor give God a ransom for him.

For the redemption of their soul is precious and it ceaseth forever. Now, he's going to play on his harp and give you some things to meditate and think upon. And first, concerning the rich people, those that have so much wealth.

There are some things that money cannot buy. They that trust in their wealth, boast themselves in the multitude of their riches. With all of their money, they cannot redeem their souls.

You cannot buy salvation. For the redemption of their soul is precious. Now, Peter probably was thinking of this psalm when he wrote, For we are redeemed not with corruptible things such as silver and gold from the empty life we used to live, but with the precious blood of Jesus Christ.

For the redemption of their soul is precious. The precious blood of Jesus Christ who was slain as a lamb without spot or blemish. You can't buy it.

The redemption of a soul. Man can't buy it. Now, the thought of the rich man is that he should still live forever and not seek corruption.

For he seeth that wise men die, likewise the fool and the brutish person perishes, and they leave their wealth to others. Now, one thing about the money, and of course he says it here, their inward thought is that their houses shall continue forever and their dwelling places to all generations and so they call their lands after their own names. Now, beware when people start naming places after themselves.

It's sort of an endeavor to say, hey, I'm going to live on forever, the perpetuating of my name. And so I have Chuck Smith Center and Chuck Smith Recreation Hall and Chuck Smith Chapel and Chuck Smith University. Oh, God help us.

I'm glad He gave me such a dumb common name as Smith so there will be no movement to name anything after Smith. It's interesting how that people look up to certain people and the values that the world has today, the value system. This past week I was over here in the parking lot near Save On Drugstore and a little man was looking at me very carefully and he came up to me and he said, I know you.

He said, I watch you on television. And of course I have a lot of people that come up and say that, you know, I've been listening to your broadcast for years or whatever. And so I meet a lot of people like this that come up and say, oh, I've been watching your program or whatever.

Aren't you Chuck Smith? You know, you get that. And so I said, oh, that's fine. It's a pleasure to meet you, sir.

What are you going to say? And so as I turned to walk away, he says, goodbye, Captain. Boy, did the air go out of my balloon. The guy's watching Love Boat on Saturday nights instead of church on Sunday morning.

We get funny ideas about ourselves. Their inward thought is that their houses will continue forever. They're dwelling places to all generations.

They call their lands after their own names. Nevertheless, man being in honor abides not. He is like the beast that perish.

This their way is their folly, yet their posterity approve their sayings. Oh, do you know what he said? You know, and you have a little book of quotations. Chuck Smith said, Oh, God deliver us.

Like sheep, they are laid in the grave. Death shall feed on them, and the upright shall have dominion over them in the morning, and their beauty shall consume in the grave from their dwelling. But God will redeem my soul from the power of the grave, for He shall revive me.

Now the wealthy, you know, their bodies are going to be consumed, their beauty is in the grave, but God is going to revive me. Be not afraid when one is made rich, when the glory of his house is increased, for when he dies, he will carry nothing away. So the rich with their riches cannot redeem their souls, nor can they take it with them.

His glory shall not descend after him, though while he lived he blessed his soul, and men will praise thee when thou do well to yourself. He shall go to the generation of his fathers, and they shall never see light. Man that is in honor and understands not is like the beast, brutish, foolish.

Man is like the beast, that is a man who is not born again, for a man who is not born again is living in a body conscious state just like the beast, for that's what animal life is, a body conscious life. All the animal is thinking about is his next meal, or the procreation, and just following the basic body instincts. And man without God, without the Spirit being made alive, is just like a beast.

And like a beast, he will perish. But those who have been born again by the Spirit of Christ, who live and believe in Jesus Christ, Jesus said, he that liveth and believeth in me shall never die. God will revive my soul.

I'll be dwelling with him. Psalm 50 is divided into three categories. The first six verses deal with God who is speaking.

