

# BIBLE TEACHING AND WORSHIP GUIDE



## FOR THE HOME-BASED CHURCH

Produced Weekly

*God On His Throne – Enthroned Over The Universe*  
Psalms 47; 96

Copy this sheet for the Gathering Time, Bible Study, and Worship Experience leaders for the next meeting of the church.

## Leaders' Responsibilities:

**Important:** Each person who will be leading one of the three parts of a session during a series of sessions needs to have access to the "Introduction" article found at the beginning of each series (Bible Teaching #....). The weekly session "Background" located in the Teacher Preparation is much more specific to that day's study.

1. **The Gathering Time Leader** will gather all of the people together and help them prepare their minds and hearts for a wonderful worship experience before God. His/her responsibility is to introduce the congregation to the theme (content) and the Scripture that will be central to their worship experience for the day.

2. **The Bible Study Leader** will then help the people understand what the Scriptures have to say and teach us about the content of the study for the day. He/she will guide the people to make a general application of the study (ie: How does this Bible study apply to people today?)

3. **The Worship Time Leader** has the responsibility to use the theme and Scriptures to guide the congregation to make personal commitments to God's will for each one in regard to the study for the day. He/she will use others to lead in the music, taking the offering, ministry moment comments, and other activities and parts of the **Worship Time** that can aid in participatory worship.

## Prior to this Coming Session:

### **Gathering Time Leader:**

### **Bible Study Leader:**

Copy the definition of the word "equity from a dictionary as it would apply to the context of God's relationship to the world. See page 17 (lower part) for the statement of God

judging with equity. You may choose to introduce that definition earlier in your class time.

**Worship Time Leader:**

**Music Sources:**

**Bow the Knee**, *The Worship Hymnal* #505; CCLI #2701725

**Majesty**, *The Worship Hymnal* #297; CCLI #1527

**Our God Reigns**, *The Worship Hymnal* #58; CCLI #8458

**Great Is the Lord**, *The Worship Hymnal* #61; CCLI #1149

**What A Mighty God We Serve**, *The Worship Hymnal* #64; CCLI #4397553

**Awesome God**, *The Worship Hymnal* #63; CCLI #4099

# 1

Copy this section for the Gathering Time leader.

**Gathering Time:** (Suggested time: 15 minutes)

## ***God On His Throne – Enthroned Over The Universe***

### **Focal Text**

Psalms 47; 96

### **Background Text**

Psalms 93, 97, 98, 99

### **Main Idea**

The psalmists delighted in describing God's sovereignty in its various expressions – over Jerusalem, over Israel, over ages and generations, over nature and over the cosmos. The favorite expression of sovereignty and the theme of these psalms is seen in His direction and control of the affairs and kingdoms of earth. The main idea is that God is “King over all the earth,” reigning on His throne over the nations. God's sovereignty is the basis for His people's joyful praise.

### **Questions to Explore**

Can we say that we feel that God is “King over all the earth” and is reigning on His throne over the nations?

Or do today's many wars, terrorist attacks, and failure of human rulers make us feel that God has removed his hand from the affairs of the world?

### **Teaching Aims**

Learners shall be led to affirm that God is the King of all the earth.

The church will discuss ways in which we see that God reigns over the nations and the rulers of those nations.

The church will decide on a definition of “the sovereignty of God” which is meaningful to the participants.

### **Gathering together:**

Sing: **Bow the Knee**, *The Worship Hymnal* #505; CCLI #2701725

**Majesty**, *The Worship Hymnal* #297; CCLI #1527

**Our God Reigns**, *The Worship Hymnal* #58; CCLI #8458

## **First thoughts:**

***Clap your hands, all you nations;  
Shout to God with cries of joy.***

***How awesome is the Lord Most High,  
The great King over all the earth!***

***Sing praises to God, sing praises:  
Sing praises to our King, sing praises.  
Psalms 47: 1-2, 6***

God is king over all the earth. His sovereignty is the basis for His people's joyful praise. Today we will consider what God's sovereignty means for us personally. Knowing that God is ultimately in control will bring us peace and joy and allow us to praise Him even when we cannot see.

If you sang the song **Bow the Knee** written by Chris Machen and Mike Harlan you sang these words which express God's sovereignty.

