

## **WHO'S IN CONTROL?**

Tuesday, April 10

Reading: Psalm 47

**Psalm 47:7** *For God is the King of all the earth; sing to him a psalm of praise. 8 God reigns over the nations; God is seated on his holy throne. 9 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.*

In 1949, George Orwell wrote a book called 1984. It's a story of a futuristic world that has been divided into three superstates after a global war. The story takes place in Oceania where one man tries to rebel against the tyrannical government led by "Big Brother" and has his efforts quashed. He is then reprogrammed to love Big Brother.

Though written almost 70 years ago, we can see elements of Orwell's story coming true. The governments of the world want ultimate control of their people and some will use force and manipulation to get it. This is nothing new. Human nature craves power. With the way the world is going, we might wonder who is really in control. Have human governments usurped the sovereignty of God?

The obvious answer is - NO! In Psalm 47, God is praised as "the great King over all the earth." In the previous psalm we read of the nations in an uproar. Here that theme is continued as the Lord "subdued nations" for His people (47:3).

What is striking about this psalm is the way the psalmist describes the people of the world. He only uses the Hebrew word for political nations once (47:8). The rest of the time he uses the word for the people of the land - the common citizens. Thus the theme of this psalm is while "God reigns over the nations," His grace is reaching out to all people groups. They are encouraged to praise His (47:1, 7). In the final verse, these people are seen assembled with the Israelites "as the people of the God of Abraham" (47:9). As the New Testament would show, God's people come from every tribe, language, and tongue.

Israel had been chosen to be a light that led all peoples to the true God. Long before the time of Jesus, however, they had departed from this mission and came to believe that they were God's special people and no one else mattered. But this psalm shows that the joy of God's grace is available for all people.

A king ascending to his throne was a cause for great joy. The psalmist uses this imagery to describe the greatness of God (47:5-9). I cannot read these verses without thinking of the Lord Jesus Christ. After He died and rose again, Christ ascended to heaven and is seated in the place of power at the right hand of the throne of God (see Ephesians 1-2). He is the great King and by His grace we are saved (Ephesians 2:4-9).

The rulers of the nations may think they have control over their people, but "the kings of the earth belong to God" (47:9). He is in ultimate control. He reigns in heaven and will one day return to set up a visible kingdom here on earth. So "clap your hands and shout to God with cries of joy. For the Lord Most High is awesome" (47:1-2).

**THRU THE BIBLE Reading: Judges 10-12; John 4**