In the Hebrew it begins, El Elohim, Yahovah hath spoken. God, singular, God's plural, and then the name Yahweh or Jehovah hath spoken. El Elohim, the El, God's singular, is many times translated mighty because it is that force concentrated and thus the thought of God as mighty.

So it is translated, the mighty God, even Jehovah hath spoken. God, God's Elohim, or God, God's Jehovah hath spoken. And He called the earth from the rising of the sun to the going down thereof.

Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God hath shined. Our God shall come. He will not keep silence.

A fire shall devour before Him and it shall be very tempestuous round about Him when our Lord comes again, breaking again into history. Now, there are those who have declared that God has alienated Himself from the earth, from man, and from history. In the last days, Peter said, scoffers are going to come saying, where is the promise of His coming? Since our fathers have fallen asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning.

God has pulled away from His work, from His world, from His universe. He's allowing things now to just progress in an evolutionary order is the word of scoffers. But, Peter points out, God has intervened in history before.

These men are willingly ignorant of the flood where God intervened in history. Willingly ignorant of the incarnation of Jesus Christ where God came in the flesh and dwelt among us. And He is coming again.

He is not going to keep silent. God has spoken. He is coming.

And around Him and before Him, the devouring fire of the great tribulation. And this tempestuous movement about Him. When Jesus returns, the earth is going to be in the midst of the greatest carnage it has ever known.

That battle of Armageddon will be in full swing. Blood will be flowing to the horse's bridles throughout the valley of Megiddo. Horrible carnage.

As man is unleashing all of his pent up anger and resentment and bitterness and hatred against each other. Culminating in this mad rebellion against God. And seeing the climax of man's rebellion against God.

Saying, we don't want God to rule over us. We'll rule ourselves. We can live without God.

We don't need God. We don't need to be confined by prudish laws or by restraining principles by which I am not allowed to follow the full desires of my own passions and flesh. And we'll see the culmination of man's rebellion there in the valley of Megiddo.

And while that battle is in full swing, Jesus will come again. He'll set His foot on the Mount of Olives and that thing is just going to split right through the middle. It's tempestuous.

The world will be in a tempestuous state at His coming. He shall call the heavens from above and to the earth that He may judge His people, gathering together the people for judgment. Gather My saints together unto Me, those that have made a covenant with Me by sacrifice.

And the heavens shall declare His righteousness, for God is Judge Himself. And so God is speaking. He tells of the day that is coming.

The day of His judgment. He's not going to keep silent forever. First of all, God addresses Himself now to His people.

The second part of the psalm, beginning with verse 7 and going through verse 15. God said, Here, O My people, I will speak, O Israel, I will testify against thee. I am God, even thy God.

I will not reprove thee for thy sacrifices or thy burnt offerings to have been continually before Me. I don't have anything to say against the fact that you were faithful in your religious duties. You kept the sacrifices, the offerings there continually.

You were very faithful in your religious duties. But God is saying, that's not what it's about. I don't want mechanical worship from you.

I don't want your service to Me to be out of a sense of obligation or duty. So I will take no bullock out of your house, nor he-goats out of your folds. For every beast of the forest is Mine, the cattle on a thousand hills.

I know all of the fowls of the mountains. The wild beasts of the field are Mine. If I were hungry, I would not tell thee, for the world is Mine and the fullness thereof.

Will I eat the flesh of bulls or drink the blood of goats? Now, God is showing that the people had the wrong concept when they were bringing their sacrifices to Him. When they were giving to God, they had just that idea, Oh, I'm giving to God. As though God had a need for me to give to Him.

As though God needed me to supply the meat for His dinner tonight. So I will take one of the lambs out of my flock, and I'll bring it to God so He can have dinner tonight. For He's depending on me to feed Him.

God said, Look, I'm not hungry. If I were hungry, I wouldn't tell you, because the world is Mine and the fullness thereof. I wouldn't go to you.

