



WELCOME TO BIBLE HOUSE OF GRACE

If you think items presented on this site to be in error, please let me know and I will gladly reconsider the content.

Psalm 97

(2019)

Bible House of Grace contains an easy to read New and Old Testament commentary full of spiritual treasures and pearls, complete with an insightful resource guide illuminating God's love and grace.



Learn the
Bible
at Home

Although I believe my aim is pure and God's will perfect this document is still the product of a human man, as to such I neither claim perfect knowledge or perfect understanding.

Psalm 97.

Topics.

- God's lightning light up the world; mountains melt before the LORD.
- The foundation of God's throne and its pillars.
- Heavens proclaim God's righteousness and all see His glory.
- All worshipers of images and other gods are put to shame.
- Zion and the daughters of Judah rejoice, because of God's judgments.
- Those who Love the LORD and hate evil God delivers from the wicked.
- Light is sown for the righteous, and joy for the upright in heart.

FOR INFORMATION: concerning people, places and the meaning of words see the title: "Map Locations and People of the Bible," and the title: "Bible Dictionary" on Website Menu.

INTRODUCTION

Psalms are songs and prayers offered to God by the nation Israel, they cover the range of human emotion, expressing praise, faith, victory, sorrow, despair, depression, frustration and the troubled heart of a mourner. They contrast the righteous with the wicked, and include the wisdom and the treasure of God's word. Psalms were written at the beginning of the 15th century BC and probably collected in their final form in the 3rd century.

BOOK FOUR (PSALM 90-106)

PSALM 97:1-5

God's Lightning Light up the World; Mountains melt before Him.

- **Psalm 97:1-5:** The LORD reigns, let the earth rejoice; let the many coastlands (isles in KJV) be glad! ²Clouds and thick darkness are all around him; righteousness and justice are the foundation of his throne. ³Fire goes before him and burns up his adversaries all around. ⁴His lightnings light up the world; the earth sees and trembles. ⁵The mountains melt like wax before the LORD, before the Lord of all the earth.

The focus of the Psalmist is not only upon the vast land mass of the continents and the great and mighty nations, kingdoms and empires of the world but also upon the many small islands of the sea. The idea is that all the earth has cause to rejoice that God reigns and not just those who live close to the city of Jerusalem and the temple of God. This means it matters not if a person lives in a prosperous nation of hundreds of millions of people or on a small island in the middle of the ocean with only ten people all have reason to rejoice in God.

The Lord reigns: He who called the universe into existence and created the earth and all that is upon it not only upholds all things in their place, but also governs over them from His heavenly abode He presides over His creation and rules, judges, and rewards or punishes accordingly. The universe is under the control of one sovereign eternal intelligent mind and not subject to mere physical laws, but to a benevolent God who rules it according to his own wise and eternal plan. This is the general truth to be

meditated upon and the foundation of joy and praise. God is love and has a fathers heart so even though His children are living in a corrupted fallen world and surrounded by dangers on all sides God's dominion is a cause for rejoicing and joy, because all can rest in the truth that He will judge all things according to righteousness and the law of justice and of love.

Clouds and thick darkness are all around: (v2) is an allusion to God descending upon Mount Sinai in thick clouds and to Him leading the wilderness generation by a pillar of fire at night and a pillar of cloud by day. God's exceeding glory would destroy the sons of men if He did not surround Himself in thick cloud. With every revelation of God to be seen by finite beings there must also be a veiling of His infinite splendour for mortal and sinful creatures to survive such glory and light. The following verses speak of God being clothed in thick clouds of darkness.

- These words the LORD spoke to all your assembly at the mountain out of the midst of the fire, the cloud, and the thick darkness, with a loud voice; and he added no more. And he wrote them on two tablets of stone and gave them to me. (Deut. 5:22).
- On the morning of the third day there were thunders and lightnings and a thick cloud on the mountain and a very loud trumpet blast, so that all the people in the camp trembled. (Exodus 19:16).
- They will tell the inhabitants of this land. They have heard that you, O LORD, are in the midst of this people. For you, O LORD, are seen face to face, and your cloud stands over them and you go before them, in a pillar of cloud by day and in a pillar of fire by night. (Num. 14:14).
- You in your great mercies did not forsake them in the wilderness. The pillar of cloud to lead them in the way did not depart from them by day, nor the pillar of fire by night to light for them the way by which they should go. (Neh. 9:19).

