

Above All

Psalm 96:7-13

Sermon Outline

A. Make Every Effort to Lift the Lord Up (vs. 7):

1. Ascribe – We are commanded to put in the effort needed to give God honor. This must be an active process that can be accomplished individually and collectively.
 - a) WE TEND TO WORSHIP GOD WHEN WE FEEL BLESSED OR ARE BLESSED BUT WE WOULD NOT FEEL OR BE IF IT WAS NOT FOR HIM.
2. Lord – Honor is given because the Lord has all authority and power and actively seeks to sustain a relationship with everyone whether saved or unsaved.
3. Lord – The Lord is committed to fulfilling all He has covenanted to do.
4. Ascribe to the Lord the glory – We are also commanded to give the Lord, who sincerely cares for us and seeks us, and has the power to punish or reward everyone, all the reverence that is due Him.
 - a) People everywhere should praise Him because He reigns (cf. 47:8; 93:1; 97:1; 99:1; 146:10). When the Lord returns to judge and reign on earth His reign will at last be established (cf. 92:1) with righteousness.^[1]
5. And strength - We need to remind ourselves that it is God who sustains us against the most powerful forces of this world and provides us safe places (34:7-8; 46:1; 59:16; Jeremiah 16:19).
6. Strength -- Give to Him from our strength not left-over energy.
7. Ascribe to the Lord – Again we are commanded to put in the effort needed to give the Lord, who has all authority and power, high esteem. This must be an active process that can be accomplished individually and collectively.
8. The glory of His name – We are commanded to keep the reputation and memory of God in a position of high regard and honor. We must never forget all that the Lord has done, from the past to the present, since He purposefully, faithfully exercises His authority and power to protect us from the evil one. We keep His memory and reputation lifted high.
 - a) Name – Reputation, memory, character, accessibility to God, and attitude to all believers.

9. The glory of His name – When we go through difficult times and we purposefully put a lot of energy into glorifying and blessing God’s name it can truly lift our spirits, like it did for David dancing through the streets.

10. Bring an offering – We are commanded to independently lift or carry (this is because they brought animals) our gifts to the Lord. It is a deliberate act that is preplanned (1 Corinthians 16:1-2).

a) Offering – it is a tribute for the goodness of God because we have entered His courts (the wise men came with gifts – a tribute to the king).

11. Bring an offering – We are commanded because of our reverence and respect for the Lord to prepare before coming into His presence to sacrificially bring a gift to Him.

12. Bring an offering – Because the Lord’s memory and reputation reminds us of all He faithfully does, causing us to highly esteem Him, it should lead worshippers to prepare and sacrificially bring an offering to Him.

13. Come into His courts – We are commanded to enter worship with purpose and to not stop until we have completed bringing an offering in respect of His faithfulness to us.

a) The phrase ‘... into his courts’ brings us to the public aspect of worship. The people were to do their singing and praise giving in the place designated for worship. Private worship is necessary, but it cannot replace public worship.^[2]

14. Come into His courts – The Lord is expecting us, because He is our fortress against all our enemies, including Satan, to honor His faithfulness by intentionally bringing an offering as we come to worship Him.

15. Come into His courts – This command, when everything above is obeyed, allows us to come into His courts appropriately.

B. Reverence His Power (vs. 9):

1. Worship the Lord – We are commanded to humble ourselves, as an act of reverence, when we enter His courts. This is a true attitude of worship.
2. Worship -- Because of His goodness, faithfulness, graciousness; because He is God – come with a prostrate heart – they fell with foreheads touching the ground (Islam – they do not have pews or chairs) especially because we have genuinely ascribed (bring, offer) glory, strength and highlighted His reputation.
3. Worship the Lord – Respect God’s power and authority by the way we humbly approach worship; the attitude that represents sincere worship.