It is manifestly wrong for us to give the assumption to people today that God is broke. I am tired of the letters that I get every week where God is in another financial crisis. This is the greatest crisis we've ever faced in the history of our ministry.

And God is going to have to cut back His marvelous work. It's going to cease unless you send in \$25 this week. And these ministries that are facing one crisis after another, what a poor image they are giving of God to the world as they get on television with their sniffles and tell us how desperate God is, how He needs immediate emergency action on your part to save Him from financial disaster.

So that people are giving with the idea of helping God out. Oh God, please don't file bankruptcy here. I will send you a check for \$5.

As though God is depending on me for support. And if I fail to support Him, His whole program is down the tubes. God doesn't want you to give with the idea of helping Him out.

God doesn't want you to think that He's holding out a tin cup. And God was upset with the people. I'm not hungry.

If I were hungry, I wouldn't tell you. I don't need you to supply me for food. You think I'm going to eat that dirty old goat out of your flock? You're kidding yourself.

The reason why you are bringing a sacrifice isn't to feed me. The reason why you're bringing a sacrifice is that your sins might be covered in order that you might have restored fellowship with me. And that's what I desire is meaningful, heartfelt fellowship with you.

That's what I want. I don't need your money. I don't need your goats.

I don't need your sheep. I want your fellowship. I want your love.

I want your service to me. Not to be a duty. Not to be an obligation.

I want it to be a response in love. Your love to me so that we can have this close, beautiful fellowship with each other. Now, sin has broken your fellowship.

Sin keeps you away. Therefore, bring a sacrifice so you can cover your sin. The sacrifice is for your benefit to cover your guilt in order that you can have fellowship with me.

That's the real thrust behind the sacrifice is restored fellowship with God that you might have this deep, heartfelt, intimate communion with Him. Now, the same with our giving to God today. It isn't to help God out.

It isn't to keep God solvent. The giving is an expression of my love. God, I love You so much.

I appreciate so much what You've done for me. I want to do something for You, God. And I'm giving with a heart of love.

I'm giving with a heart that's overflowing. I desire to give. I want to give.

The Bible said your giving to God should never be grudgingly or out of constraint. You should never be giving by pressure. And using pressure methods to induce people to give is manifestly wrong.

Boy, I'd be embarrassed to stand before God when I got to heaven if I were guilty of some of these methods of raising funds for God. Oh man, I'm going to enjoy just sitting back and watch God rake them over the coals for the way they've represented Him. Watch Him as He shakes until their teeth rattle, making people think He's broke, making people think that He's begging and has to beg in order to survive.

What a blasphemous concept of God they're promoting. And God doesn't want that kind of giving anyhow. God wants you to give out of a heart of love.

Therefore, as every man has purposed in his own heart, so let him give, for God loves a hilarious giver. Oh, the way we motivate people. Give.

And God is going to give back to you, measured out, pressed down, running over. Men are going to give into your bosom. You give ten, God will give you a hundred.

And we motivate them out of their own greed. We're using their own greed as a motivator to give them to give. Because look what God's going to give to you.

You just give to God and you'll be driving limousines. And we're using carnal motivation when in reality, God doesn't want people giving out of that kind of motive, thinking, oh boy, I'm going to give ten, I'm going to get a hundred. Man, that's neat.

Give a hundred, give a thousand. Oh, right. Give a thousand, get a million.

I'll get rich. What poor motivation for giving. Oh God, I love you.

God, I appreciate so much you've done. How can I do less than just give you my best? Give you my all, God. You've done so much for me.

I had nothing. I deserve nothing. And yet you've been so good, so rich unto me.

You've blessed me so much. Oh God, I just... What can I give you, God? And my giving to God is just out of a heart that's overflowing with love and appreciation. That's the kind of gift that God desires.

So God says, look, I'm not hungry. I'm not hurting. I'm not broke.

I would just assume you not offer your sacrifices, except that you need to in order to come to me. But what I want you to really offer to me. Now the sacrifice for you is to cover your sin.