Bow the knee:  
Trust the heart of your Father when the answer goes beyond what you can see.  
Bow the knee;  
Lift your eyes toward heaven and believe the One who holds eternity.  
And when you don't understand the purpose of His plan,  
In the presence of the King, bow the knee.

(Copyright 1997 Centergetic Music (ASCAP)) (admin. By ICG).

God's sovereignty means that we can trust the heart of the Father even when we don't understand. As we trust, we both praise and submit.

***Clap your hands, all you nations;  
Shout to God with cries of joy.***

## **Closing the Gathering Time:**

Take time at this point to mention items of prayer concern for the church, announcements of ministry or activities, and anything else that needs to be shared with or by the congregation. Pray for these needs. Remember to praise God in prayer.

Break time! Take five minutes between sessions. Encourage children to use the washroom so that they won't need to leave during the Bible Study time.

Distribute youth/adult Bible study outlines or paper for note-taking, if available.

Also hand out the activity sheets for preschool and younger children to use during Bible Study and/or worship.

# 2

Copy this section for the Bible Study leader.

**Note to the Bible Study Leader:** Suggested teaching time for the Bible study should be about 35 minutes. Use the “Teacher Preparation” for your personal study during the week before the session. Use the “Bible Study Plan” for the actual session.

## Teacher Preparation

### *God On His Throne – Enthroned Over The Universe*

#### **Focal Text**

Psalms 47; 96

#### **Background Text**

Psalms 93, 97, 98, 99

#### **Main Idea**

The psalmists delighted in describing God’s sovereignty in its various expressions – over Jerusalem, over Israel, over ages and generations, over nature and over the cosmos. The favorite expression of sovereignty and the theme of these psalms is seen in His direction and control of the affairs and kingdoms of earth. The main idea is that God is “King over all the earth,” reigning on His throne over the nations. God’s sovereignty is the basis for His people’s joyful praise.

#### **Questions to Explore**

Can we say that we feel that God is “King over all the earth” and is reigning on His throne over the nations?

Or do today’s many wars, terrorist attacks, and failure of human rulers make us feel that God has removed his hand from the affairs of the world?

#### **Teaching Aims**

Learners shall be led to affirm that God is the King of all the earth.

The church will discuss ways in which we see that God reigns over the nations and the rulers of those nations.

The church will decide on a definition of “the sovereignty of God” which is meaningful to the participants.

#### **Introduction to your personal study:**

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*God On His Throne – Enthroned Over The Universe – 25-52-11-en*

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The sovereignty of God is one of the basic doctrines of the Christian faith. It is both easy and difficult to understand. Or perhaps it is easy enough to understand, but difficult to put into practice. As you prepare to teach this important lesson, pray that you will understand in both an intellectual and a very personal way what it is to believe that God is sovereign and to rest safely and securely in that belief.

Read the psalms in both the focal and background texts devotionally during the week. Read them aloud as well as silently. Read them (or one of them) to another person or at your family prayer time. Read with emotion and emphasis.

## **Background:**

Please ask for and read the information contained in the “**Introduction**” article found at the beginning of this series (Bible Teaching #....) of Bible Study and Worship sessions. Whoever downloaded this session for you should have that material for you, as well.

Conyers in his book **A Basic Christian Theology** (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 1995, p. 62) uses the word “providence” to describe what is meant by the concept we are considering. “The underlying view of the gospel is that God uses every occasion, whether good or evil, to pursue his ultimate goal of redemption. Nothing escapes the ceaseless divine pursuit of the ultimate good. Providence, therefore, is the perfect reflection of the doctrine of creation. In creation, all things are created good, showing that God’s intention toward his creation is altogether good. Providence is the assurance that when all is said and done, in spite of the intervention of evil, God’s will is going to be accomplished. Good will ultimately triumph. All things – all events, all people, all intentions, all good works, and all evil works – ultimately will be turned to that purpose.”

