

Psalm 97

by Henry Law

The sermon emphasizes the importance of holy joy in response to God's reign, and encourages believers to love the Lord and hate evil.

Scripture: Psalm 97:1-3, Psalm 97:7, Psalm 97:10

Topics: "Gods Sovereignty", "Christ Kingdom"

Description

Henry Law preaches about the encouragement of faith to joyfully contemplate Christ's kingdom, which may be hidden from the world but is dreadful to all adversaries. Believers are exhorted to abound in holy joy, recognizing that the Lord reigns over all events and His righteousness and judgment are the foundation of His throne. The sermon emphasizes the solemnity of God's rule, the manifestation of His glory through His righteous decrees, and the impending wrath against unrighteousness in Christ's kingdom.

Transcript

Faith is encouraged to joyfully contemplate Christ's kingdom. It may be hidden from the world; but it is dreadful to all adversaries. Exhortations follow to abound in holy joy.

1. "The Lord reigns; let the earth rejoice; let the multitude of isles be glad thereof."

The Lord reigns. This is the Gospel's note. It is a truth prolific of holy joy. All events obey His scepter. In every circumstance, therefore, joy should wave its tranquil wand throughout the heart. Every occurrence should whisper, It is the Lord; let Him do what seems good to Him. Events may sometimes show a frowning aspect, but happy believers receive them as blessings in disguise.

2. "Clouds and darkness are round about Him; righteousness and judgment are the habitation of His throne."

Faith may not always discern the intent of God's rule. To the ungodly His will is shrouded in impenetrable darkness. They do not know the mighty Ruler. They do not understand the workings of His hand. Solemn lessons are embodied in the word. If they had known, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. But His throne is established high on the pinnacle of righteousness and justice. All the decrees of His tribunal are offsprings of these attributes, and shine as reflections of His glory. Happy, indeed, are those in whose hearts the Lord God reigns righteously.

3-6. "A fire goes before Him, and burns up His enemies round about. His lightnings enlightened the world; the earth saw, and trembled. The hills melted like wax at the presence of the Lord, at the presence of the Lord of the whole earth. The heavens declare His righteousness, and all the people see His glory."

Thoughts here recall Sinai's terrors. When the fiery law was promulgated, dreadful manifestations announced that vengeance would destroy opponents. In Christ's kingdom, holy indignation is also against all unrighteousness. Here strong images are employed to show that wrath will scrutinize and rightly execute its tremendous work. Tribulation and anguish must be the rebel's doom. Blessed are those who are delivered from this wrath, and are translated into the kingdom of God's dear Son.

7-9. "Confounded be all those who serve engraved images, that boast themselves of idols; worship Him, all you gods. Zion heard, and was glad; and the daughters of Judah rejoiced because of Your judgments, O Lord. For You, Lord, are high above all the earth; You are exalted far above all gods."

Let no fond dream suggest that idolatry is not an abomination in God's sight. Truth has denounced its sure destruction, and destruction will surely come. Let all who hear take warning, and meekly bow before the King of kings. The ear of faith hears God's resolve, and rejoices in the thought that homage and worship shall be rendered to Him to whom it is so justly due.

10-12. "You who love the Lord, hate evil; He preserves the souls of His saints; He delivers them out of the hand of the wicked. Light is sown for the righteous, and gladness for the upright in heart. Rejoice in the Lord, you righteous; and give thanks at the remembrance of His holiness."

Believers are here pointedly described. Their conspicuous feature is love of their Lord. It is a true address, 'O You Whom my soul loves!' He demands our hearts. Let them be His in every pulse, at every moment. The best proof of this love will be hatred of all that is adverse to Him. Those who love Him will nestle in His heart, and His power will screen them from all harm. As seed sown springs from the bosom of the earth, so light and gladness are laid up for the happy flock, and assuredly will be their portion. They have all cause to rejoice, to be glad, and to give thanks. God's holiness frightens the wicked. The thought is terror to them. His servants ponder this attribute with delight. They turn not from the precept, 'Be holy, for I am holy.'

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