You can come to me. But then offer to me thanksgiving. I think we ought to keep a tally sheet this week.

And let's keep a record of how many times we complained to God about things that aren't quite right. Things that we don't like. Things that have gone wrong.

And then keep another sheet on how many times I've stopped to just thank God for all that I have. I think that if we would really keep a tally on ourselves, we'd be rather amazed at how much griping and complaining we do and how little thanks we give. And yet God wants our thanksgiving.

God said, offer unto me thanksgiving. And pay the vows unto the Most High. Now, when I make a vow to God, it's because I am conscious of the fact that I am not all that I should be.

And I'm promising God I'm going to be better. David said, I will pay the vows I made to you in the day in which I was in trouble. And that's when you usually make a vow when you're really in trouble.

Oh God, help me now. Just get me out of this mess and I promise, Lord, I'm going to live a better life. Lord, just help me out of this.

And I promise, this is what I'm going to do. And when I'm in trouble, I make my vows to God. But then when I get out of trouble, it's like the little kids sliding down the roof.

Crying out to God. Oh God, help me, help me God, I'm slipping, I'm falling. And his pants got caught on a nail and he turned and said, never mind God, the nail stopped me.

And we forget God so quickly. We're willing to attribute now the work of God to just circumstances or to a coincidence. Oh, that's alright God, I don't need you anymore, you know.

And we forget the promises that we made. We forget the vows. We go on living the same old crummy life.

Substandard in our Christian walk. Then we get in trouble. Oh God, if you just get me out of this, I promise this time, really Lord, really and truly.

Cross my heart, hope to die. Lord, you see, I'm aware of my shortcomings. I'm aware that I'm not living the kind of life that I should.

I'm conscious of that. I'm guilty. I know I'm guilty.

Now I do, I spend most of my life trying to cover my guilt and not let other people know how guilty I am. But in my own heart, I know that I am not all that I should be. And that's why when I'm in trouble, I make promises to God.

But God is saying, hey, just keep your vows. Start living the right kind of a life. And then call upon me in the day of trouble and I will deliver you.

God so many times has said for us to call on him in trouble. Jeremiah 33, call upon me and I will answer thee and show thee great and mighty things which thou knowest not. Imagine God inviting you to call on him.

Anytime you're in trouble, just call on me. I have a friend who gave me his card and he said, anytime you're in trouble, just call this number. Oh man, does that make you feel good.

Anytime you're in trouble, got a number to call. I have a friend who was in her 80s. She had a beautiful gift of exhortation to the body of Christ.

And she had a big old Cadillac and she'd drive across the country in this big old Cadillac, ministering in churches, exhorting the body of Christ across the country. Blessed little old saint. She had to sit up on a cushion to see over the dashboard.

And she was in a meeting in Texas and through her gift of exhortation, a wealthy man there in the meeting was really touched and he came up to her and he said, I'm worried about you driving across the country in that big old car. It was an old Cadillac and he said, I own a fleet of trucks and he said, we have garages all over the country. And he said, I want you to take my card and here's my number on it.

And he said, anytime, anywhere, when you need help, just call the number. And he said, you're not far from one of my garages. And he said, I'll see that your car is towed in and you're taken care of.

And she smiled and handed the card back to him and she said, you know, that is a very generous offer and I want you to know that I appreciate it very much. But she said, for over 60 years, I've been trusting in the Lord to take care of me and he hasn't failed me yet. I don't know why I should accept a substitute.

God says, call upon me in trouble. I will deliver you. Now when you can call on God, why should you accept a substitute? How beautiful it is that we can call upon God.

I will deliver you and as a result of God's deliverance, I will glorify Him. And that's the kind of praise that God desires, that praise that is a response to what He has done for me. Now, God has said that to His people.