## **Focusing on the meaning**

### **Psalm 47**

***Clap your hands, all you nations; shout to God with cries of joy. How awesome is the Lord Most High, the great King over all the earth! He subdued nations under us, peoples under our feet. He chose our inheritance for us, the pride of Jacob, whom he loved. Selah.***

***God has ascended amid shouts of joy, the Lord amid the sounding of trumpets.***  
vv. 1-5

“This psalm together with Psalm 93: 96-99 compose a group which are now quite generally designated “Psalms of Yahweh’s Enthronement.” It is to the credit of Sigmund Mowinckel....to have discovered that in postexilic times on the Hebrew New



Year's Day Yahweh was dramatically represented as taking his seat on his throne to exercise his dominion over the world for the coming year" (**The Interpreter's Bible, Psalms**. New York: Abingdon Press, 1955, p, 245).

"The Lord is king because He is creator and world-wide recognition of the fact is ideally represented as already realized" (The Interpreter's Bible, p. 246).

The commentary in The Interpreter's Bible warns against nationalism which is exaggerated to the point of danger. "The process that transmutes a vague ideal of devotion to God into dangerous nationalist arrogance is a very simple one" (p. 249).

In today's world, Christian believers are suffering exile from their homes, illness, and death as factions within countries war for dominance. Success in war by any one country will not bring the peace which the world needs. This Psalm reminds us that the Lord is King and He only is the Sovereign of the universe.

"Notice the ingredients of a coronation included here: the people shout and clap their hands in celebration (v. 1); there is a trumpet fanfare (v. 5); neighboring kings paid their respect. There is also a procession up to the Temple (v. 5). Jacob in verse 4 stands for the Hebrew nation as well as for their ancestors. (**Shepherd's Notes, Psalms 1-50**. Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 1999, p. 93-94).

"The whole psalm praises God's sovereignty. Israel learned this through their historical, personal experiences with God. That is the only way we can fully learn of God's sovereignty. He must control our lives" (**Disciple's Study Bible**, Nashville: Holman Bible Publishers, 1988, p. 672).

The psalmist reminds the people that God has directed their path through many years. It must have been very difficult for the people in Egyptian captivity for four hundred years to continue to have faith in God. Even those led out of captivity doubted and rebelled. We only see history from our own limited perspective and it is often very, very difficult to see God at work in the events of the world in which we live.

"As God exercises His sovereignty in history, He does not simply manipulate the peoples of the earth as pawns on a chessboard. He works in a way that takes into account the freedom of will that He has granted to all people. The sovereignty of God is always directed by His own will and His own purposes. God is doing something in history, not simply responding to what humans do. As the One who alone has the power to create, God has the right and the power to work in and through the various peoples of the earth to accomplish His will. We may not always understand what God is doing, but we can know that God is in control of His world and will finally accomplished His own righteous, redemptive purposes" (Disciple's Study Bible, p. 23).

"God's sovereignty is more than sheer power or absolute authority. It is His capability of achieving His purposes in ways that do not violate the very conditions of life that He

has created. God has given to each person the right of self-determination, or free will, which God does not violate” (Disciple’s Study Bible, p. 34).

“Moses attributed the substantial growth of the Hebrew people (Deuteronomy 1:10) to the blessing of God. We do not want to take a deterministic viewpoint holding that every event is the direct result of God’s intervention, but we ought to see God’s hand in human affairs more than we do. Is there any good thing in life for which we are not indebted to God? We should be careful not to trace cause-effect relationships between God and everything that happens to us. We should be careful to praise and thank God for all the good things that do come to us” (Disciple’s Study Bible, p, 212).

***Sing praises to God, sing praises; sing praises to our King, sing praises. For God is the King of all the earth; sing to him a psalm of praise. God reigns over the nations; God is seated on his holy throne. The nobles of the nations assemble as the people of the God of Abraham, for the kings of the earth belong to God; he is greatly exalted.*** vv. 6-9

“In the so-called enthronement Psalms the accent is upon the coming reign of God, and the thought may be compared to the phrase of the Lord’s Prayer, ‘***Thy kingdom come***’ (The Layman’s Bible Commentary: Psalms. Richmond, Virginia: John Knox Press, 1960, p. 81).

The Layman’s Bible Commentary divides the Psalm into two sections. The Nationalistic Outlook (47:1-5) speaks of the installation of an Israelite king. “In times past God showed his sovereign power by subduing the nations of Canaan and giving their land to Israel. Israel was both a Church and a state, which means that a nationalistic outlook was inevitable until Church and state should be separated. As the earthly king was installed with ‘shout’ and the sound of the ‘trumpet’ (I Kings 1: 38-40), so at the Festival, God is acknowledged as King” (p. 81).