- a) Reasons for this kind of worship are sprinkled throughout the first nine verses: God is great (v. 4), he alone is God (vv. 4–5), he is the creator of all things (v. 5), heaven is filled with his majesty and splendor (v. 6) and his sanctuary is filled with his strength and beauty (v. 6). With the last of these reasons, the psalmist may have been asserting that the temple was a holy place that reflected the strength and beauty of God. Our own worship services ought to display the same. ^[3]
4. Holy attire - Holy attire refers to clothes set aside based on what the Lord prescribes in His Word.
- a) The way worshippers come is also important. This is recognized based on their attire and fearful, reverent respect (Hebrews 12:28-29; 13:15-16).
5. Holy attire - Holy attire represents clothes that demonstrate respect for what the Lord describes as appropriate for the priest and for all those who submit to His word as it relates to what to wear (example 1 Peter 3:3-4).
- a) Matthew Henry says: ‘We must worship him with holy hearts, sanctified by the grace of God, devoted to the glory of God, and purified from the pollution of sin.’^[4]
6. Tremble before Him – We are commanded to come into His presence with complete reverence of His power and authority.
- a) Tremble seems to carry with it a sense of respect of His all-consuming power.
- b) God needs to be feared because He will judge in all His power and might (vs. 10, 13).
7. Tremble before Him – His powerful might to execute justice should cause us to fear Him.
- a) Someday every knee must bow (Phil. 2:10) before this sovereign LORD, whose holiness is awesome.
- b) We must come to Him recognizing His might and power so much that it brings inner fear and awe (Hebrews 12:28-29) as we come into His courts.
8. World -- We must worship Him with such praise, dedication, and awesome respect (1 Peter 4:17) that the world knows that He reigns, and justice is forthcoming. This justice is fair and just.

C. Always Remember He Reigns Forever (Vs. 10):

1. Say among the nations – The Lord expects us to speak up to everyone that crosses our path of how great and mighty He is.
2. The Lord reigns – The almighty powerful Lord who is always in complete control of everything is the chief operating king of all that takes place throughout the world (Colossians 1:15-20).
3. The Lord reigns – Noun, proper, masculine, singular, absolute+divine/ Qal, 3rd person, masculine, singular+qatal (perfect), active, suffixed (perfect) – Regardless of how chaotic things appear, the Lord is perfectly executing His plans, based on His Word, with total authority.

a) It was the countercultural cry of ancient Israelites in a world that believed that gods could rise and fall. In contrast, the living God remains Ruler for all eternity. He shall judge: This verse answers the cry of the oppressed peoples of world history. God will restore justice (82:8; 94:1–3).^[5]

4. Reigns – We demonstrate to the world that the Lord is king, ruler and chief executive officer (Eph. 2:22-23) by the way we worship Him and allow Him to lead our lives. Nothing He has put in place in the world can be changed by man. Everything He said will take place—it is certain—nothing can change things. In the last days there will be earthquakes, famines, pestilences, plagues, wars and rumors of wars – no one can stop them.

5. The world is firmly established – All that the Lord plans to do throughout the world is enduring and cannot be moved. It is anchored in His Word with the purpose of fulfilling all He said He will accomplish, and no one can change it.

6. The world is firmly established – No one can prevent what the Lord is going to accomplish, it will get done.

7. He will judge; Execute judgment – The Lord endlessly governs all the earth judiciously whether it is governments or the peoples who roam the earth.

8. He will judge; Execute judgment – It does not matter who seems to be getting away with evil in the Lord's time justice will flow like a river.

9. Equity – The Lord governs in a righteously. He is always fair and wise.

^[1] Ross, A. P. (1985). Psalms. In J. F. Walvoord & R. B. Zuck (Eds.), *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures* (Vol. 1, p. 863). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.

^[2] Ellsworth, R. (2006). Opening up Psalms (p. 210). Leominster: Day One Publications.

^[3] Ellsworth, R. (2006). Opening up Psalms (pp. 210–211). Leominster: Day One Publications.

^[4] Ellsworth, R. (2006). Opening up Psalms (p. 210). Leominster: Day One Publications.

^[5] Radmacher, E. D., Allen, R. B., & House, H. W. (1999). Nelson's new illustrated Bible commentary (p. 713). Nashville: T. Nelson Publishers.