Now, He's talking to the wicked. The day of judgment. But unto the wicked, God says, what hast thou to do to declare My statutes or that thou shouldest take My covenant in thy mouth, seeing that you hate instruction and you cast My words behind you? Why should you come into the kingdom? Why should you come under the authority of My reigning and My ruling, seeing that you've hated instruction? You didn't want anything to do with Me.

When you saw a thief, you consented with him. Now Jesus said that if a person tries to come into the kingdom any other way, then by Me, the door, he is a thief and a robber. And He said, now you've seen the way of thieves, people that have been trying to come in by other ways, and you consent with them.

It's amazing the weird things that people will believe when they reject Jesus Christ. The weird antics they will go through. The weird concepts they will take up.

Otherwise intelligent, brilliant men. Some of the biggest spiritual dupes I've ever met are college professors who are constantly putting down Jesus Christ in the classroom. But they all have, it seems, their little quest in, you know, spiritism or into this or that or the other weird thing, you know.

Too intelligent for Jesus Christ, but trying to find another way. And the Lord in the day of judgment said, hey, why should you come into My kingdom now? Why should you be a part of it? You've hated instruction. You've put My words behind you.

When you saw a thief, you consented with them. And you have been a partaker with adulterers. That is, those of spiritual adultery.

You've been following other gods. You give your mouth to evil and your tongue frames deceit. You sit and speak against thy brother and you slander your own mother's son.

These things have you done and I kept silence. But you thought that I was altogether one such as you. But I will reprove thee and set thee in order before thine eyes.

Now, you made the mistake, you made the sad mistake of thinking that My silence was weakness. That because I was silent, I didn't care. That because I was silent, it didn't matter.

Because you weren't judged immediately, you felt that God was approving. This is a mistake, and let me warn you, a mistake that many people make. Even Christians who fall into a path of wickedness and sin.

I have heard them say, I've had them say to me, If what we are doing is so wrong, then why does God still bless our lives? And they mistake the patience and the long-suffering and the grace of God as approval for their wickedness. Or that God is condoning the evil that they are doing. God will never condone wickedness.

God is merciful. God is gracious. God is long-suffering.

But make no mistake, He's not weak. And the day of judgment will come. And though it may seem that you are getting by with it because God hasn't already cut you off, because God hasn't already with a swift hand brought His judgment upon you, it doesn't mean that you're going to escape judgment.

It doesn't mean that God won't judge, that God is too weak to judge, or that God approves what you're doing. Never. The day will come.

But it's a fatal mistake for many people, for they have made a fatal mistake in thinking because God hasn't judged me. Here's a guy who stands out in the field and says, If there's a God up there in heaven, let Him strike me dead. Now see, that's a proof there's no God because I'm still here.

God is so patient with us, but He's not weak. And He will come. He will judge.

Now consider this, you that forget God. Just remember this. Consider it.

Lest I tear you in pieces and there be none to deliver. You better take note of this. I'm not smiling.

I'm not approving. You better take careful note of that. For if you don't change, if you go on in your wickedness, there will be none to deliver.

The psalm closes with, Whoso offereth praise glorifies Me. And to him that ordereth his conversation. The word conversation is an old English word.

The word literally means his manner of living. And if you'll just order your life, your manner of living, in the right way. God said, I will show you My salvation.

Shall we pray? Father, we pray that we might give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest we should drift away from them. For we know that if the word spoken by angels was steadfast, and that if every trespass received a just recompense of reward, we know that there is no escaping if we

neglect this great salvation that You have offered to us through Your Son, Jesus Christ. Lord, help us that we might order our lives aright.

Help us, Lord, to be giving thanks to You. Help us, Lord, to live up to what we know to be right, to pay our vows, and to call upon You at all times that You might work in our lives Your beautiful work of love and of grace. Lord, may we experience with the psalmist that great thirst after Thee, hungering and thirsting after righteousness, that we might be filled and that we might overflow with Your love and with Your Spirit.

In Jesus' name, Amen.

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