The second emphasis is the missionary perspective in verses 6-9. The reasons for praise include the fact that God is King over all the earth. “His reign, though real in every generation, will one day be consummated when the rulers of all peoples gather ‘as the people of the God of Abraham’ – the fulfillment of the promise made in Genesis 12:3, ‘in you all the families of the earth will be blessed’.

According to Paul, men become sons of Abraham by faith in Jesus Christ (Gal. 3: 6-29). Verse 10 finds the Christian counterpart in Revelation 11:5, ***The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ, and he shall reign for ever and ever***” (pp. 81-82).

It is in this light that we read and study Psalm 47. God is King today and the day is coming when his Kingship will be recognized in all the earth. We must live this day in reverence and worship and anticipation.

## ***Psalm 96***

***Sing to the Lord a new song;  
Sing to the Lord, all the earth.  
Sing to the Lord, praise his name;  
Proclaim his salvation day after day.  
Declare his glory among the nations,  
His marvelous deeds among all people.*** vv. 1-3

“This psalm is unusual in that the praise is for God Himself. The majority of the praise psalms celebrate what He does or has done for people” (Disciple’s Study Bible, p. 708). Psalms 93, 97, 100 and 150 also exhibit this kind of praise for God Himself.

As we praise we tell others of his mighty works and his salvation. Praise is never just for ourselves. Praise is more than the songs we sing although this passage encourages us to sing a new song. Our songs should be fresh and meaningful not just repetitive and commonplace. Praise is also the declaration through words of the Lord’s glory.

***For great is the Lord and most worthy of praise;  
He is to be feared above all gods.  
For all the gods of the nations are idols  
But the Lord made the heavens.  
Splendor and majesty are before him.  
Strength and glory are in his sanctuary.*** vv. 4-6

The Hebrew people were surrounded by nations larger and strong than they were. These nations had many gods. It was easy for the Hebrews to be enticed to worship these gods. The Psalmist reminds the people that the Lord their God made the heavens. He is the Creator. No god compares with his splendor, majesty, strength, and glory.

***Ascribe to the Lord, O families of nations,  
Ascribe to the Lord glory and strength.  
Ascribe to the Lord the glory due his name  
Bring an offering and come into his courts.  
Worship the Lord in the splendor of his holiness;  
Tremble before him, all the earth.*** vv. 7-9

Ascribe is not a word often used by English speakers. The King James Version of the Bible uses the word “give”, but various other versions prefer ascribe. The dictionary definition says it means to attribute or impute or to acknowledge a characteristic belong to that being discussed. Therefore, we would acknowledge the glory and strength, the glory due his name.

Jewish people would have brought an offering into the temple as a part of their worship experience. In today’s world we may not have that sense of offering to God the money

given to church. In larger churches, the taking of the offering is done quietly and as inoffensively as possible. We are careful not to offend visitors by appearing to be asking for money. But we may be failing to help worshipers to understand that the offering is itself a worship experience. It is a joyful giving to the One who has given us so much.

The Layman's Bible Commentary calls these verses a missionary invitation. "Imaginatively and in the spirit of the great Prophet of the Exile (Isa. 49-66), the psalmist invites the families of the nations to worship Israel's God. The presence of Jews and converts at the festival in Jerusalem is prophetic of the eventual turning of the nations to the Lord. As the worshipers 'bring an offering,' so the peoples of the nations shall one day show their submission to God. Those participating in the festival are to be clothed in garments free from ceremonial uncleanness (see Lev. 11:24-28) and appropriate to the occasion" (p. 135).

When we worship the Lord in the splendor of his holiness, we should tremble before him. We should feel a holy awe in the presence of God. The Psalm began with encouraging the singing of a new song. That song should allow for that holy awe to be felt by those who sing.

