The Lord Reigns
How the Lord’s reign should affect you
Psalm 97
Don Ruhl • Savage Street, Grants Pass, Oregon • September 7, In the year of our Lord, 2014
Song Leader and Song Suggestions: Rejoice in the Lord Always (875); I Exalt Thee (938)

Prelude:
I. First Point

Persuasion:
I. Psalm 97.1 – The Lord Reigns; Rejoice

1. The Lord reigns;
   Let the earth rejoice;
   Let the multitude of isles be glad!

A. That first line says it all.
   1. ISIS, ISIL, IS the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria does not reign.
   2. The United States government does not reign.
   4. The economy does not reign.
   5. The weather does not reign.
   6. The Oregon Ducks do not reign.
   7. Science does not reign.

B. The Lord reigns;
   1. let the Earth rejoice, and
   2. let all the islands be glad.
      a) Man, am I glad that the Lord reigns and
      b) not someone else.

C. Psalm 97 does not merely speak of ancient Israel, but
   1. of the Earth and
2. of the multitude of isles;
   a) let them all rejoice and be glad
   b) that Jehovah God reigns,
      (1) not *will* reign, but
      (2) He reigns *now!*
         (a) Therefore, do not worry and do not be discouraged.
         (b) Someway, somehow, someday we shall win, because
            i) the Lord reigns, and
            ii) no one can overthrow Him,
                (1) although men have tried repeatedly, but
                (2) they have all failed.

D. How do I know the Lord shall continue to reign?
   1. Verses 2–6 answer that question.
   2. Open your mind’s eye to see something wonderful.

II. Psalm 97.2–6 – The Lord Reigns; See His Glory

2 Clouds and darkness surround Him;
   Righteousness and justice are the foundation of His throne.
3 A fire goes before Him,
   And burns up His enemies round about.
4 His lightnings light the world;
   The earth sees and trembles.
5 The mountains melt like wax at the presence of the Lord,
   At the presence of the Lord of the whole earth.
6 The heavens declare His righteousness,
   And all the peoples see His glory.

A. Clouds and darkness surround Him,
   1. so that no one can approach Him and
   2. overthrow Him.

B. Righteousness and justice form the foundation of His throne.
1. Therefore, the wicked, criminals, drug lords, terrorists, atheists, evolutionists, scientists, nor anyone else

2. shall be able to get rid of Him, although they would love to do so.

C. Fire goes out before Him and burns up His enemies,

1. as demonstrated repeatedly throughout history.

2. Everyone and every nation that has tried to remove the Lord
   a) is no longer with us, but
   b) He and His church continue to this very hour.

D. His lightnings light the world, and

1. when the Earth sees His lightning,

2. the Earth trembles,
   a) so will all His enemies
   b) when they see Him on His judgment throne with lightnings.

E. The mountains melt like wax in His presence, and

1. so will anyone who has opposed Him, because

2. they will realize just how real He is and how foolish they have been.

F. The heavens declare His righteousness,

1. showing that He created our world to hold life, human life, and

2. that if you live by His natural laws, you do well, but
   a) if you violate His natural laws, you suffer.
   b) So it is with His spiritual laws.

G. When I read over verses 2–6, Nahum 1 pops into my mind,

3b The Lord has His way
   In the whirlwind and in the storm,
   And the clouds are the dust of His feet.

4 He rebukes the sea and makes it dry,
   And dries up all the rivers.
   Bashan and Carmel wither,
And the flower of Lebanon wilts.
5 The mountains quake before Him,
The hills melt,
And the earth heaves at His presence,
Yes, the world and all who dwell in it.
(Nah 1.3–5)

H. Also, I picture Israel’s experience at Mt. Sinai,

16 Then it came to pass on the third day, in the morning, that there were
thunderings and lightnings, and a thick cloud on the mountain; and the
sound of the trumpet was very loud, so that all the people who were in the
camp trembled.

18 Now Mount Sinai was completely in smoke, because the Lord descended
upon it in fire. Its smoke ascended like the smoke of a furnace, and the
whole mountain quaked greatly (Exo 19.16, 18).

I. Ezekiel 43 also pictures an awesome of the glory of the reigning Lord,

2 And behold, the glory of the God of Israel came from the way of the east.
His voice was like the sound of many waters; and the earth shone with His
glory (Eze 43.2).

III. Psalm 97.7 – The Lord Reigns; Worship Him

7 Let all be put to shame who serve carved images,
Who boast of idols.
Worship Him, all you gods.

A. They will be put to shame who serve carved images.

1. Show me
   a) one carved image and

   b) those who serve that image
      (1) from the days of this psalmist
      (2) who survive to our generation.
2. Every idol and all who have served those idols
   a) have ended,
   b) going down in shame for having worshiped and serve a stone.

B. People have boasted of their idols and
   1. a whole lot more, but
   2. any idol in which they have boasted, and
      a) anything else in which they have boasted,
      b) has failed.

