

Ron J. Bigalke, Ph.D.  
PO Box 244, Rincon, GA 31326-0244  
912-659-4212  
ron.bigalke@capitolcom.org

## The Georgia Capitol Devotional

*Psalm 97:1, 12 – The LORD reigns, let the earth rejoice; let the many islands be glad. . . . Be glad in the LORD, you righteous ones, and give thanks to His holy name.*

Let us deduce a few considerations from Psalm 97 that can inform the manner in which we relate to the living God.

The personal viewpoint from which one understands all life is often regarded as a worldview. A worldview is then an amalgamation of various assumptions or presuppositions that one affirms – either consciously or subconsciously – concerning the basic framework of the world in which we live. One’s worldview is an answer to the following questions: (1) what is ultimate reality?; (2) what is the purpose of my life?; (3) who am I?; (4) why do I exist?; (5) where did I originate?; (6) what is my destiny; and, (7) what is the nature of the world in which I live?

A plethora of worldviews is evident in our culture, which seeks to answer those basic questions. Many worldviews are possible, such as the following: biblical theism, deism, dualism, fatalism, hedonism, humanism, positivism, pragmatism, relativism, secularism, or synergism. Nevertheless, the reality is that only one worldview is adequate and true. The only belief system that is sufficient is that God actively – moment by moment – rules sovereignly over all things for his own glory and for the good of his people. The comprehensive worldview that “the LORD reigns” is revealed all throughout the Bible, and especially within the Psalms.

A worldview focused upon God is declared rather succinctly in the worship song of Psalm 97. The psalm provides an all-encompassing perspective of the world that is understood in relation to God’s divine character and holy attributes (vv. 2-11). Psalm 97 is an enthronement hymn declaring the absolute sovereignty of God over all creation. Having a true worldview begins with an honest understanding of God himself. Nothing upon earth will be understood properly until one has first acknowledged God as supremely glorious: exalted in heaven. Psalm 97 provides tremendous help in revealing a theocentric (God-focused) comprehension of all things.

### THE WORLDVIEW OF PSALM 97

Psalm 97 begins with the familiar refrain, “the LORD reigns.” The declaration means that God is absolutely sovereign over all human history. Only the Lord God is always able to do as He pleases: continually exercising his all-encompassing authority. How should we respond to such revelation? “Let the earth rejoice” is the only proper response that would be appropriate to the magnificent truth of divine sovereignty.

The throne of God is described in symbolic terms that inspire profound and reverential awe. First, the Lord God is swathed in “clouds and thick darkness,” which is a reminder that He is invisible to the eyes of humanity and majestically inscrutable regarding his ways. Moreover, “righteousness and justice are the foundation of His throne.” God is the ideal government for He is a beneficent monarch (king), who allows no miscarriages of justice or perversions of the truth.

*Isaiah 55:8 – “For My thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways My ways,” declares the LORD.*

God is a consuming fire to those who do not know Him and who do not heed the gospel of his grace (Ps 97:3-5; cf. 2 Thess 1:8). The time is coming in which everything that exalts itself against the knowledge of God will be humbled. At that coming time, the Lord will be seen for who He has always been: “Most High over all the earth” (Ps 97:6-9). In light of that coming day, how should one respond now? “Hate evil . . . love the LORD” (v. 10).

The two commands – hate evil, love God – are moral corollaries for all who sincerely love the Lord must hate all that is contrary to Him. “Light is sown *like seed* for the righteous” (v. 11), which means that the coming of Christ will diffuse light for those who practice what is right, in addition to “gladness” for all those whose hearts are honest and sincere before God.

Psalm 97 concludes by calling upon all God’s people to “be glad in the LORD.” Rightly should God’s people exult in the Lord himself and in his kingdom. All genuine gladness is in the Lord God (as He has revealed himself to humanity in the Holy Bible). The truth that “the LORD reigns” makes the heart glad. Knowing “that God causes all things to work together for good” to those who love Him, “to those who are called according to His purpose” (Rom 8:28) is reason for genuine gladness!

### NEXT CAPITOL BIBLE STUDY

**Tuesday, 24 March**

**7:30 am – 8:00 am, 403 CAP**

**12 Noon – 12:45 pm, 123 CAP**



**Capitol Commission Bible Studies**

*No Bible Studies on Tuesday, 17 March 2015*

*Next Bible Studies on Tuesday, 24 March 2015*



Enhancing Trust