***Say among the nations, "The Lord reigns"  
The world is firmly established, it cannot be moved;  
He will judge the people with equity.  
Let the heavens rejoice, let the earth be glad;  
Let the sea resound and all that is in it;  
Let the fields be jubilant, and everything in them.  
Then all the trees of the forest will sing for joy;  
They will sing before the Lord, for he comes,  
He comes to judge the earth.  
He will judge the world in righteousness  
And the people in his truth. VV. 10-13***

The Universal Judgment of the King is the title given these verses by The Layman's Bible Commentary. "The worshipping people are to proclaim the universal reign of God....As God manifested his kingship in the past by making the heavens (v. 5), he now manifests it in his dependable government of the world. But his Kingdom will come in its fullness as he executes his final judgement in righteousness and truth. Since the consummation of God's Kingdom is thought to include a transformation of nature as well as of human nature (see Isa. 11:6-10; 35:1-10; 55:12-13; Rom. 8:19-25) the heavens, the earth, the sea, the field and the trees are all exhorted to join in the praise of the Lord who is both King and Judge" (pp. 135-136).

***"He will judge the people with equity.*** All the peoples are meant. It is a glorious prediction and worthy of a new song. We sometimes become concerned with how people of other faiths and cultures will be judged. While we continue to share our Christian faith, we can also rest in this promise that the Lord will judge with equity.

The hymns of God's kingship are characterized by a universality which issues from the concept of God as continuing sovereign Lord. The new song of this psalm is that Yahweh is to be sung by the Congregation of Israel, to the world and then with the world joining in, for what he really is. It is something the peoples need vitally to know. And Israel had then as the Church of our Lord has now, both the joy and the obligation of singing, shouting and declaring it. In a world where every god had his favorites and every people its favorite god, it was incredible that one God, before whom the gods were nothing, should judge them all with consistent equity. It was indeed enough to make trees and fishes sing for joy. And it still is" (**The Broadman Bible Commentary, Vol. 4, Esther-Psalms**. Nashville: Broadman & Holman. 1971, p. 368).

These Psalms should encourage us to sing for joy. There are not so much to be analyzed and studied as used as a means of worship. Returning to our original definition of providence or the sovereignty of God we have the assurance that when all is said and done, in spite of the intervention of evil, God's will is going to be accomplished. Good will ultimately triumph. All things – all events, all people, all intentions, all good works, and all evil works – ultimately will be turned to that purpose.

### **Your Goal as the Leader of this Bible Study:**

These psalms should encourage your group to worship God for his care, his righteousness, and for his sovereignty. Help participants understand that God is in control even in the difficult circumstances of life. He is also involved in the details of our daily lives.

### **For Personal Reflection:**

**What have I learned from this study?**

**What personal experience does this lesson bring to mind?**

**What is one action I will take this week to apply this Scripture passage to my life?**

## **Bible Study Plan** (Suggested time: 35 minutes)

### ***God On His Throne – Enthroned Over The Universe***

Regroup the church after the Gathering Time and break by singing a chorus that young children can relate to—or another praise chorus if your congregation does not have children. Children who go to their own Bible teaching session should stay with the group until after this song. Have the preschoolers and children accompany the hymn with rhythm sticks, maracas, bells, etc.

**Begin by helping the group locate the Focal Text in their Bibles. Also, share with them the Main Idea to be learned from the Scriptures, and the Questions to be Explored by the group.**

#### **Focal Text**

Psalms 47; 96

#### **Background Text**

Psalms 93, 97, 98, 99

#### **Main Idea**

The psalmists delighted in describing God's sovereignty in its various expressions – over Jerusalem, over Israel, over ages and generations, over nature, and over the cosmos. The favorite expression of sovereignty and the theme of these psalms is seen in His direction and control of the affairs and kingdoms of earth. The main idea is that God is "King over all the earth," reigning on His throne over the nations. God's sovereignty is the basis for His people's joyful praise.

#### **Questions to Explore**

Can we say that we feel that God is "King over all the earth" and is reigning on His throne over the nations?

Or do today's many wars, terrorist attacks, and failure of human rulers make us feel that God has removed his hand from the affairs of the world?

#### **Teaching Aims**

Learners shall be led to affirm that God is the King of all the earth.

The church will discuss ways in which we see that God reigns over the nations and the rulers of those nations.

The church will decide on a definition of "the sovereignty of God" which is meaningful to the participants.

## Connect with Life:

Ask participants to recount a recent incident in which they were aware of God's care and provision. For those who find this difficult, encourage them to think of this while studying these psalms.