C. Can you imagine how idolaters shall feel
   1. when they see our Lord in His glory?
   2. They spent their time worshiping a piece of wood, and then
      a) they see the great God,
      b) surrounded by over one hundred million angels!

D. Our Lord continues to reign,
   1. setting up the Kingdom of God in the first century, and
   2. that Kingdom continues to this very hour,
      a) spread out over all the Earth.
      b) When the Kingdom of our Lord had been set up in every time zone,
         (1) we could say from that time until this time
         (2) that the sun never sets on His Kingdom, which is the church.

E. Therefore, we tell everything, every idol and every god among men,
   1. worship the one true and living God, and
   2. the Lord Jesus Christ.

IV. Psalm 97.8–9 – The Lord Reigns; Be Glad

   8 Zion hears and is glad,
       And the daughters of Judah rejoice
Because of Your judgments, O Lord.

9 For You, Lord, are most high above all the earth; You are exalted far above all gods.

A. Zion, now the Church of the living God, hears something, and
   1. Zion is glad to hear of it.
   2. The women rejoice at the news.
      a) What is the news? What does Zion hear?
      b) The Lord judges.

B. Why does He judge?
   1. He is the most high above all the Earth.
   2. He is exalted far above all gods.
   3. He has the right.
      a) As Melchizedek referred to our Lord, He is,
      b) “God Most High, Possessor of heaven and Earth” (Gen 14.19).

V. Psalm 97.10a – The Lord Reigns; Hate Evil

10a You who love the Lord, hate evil!

A. This Psalm was written to people who love the Lord, and
   1. I speak on it today to people who love the Lord.
   2. Do you love the Lord?

B. If so, what did the psalmist say for you to do?
   1. Hate evil!
   2. You cannot simultaneously love the Lord and hate evil.
      a) If we love evil,
      b) we hate the Lord.

VI. Psalm 97.10b–11 – The Lord Reigns; Be at Peace
10b He preserves the souls of His saints;
He delivers them out of the hand of the wicked.

11 Light is sown for the righteous,
And gladness for the upright in heart.

A. The Psalm began by telling us that the Lord reigns.
   1. If that is the case, then
      a) He can preserve the souls of His saints,
      b) He can deliver them out of the hand of the wicked,
      c) He can sow light for the righteous, and
      d) He can sow gladness for the upright in heart.

B. The Lord reigns.
   1. See what that means for us, according to verses 10 and 11?
   2. Therefore, be at peace.
      a) Your preservation, deliverance, light, and gladness
      b) do not come from man, the government, pills, retirement funds, Social Security, a good economy, and so on.
         (1) The Lord provides what we need, and
         (2) sometimes He does it through these other entities, but
            (a) He can just as easily dismiss them, and
            (b) use something new.

VII. Psalm 97.12 – The Lord Reigns; Rejoice

12 Rejoice in the Lord, you righteous,
And give thanks at the remembrance of His holy name.

A. You have every reason to rejoice in the Lord,
   1. if you are righteous.

B. You have every reason to give thanks when you remember His holy name,
1. if you are upright in heart.

C. Therefore, do it.

1. Go home and
   a) be happy that your Lord reigns, and
   b) give Him thanks for reigning in your life and
      (1) for preserving your soul,
      (2) for delivering you from the wicked,
      (3) for giving you light, and
      (4) for filling your heart with gladness.

2. Learn to see your whole life in the context of the Lord.

26 “And He has made from one blood every nation of men to dwell on all the face of the earth, and has determined their preappointed times and the boundaries of their dwellings, 27 so that they should seek the Lord, in the hope that they might grope for Him and find Him, though He is not far from each one of us; 28 for in Him we live and move and have our being, as also some of your own poets have said, ‘For we are also His offspring’” (Acts 17.26–28).

Exhortation:

I. I want to declare to you today

A. that Jesus of Nazareth reigns, because

B. Jesus is Lord.

1. To be saved, you confess that Jesus is Lord.

2. You confess that He is the Lord of Psalm 97.
   a) Therefore, whatever Psalm 97 says about the Lord,
   b) Psalm 97 says about Jesus of Nazareth.

II. Do you know who Jesus is?

A. When He lived on the Earth,
1. He demonstrated His power over all nature by the miracles He did, which
2. only the Creator of nature could do.

B. When you believe in Jesus as the Lord,
1. you will see even more of His glory,
2. especially as John the apostle saw, as recorded in Revelation 1:
   a) His head and hair were as white as snow,
   b) His eyes looked like flames of fire,
   c) His feet looked like fine brass,
   d) His voice sounded like many waters,
   e) He holds stars in His hand,
   f) a two-edged sword comes out of His mouth, and
   g) His face shines like the sun.

III. Someday the Lord of Psalm 97 shall descend from heaven

A. with the clouds of heaven and
B. with His holy angels.

1. He shall take His people to be with Him forever in heaven.
2. The rest He shall cast away from Him forever.
   a) In which group are you?
   b) If you are in the group to be cast away,
      (1) do you want to change that status?
      (2) Are you ready to do it right now?