The foundation of God's throne: (v2) are righteousness and justice and its pillars are

- Holiness and love.
- Mercy and longsuffering.
- Joy and peace.

These pillars embrace honesty, moral virtue, integrity truthfulness, fairness for all and kindness, goodness, gentleness and self-control (Gal. 5:22). These are the foundation and pillars of God's throne which means that all who belong to His Kingdom should do all they can to make them the foundation and pillars of their life.

God's lightning lights up the world and mountains melt like wax (v4-5) these two things are spectacular.

1. To watch the luminous brilliance and power of God's lightning dispelling the darkness of the sky and lighting up the earth below is a wonder to behold.
2. To see a mountain, spew out fire and laver and fill the sky with clouds of smoke and dust for miles around it leaves one standing in awe.

Both of these events should not only give mankind some sense of God's awesome power and our weakness and mortality before it, but should also humble and motivate us to seek the God who can rescue us from such weakness and mortality and has the power to raise us to eternal life and immortality.

The words, "The mountains melt like wax before the LORD of all the earth," (v5) can refer to the following two things:

1. Powerful kings and their fierce armies (often referred to as mountains) who gather together to lay Israel waste being destroyed by God's power.

2. The end of Christ's glorious millennial reign as King of kings and Lord of lords when God Himself descends to earth on a Great White Throne and the earth and sky flee away from His presence and no place is found for them. (Revelation 20:11).

A fire goes before Him (v3) is not only a picture of God's power going before the armies of Israel like a mighty warrior and advancing guard devouring their enemies and clearing the way for them, but also a picture of God's judgment upon the wicked who will be burned up as chaff before a flame.

PSALM 97:6-7

The Heavens Proclaim His Righteousness and all see His Glory.

- **Psalm 97:6-7:** The heavens proclaim his righteousness, and all the peoples see his glory.
⁷All worshipers of images are put to shame, who make their boast in worthless idols; worship him, all you gods!

It matters not where one is on earth all they have to do is walk outside and look up to the night sky and see the glory of God. In Psalm nineteen it is written:

- The heavens declare the glory of God, and the sky above proclaims his handiwork. ²Day to day they utter out speech, and night to night reveals and shows knowledge. ³There is no speech, nor language, where their voice is not heard. ⁴Their measuring line goes out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world. (Psalm 19:1-4).

The silent voice of the billions of stars, the Milky Way, the planets the sun and the moon abiding in the heavens are a testimony of God's greatness and His glory.

3

All worshipers of images are put to shame (v7) because their gods have no power, they cannot hear, see or speak, so when those who believe in the invisible, immortal, Holy Almighty God the creator of all things and source of all life say to those who believe in other gods and idols look up to the heavens and see what my God created, show me what your gods have created they cannot show them anything and in this way they are put to shame.

Worship him, all you gods: (v7) does not mean that other gods actually exist in reality. It refers to gods that are created by the imagination of the mind by a strong belief in them. The human nervous system does not have a mind of its own and therefore automatically responds to whatever is pictured on the imagination whether it is real or false. The stronger the belief the greater effect the mental image on the imagination of the mind will have on the human nervous system. This is why deception is so deceptive. It matters not if the god people believe in is real or not the nervous system responds accordingly. If the god a person believes in is a wrathful, vengeful and judgmental god they will feel emotions of guilt and fear in contrast to this if the god a person believes in is a god of love and compassion, they we feel emotions of love and comfort.

This is why faith should be based upon the Scriptures of the Bible and never upon on emotions. This does not mean emotions should be denied, God gave them to us to enjoy (especially in worship and praise) it just means that they should not be the foundation of our faith and what we believe. It is through reading the Bible that we learn who the one and only immortal, invisible, eternal God is and His eternal will, plans and purposes for the world, the earth and for eternity.

For further information see:

- Demons in, Satan and his Family (ON WEBSITE MENU).

Clearly not one of these gods of the imagination have any power to create the earth, the mountains the seas there is only one God who has such awesome power and He is the invisible, immortal, Holy Almighty God of all creation and the source of all life the great I AM the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

NOTICE: The Psalmist refers to God's creation of the heavens as God's handiwork this is because His great work is in saving mankind from death and raising them to eternal life. God spent seven days creating our world He has been working on mankind's salvation and eternity for over six thousand years

PSALM 97:8-9

Zion and Daughters of Judah Rejoice, because of God's Judgments.