## Guide the Study:

Read the **Main Idea** (see above) to the group:

Share: The psalmists delighted in describing God's sovereignty in its various expressions – over Jerusalem, over Israel, over ages and generations, over nature and over the cosmos. The favorite expression of sovereignty and the theme of these psalms is seen in His direction and control of the affairs and kingdoms of earth. The main idea is that God is "King over all the earth," reigning on His throne over the nations. God's sovereignty is the basis for His people's joyful praise.

Now ask the Questions to Explore:

Can we say that we feel that God is "King over all the earth" and is reigning on His throne over the nations?

Or do today's many wars, terrorist attacks, and failure of human rulers make us feel that God has removed his hand from the affairs of the world?

Say: We will examine the idea of the sovereignty of God in this lesson. One expression of God's sovereignty is seen in what one commentator called the providence of God.

Summarize how it was expressed in the following quote:

Conyers in his book, **A Basic Christian Theology**, uses the word "providence" to describe what is meant by the concept we are considering. "The underlying view of the gospel is that God uses every occasion, whether good or evil, to pursue his ultimate goal of redemption. Nothing escapes the ceaseless divine pursuit of the ultimate good. Providence, therefore, is the perfect reflection of the doctrine of creation. In creation, all things are created good, showing that God's intention toward his creation is altogether good. Providence is the assurance that when all is said and done, in spite of the intervention of evil, God's will is going to be accomplished. Good will ultimately triumph. All things – all events, all people, all intentions, all good works, and all evil works – ultimately will be turned to that purpose." (**A Basic Christian Theology**, Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 1995, p. 62)

Discuss the concept and how people have experienced God's sovereignty in their own lives.

Have someone read Psalm 47: 1-5.

Comment on the ingredients of a coronation included here:

- a. the people shout and clap their hands in celebration (v. 1)
- b. there is a trumpet fanfare (v.5)
- c. neighboring kings pay their respect (v.9)
- d. there is also a procession up to the Temple (v. 5).

Share this: The psalmist reminds the people that God has directed their path through many years. As God exercises His sovereignty, He does not simply manipulate the peoples of the earth as pawns on a chessboard. He works in a way that takes into account the freedom of will that He has granted to all people. We are limited in what we can see about God's work in the history of the world.

Allow for discussion. (Refer back to page 9 of the Teacher Preparation materials and be sure you have the basic ideas presented there clearly in your own mind).

Continue: One commentator said that we ought to see God's hand in human affairs more than we do.

Remind the group of the opening exercise in which participants were encouraged to share ways in which they were aware of God's work in their lives.

Ask: Do any of you remember other incidents in the light of the discussion?

Comment: It is important that we learn to see God's providential care and sovereignty in our lives when things are going well so that when difficulties come we can hold on to that truth. But here is an important warning in ministering to others. It is well to remember to be careful in speaking of God's sovereignty to someone grieving who may not understand this Biblical truth. Such comments can easily cause the grieving person or family to reject what you say, reject you as a cruel person; even further reject God. Most often, you don't need to say anything. Simply your presence will be enough for those grieving to feel God's presence which comes with you.

Have someone read Psalm 47: 6-9.

Comment: We see the reasons for praise including the fact that God is King over all the earth. This is a reality to be fully realized at Christ's return.

Have someone read Genesis 12:3 and Revelation 11:5.

Explain: God is King today and the day is coming when His Kingship will be recognized in all the earth. We must live this day in reverence and worship and anticipation.



Have someone read Psalm 96: 1-3.

Say: This psalm is unusual in that the praise is for God Himself. The majority of the praise psalms celebrate what He does or has done for people.

Ask: What might be meant by “Sing to the Lord a new song”.

State: Music is an important part of worship, **but it is not all of worship.** Here we are told that we are to sing, praise, proclaim. To proclaim is to tell others of his wonderful salvation and his marvelous deeds.

Have someone read Psalm 96: 4-6.

Inquire: What reason is given to the Hebrew people for fearing the Lord above the idols of the nations around them? (God is creator of the universe)

Have someone read Psalm 96: 7-9.

Ask: What definition would one give to the word “ascribe”. (We are to acknowledge the glory due the Lord)

Encourage your group to consider what this passage might say to us about the offerings we bring in our worship times.

Have a reader read Psalm 96: 10-13.

Summarize the following in your own words:

The Universal Judgment of the King is the title given these verses by The Layman’s Bible Commentary.

