

Psalm 97 Reign on!



Today's psalm looks initially very similar to the previous psalm of last week, but quickly takes on a rather darker note. Psalm 96 show us a God to be worshipped jubilantly, whereas Psalm 97 shows a God who is also to be feared.

➤ **Darkness** (1-6)

First of all, look back at Psalm 96. What do you see there that is also reflected in this psalm?

If it was just v1, the second half of v2, and v6, this would seem just like a re-run. But it's not. Why not?

So how do these more threatening-sounding descriptions of God add to our understanding?

How literally are we to take them?

Why do we need these too?

➤ **Light** (7-12)

As in 96:5, the “worthless idols” (7) is a deliberate sound-alike word play in Hebrew on the word “God” or “gods” (end of 7 and 9). Why is it so good that the worshippers of these “worthless idols” should be “put to shame”? Isn't this intolerant and unfair?

How can “gods” be called upon to worship the true God (7)?

How are we to “hate evil”? (10) Think in practical terms.

What does “light is sown for the righteous” (11) mean?

Is it the same as “joy” (other half of the verse)?

Have you experienced this personally?