- **Psalm 97:8-9:** Zion hears and is glad, and the daughters of Judah rejoice, because of your judgments, O LORD. ⁹For you, O LORD, are most high over all the earth; you are exalted far above all gods.

Zion comes from the Hebrew word (*Tsiyown*) and refers to the mountain the city of Jerusalem is built upon. It carries the idea of a permanent capital mountain of Jerusalem in the sense of being readily seen and easily visible and noticed as an important sign (i.e., a significant and historic sign and guiding pillar). Though Mount Zion is not distinguished for its elevation or grandeur and though it had nothing in itself to claim attention or to excite wonder, it was the most exalted and honoured above all mountains because it was selected as the place where God was to be worshipped and the place where God's city and God's temple is built and God's worship was established. From Mount Zion came the Messiah the Christ attended by a multitude of angels celebrating his birth and on Mount Zion the Messiah the Christ came into his own temple as Malachi in the following verse prophesied concerning him.

- Behold, I send my messenger and he will prepare the way before me. And the Lord whom you seek will suddenly come to his temple; and the messenger of the covenant in whom you delight, behold, he is coming, says the LORD of hosts. (Mal. 3:1).

Added to all this royal glory, multitudes of angels ministered to the Lord in his temptation, at his resurrection and accompanied him in his ascension all from Mount Zion. Mount Zion has no fame or glory of itself, its glory comes from being the honoured mountain God chose to build His Holy city upon and is the mountain that the Messiah the Christ the Saviour of the world died and rose again from. The real strength is not in Mount Zion itself, but in the LORD, who is the head of the thousands of chariots and the heavenly host surrounding it and as such is the protector of his chosen dwelling-place. Zion also speaks of all the faithful who belong to God's Kingdom and the global family of the Lord Jesus Christ.

You are exalted far above all gods (v9) see the notes under the title: "Worship him, all you," following verse six and seven (above).

PSALM 97:10-12

All who Love the LORD and Hate Evil God delivers from the Wicked.

- **Psalm 97:10-12:** O you who love the LORD, hate evil! He preserves the lives of his saints; he delivers them from the hand of the wicked. ¹¹Light is sown for the righteous, and joy for the upright in heart. ¹²Rejoice in the LORD, O you righteous, and give thanks to his holy name!

The heart of those who love the Lord not only hates seeing the innocent suffer at the hands of the wicked, but also hate seeing the poor and the helpless being oppressed for the gain of others and justice being perverted for one's own advantage. There is no doubt all who love Christ

look with excited joy toward his return in glory, not only for themselves, but also because it will not only involves Christ gathering the faithful to himself, but also mean the judgment of the wicked and the beginning of a New Age of righteousness, justice, joy and peace. God delivers those who hate evil from the hand of the wicked (v10), can be applied in the following three ways:

1. Those who hate evil will shy away from any form of wickedness and corruption and will have nothing to do with such people.
2. God by His Spirit and love will guide and keep His children from the wicked.
3. In the resurrection God will deliver all the faithful from all forms of wickedness and corruption for evermore.

Those who love God will hate evil and what is against God and will have joy in their heart. In the Psalms it is written:

- You have loved righteousness and hated wickedness. Therefore God, your God, has anointed you with the oil of gladness beyond your companions. (Psalm 45:7).

The author of Hebrews wrote:

- You have loved righteousness and hated wickedness; therefore God, your God, has anointed you with the oil of gladness beyond your companions. (Heb. 1:9).

The practical application of rejoicing in the LORD is to rejoice in everything that is good and right as opposed to rejoicing in what is wrong and corrupt.

Light is sown for the righteous, and joy for the upright in heart: (v11) in this context light for the faithful of the Old Testament refers to the words of the LORD their God the God of Abraham Isaac and Jacob spoke to them and to the faithful of the New Testament the light sown refers to the words of Jesus and the Gospel this is the light of God that lightens up the heart of the righteous and fills the inner being with joy and happiness and ultimately leads to eternal life and everlasting glory.

As the founder of Bible House of Grace, I would like to thank the many Christian scholars, commentators and theologians who have gone before me, and the many today, who have freely made available their works to enhance the knowledge of the Bible to all people worldwide. It is only with the help of these faithful writers that much of Bible House of Grace exists as it does today.