“The worshipping people are to proclaim the universal reign of God....As God manifested his kingship in the past by making the heavens (v. 5), he now manifests it in his dependable government of the world.

But his Kingdom will come in its fullness as he executes his final judgement in righteousness and truth. Since the consummation of God’s Kingdom is thought to include a transformation of nature as well as of human nature (see Isa. 11:6-10; 35:1-10; 55:12-13; Rom. 8:19-25) the heavens, the earth, the sea, the field and the trees are all exhorted to join in the praise of the Lord who is both King and Judge” (pp. 135-136).

Now ask: According to these verses how will the Lord judge the people? (With equity, in righteousness, and in his truth)

Discuss what this would mean. Make sure that they all understand the word “**equity**”. Bring with you the definition of the word from a dictionary and share it with the group.

### **Encourage Application:**

If you have two or more youth, this is the time to give them the **Youth!!! Take Ten** page and allow them to move away from the adults and apply the lesson by and for themselves.

Conclude with this declaration: Returning to our original definition of providence or the sovereignty of God, we have the assurance that when all is said and done, in spite of the intervention of evil, God’s will is going to be accomplished. Good will ultimately triumph. All things – all events, all people, all intentions, all good works, and all evil works – ultimately will be turned to that purpose.

Ask someone to close the Bible study in prayer.

**Take a five minute break to separate the Bible Study and Worship Time.** Children may need to use the washroom again before worship.

# YOUTH!!! TAKE TEN

## Bible Study Application for Youth

You may wish to move away from the adults for the final five to ten minutes of the Bible study and help each other as youth to apply the lesson to your own needs.

### ***God On His Throne – Enthroned Over The Universe*** **Psalms 47; 96**

**A youth will lead the following activity and comments.** No adults need to be present. If possible, teens should take turns in leading the application time.

## **Sovereignty**

### **Is Really, Really Hard to Understand!!!**

One of the most important doctrines or beliefs that we need to consider is that of the sovereignty or providence of God. It is a concept that we will be trying to understand in its fullest for all of our lives. Think together and discuss using the following definition:

Conyers in his book **A Basic Christian Theology** (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 1995, p. 62) uses the word “providence” to describe what is meant by the concept we are considering. “The underlying view of the gospel is that God uses every occasion, whether good or evil, to pursue his ultimate goal of redemption. Nothing escapes the ceaseless divine pursuit of the ultimate good. Providence, therefore, is the perfect reflection of the doctrine of creation. In creation, all things are created good, showing that God’s intention toward his creation is altogether good. Providence is the assurance that when all is said and done, in spite of the intervention of evil, God’s will is going to be accomplished. Good will ultimately triumph. All things – all events, all people, all intentions, all good works, and all evil works – ultimately will be turned to that purpose.”

**Worship Time** (Suggested time: 30 minutes)***God On His Throne – Enthroned Over The Universe***  
**Psalms 47; 96****Beginning the Service:**

Sing one or all of the following:

**Great Is the Lord**, *The Worship Hymnal* #61; CCLI #1149

**What A Mighty God We Serve**, *The Worship Hymnal* #64; CCLI #4397553

**Awesome God**, *The Worship Hymnal* #63; CCLI #4099

**Offering:****Praying for the World:**

No known church exists among the more than 400,000 Bunu who inhabit Yunnan and Guangxi Provinces of China. Because many have retreated to land no one else wants, isolation is their greatest barrier to the Gospel.

One distinct feature of Bunu culture is their matriarchal society. Bunu women are the legal property holders and have the freedom to divorce and remarry as they see fit.

Polytheists and animists, they worship many gods and spirits, while also adhering to Taoism and ancestor worship. Less than 100 Bunu are believed to be professing Christians.

**Sharing Guide:**

**This sharing guide is written to assist the person who directs the worship time to reemphasize the teaching for the day and help guide the congregation to respond to God's call and will for their lives in regard to the scripture studied. The leader may choose to follow the guide closely. Or, he or she may wish to only use it to give direction and a concept for preparing an original message. The leader is free to choose other ways to communicate and share the concepts presented here.**

## **Our God Reigns**

### **Psalms 93, 97, 98, 99**

We have studied Psalm 47 and Psalm 96 which are part of a group of psalms which praise God's sovereignty. We have seen that as God exercises his sovereignty within history, he does not simply manipulate the peoples of the earth. He works in a way which takes into account the freedom of will given to all people. Yet, He is always at work in and through the various peoples of the world to accomplish His will. In the Psalms called the Enthronement Psalms, the accent is upon the coming reign of God. We will examine portions of Psalms 93, 97, 98 and 99 which speak to His reign – presently and in the future.

Psalm 93: 1-2

***The Lord reigns, he is robed in majesty;  
The Lord is robed in majesty  
And is armed with strength.  
The world is firmly established;  
It cannot be moved.  
Your throne was established long ago;  
You are from all eternity.***

God has no time limits. He firmly established the world and has existed from eternity. No power can change that reality. We rest in the assurance that the Lord reigns, he is robed in majesty and is armed with strength. Furthermore, His strength is available to us; His strength is our strength.

Psalm 97: 1-7; 10

***The Lord reigns, let the earth be glad;  
Let the distant shores rejoice.  
Clouds and thick darkness surround him;  
Righteousness and justice are the foundation of his throne.  
Fire goes before him  
And consumes his foes on every side.  
His lightning lights up the world;  
The earth sees and trembles.  
The mountains melt like wax before the Lord,  
Before the Lord of all the earth.  
The heavens proclaim his righteousness  
And all the peoples see his glory.***

***Let those who love the Lord hate evil,  
For He guards the lives of his faithful ones  
And delivers them from the hand of the wicked.***

The Psalm affirms the joy we can have in the fact that the Lord reigns. He reigns with righteousness and justice. Dramatic symbolism of fire and lightning and mountains melting should cause fear in the hearts of those who choose to be outside of his protective care.

Those who love the Lord must hate evil. To love him is more than emotion. It is a commitment to avoid evil actions. Then we can rest in the promise of God's protection, blessing and joy.

Psalm 98 repeats the theme of Psalm 96.

***Sing to the Lord a new song,  
For he has done marvelous things;  
His right hand and his holy arm  
Have worked salvation for him.  
The Lord has made his salvation known  
And revealed his righteousness to the nations.  
He has remembered his love  
And his faithfulness to the house of Israel;  
All the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God.*** (vv. 1-3)

Here we see the emphasis on the coming reign of God. ***The Lord has made his salvation known and revealed his righteousness to the nations. All the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God.*** We must remember here that the Psalmist was writing long before Christ's birth. Yet he understood that a right relationship to the Lord was to be available to all people. John 3:16 reminds us ***For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.*** The Psalmist wrote from the perspective of a Jewish believer who felt that Jews were the chosen people of God. Yet, God revealed to him that a larger plan was in place – ***all the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God.***

We need to be reminded of that promise and hope. In the darkness of our day when war is happening in many parts of the world; when hatred is strong and young people are sacrificing their lives to kill innocent people we must cling to the understanding that righteousness and justice and the salvation of our God will prevail.

Psalm 98 gives us the directions for the new song we are to sing.

***Shout for joy to the Lord, all the earth,  
Burst into jubilant song with music;  
Make music to the Lord with the harp,  
With the harp and the sound of singing,  
With trumpets and the blast of the ram's horn  
–Shout for joy before the Lord, the King.***

***Let the sea resound, and everything in it,  
The world, and all who live in it.  
Let the rivers clap their hands,  
Let the mountains sing together for joy;  
Let them sing before the Lord. vv. 4-9***

Now that would be a new song!

Psalm 99 continues the theme:

***The Lord reigns,  
For the nations tremble;  
He sits enthroned between the cherubim,  
Let the earth shake.  
Great is the Lord in Zion;  
He is exalted over all the nations.  
Let them praise your great and awesome name  
–He is holy.***

The beautiful psalms we have examined this morning should be read aloud and be read often. They help us worship; they make us want to shout for joy, to burst into jubilant song with music, make music on the harp and trumpet and many other instruments.

They help us believe that God is in control and that righteousness and justice will prevail when in the darkest night we find that hard to believe.

### **Call to Commitment:**

Let us praise His great and awesome name – He is holy.

### **Concluding the Service:**

Sing the following song which focuses on the Christ as the God who reigns.

**Our God Reigns, *The Worship Hymnal* #58; CCLI #8458**