

THRU THE BIBLE EXPOSITION
Psalms: Living By Faith In God
XLVII. God's Answer To The Reconstructionist Dismay
(Psalm 47:1-9)

Introduction: (To show the need . . .)

Many evangelicals hold to reconstructionism, also known as dominion theology, the view that “Christians will evangelize the whole earth, take political power, take the world stage, and usher in the kingdom of God.” (Brannon Howse, The Coming Religious Reich, 2015, p. 266) This view reflects the postmillennial belief that the Church allegedly replaced Israel in God’s promises to Abraham since Israel disobeyed God, and that the Church will usher in a thousand-year golden era followed by Christ’s return. (Ibid., p. 299; Charles Caldwell Ryrie, A Survey of Bible Doctrine, 1978, p. 161-163) However, with the increase of sin in the world, the reconstructionist view looks hopeless:

(1) In a letter to the Republican-American, Judith Howes of Danbury reported, “Killing babies is big business. Abortionists make thousands of dollars . . . destroying ‘products of conception’ . . . The moral climate isn’t healthy.”

(2) Medically induced gender transition for children has been increasingly practiced, but “(a)fter reviewing the evidence, the United Kingdom, France, Finland, and Sweden have all taken serious steps back from their previous stance that youth transition was safe and appropriate.” (“Listen to the science,” Ibid., November 18, 2022, p. 8A) Even The New York Times recently “published a report . . . taking an honest look at the harms being perpetrated” by such transitions, but in “the United States . . . the medical establishment is driven not by evidence-based reasoning . . . but by a desire to profit and a fear of the powerful trans activists who influence liberal politics.” (Ibid.)

(3) A recent “Washington Post article titled ‘7 ways a recession could be good for you financially’” gave misleading information on each of the 7 ways named in this article in apparent support of the Biden administration’s actions that have fueled inflation! (Ibid., E. J. Antoni, “Denying economic reality hurts struggling Americans,” November 18, 2022, p. 8A) We explain (as follows): (a) The article claimed that “(h)ousing prices may finally come down to reasonable levels,” but “(m)onthly payments for mortgages are increasing even as home prices fall because interest rates are rising so fast,” Ibid. (b) The article claimed that “(s)avings rates are up” though they “have totally collapsed” in “an 85% decline,” making the article’s claim “demonstrably false.” (Ibid.) (c) The article claimed that “I bonds inflation rate might go even higher,” but when inflation bond rates rise, “inflation is getting even worse . . . little consolation for all the other losses imposed by inflation.” (d) The article claimed that “(t)he dollar is king” but the “strength of the dollar . . . does little to help the vast majority of Americans who cannot afford to travel overseas as the article advises you to do.” (Ibid.) (e) The article claimed that “(u)nemployment is still relatively low” though “(u)nemployment . . . will soon get worse as businesses continue layoffs and stop hiring.” (Ibid.) (f) The article claimed that “(y)our used car is worth more,” but though “you can sell your used car for more . . . then what will you drive? . . . In the very next paragraph, the article acknowledges that new car prices have gone up even faster in the last year than used car prices.” (Ibid.) (g) The article claimed that “(s)tudent loan forgiveness is coming,” but “if the handouts ultimately evade the constitutional challenges, they will exacerbate the underlying economic problems fueling inflation and high college tuition.” (Ibid.) Mr. Antoni thus concluded that “(t)he Washington Post is dead wrong about the alleged benefits of a recession . . .” (Ibid.) So, a nationally known, allegedly reputable newspaper has printed an article in defense of the Biden administration’s financial policies, providing errant information on every major point that it made in its article, more evidence that the mainstream media is simply not being honest with us!

(4) Tracy O’Shaughnessy’s story, “Driving Off The Demons” (Ibid., p. 1B) told how “the pandemic, cultural unrest and obvious stressors like school shootings has deeply affected the mental health of children.” Dr. Katelyn Cusmano at Yale New Haven Children’s Hospital claimed, “The world has a lot more anxiety now . . . There is so much going on in society . . . We get through one problem and another springs up . . .”

(5) Religious liberty is increasingly at risk: A bill has been advanced “in the Senate that would protect same-sex and interracial marriages in federal law,” a negative reaction to an “opinion . . . from Justice Clarence Thomas” in the Supreme Court’s overturning of *Roe v. Wade* that removed the federal sanction of abortion. (David Crary, “Faith groups split over bill to protect same-sex marriage,” Ibid., p. 3B) However, “the U. S. Conference of Catholic Bishops and leaders of the Southern Baptist Convention remain opposed, saying the bill . . . is a dire threat to religious liberty. A paramount concern for these leaders of the country’s two largest denominations is that even the updated bill would not protect religious schools or faith-based non-profits such as adoption and foster care providers.” (Ibid.)

Need: So, we ask, “If the reconstructionist belief that the Church will gain control of the world and usher in a thousand-year, golden era of God’s kingdom on earth is not being realized, what should we do, and why?!”

- I. Psalm 47:1-9 predicts God's coming reign over the whole world, Bible Know. Com., O. T., p. 829.**
- II. However, this psalm's description of that reign counters the reconstructionist view of God's kingdom:**
- A. God is presented as one day ruling over the earth (Psalm 47:2b, 7a) with the "shields" of the earth, "the symbols of authority" over the world, also belonging to Him, Ryrie Study Bible, KJV, 1978, fn. to Psa. 47:9.
 - B. However, in Psalm 47:9b, the psalmist noted that God will rule over the people of the God of **Abraham**, and God's covenant with **Abraham** was *unconditional* in Genesis 15:9-17: "Ordinarily, the two parties to the agreement would walk together between the parts of the sacrifice, but on this occasion . . . God put Abraham to sleep and passed alone between the parts of the animals. God could hardly have demonstrated more clearly that the keeping of this covenant depended on Him alone." (Ibid., Ryrie, A Survey of Bible Doctrine, p. 161)
 - C. Since the **Abrahamic** covenant was *unconditional*, though Israel sinfully failed God in history, God will still keep His covenant with Israel due to its *unconditional* nature! Thus, the postmillennial, reconstructionist, and dominion theology belief that the Church replaced Israel as the recipient of that **Abrahamic** covenant because that covenant was **alleged** to be a *conditional* covenant that Israel did not keep is in **ERROR!**
- III. Accordingly, Psalm 47:9 sums that the princes of the people of the God of Abraham will be gathered together since the Lord has authority over all the world's nations in Christ's future Millennial Kingdom!**

Lesson: *The reconstructionist belief that the Church will gain control of the world and usher in a thousand-year, golden era of God's kingdom on earth errs, for Christ will rule the world through a regenerated nation Israel at His Second Coming to earth in fulfillment of God's unconditional covenant to Abraham, the premillennial view!*

Application: *(1) May we trust in Christ Who died as our Atoning Sacrifice for sin that we might receive God's gift of eternal life, John 3:16; 1 Corinthians 15:1-11. (2) May we reject the postmillennial, reconstructionist and dominion theology view that the Church will usher in God's worldwide kingdom in favor of the Biblical premillennial view that Christ will rule the world through a regenerated nation Israel as foretold in Scripture!*

Conclusion: (To illustrate the message and provide additional guidance . . .)

(1) In adopting the premillennial worldview over the postmillennial (and reconstructionist and dominion theology) view, instead of trying to transform society or aiming to save the world's institutions, may we realize that most of the world will not believe in Christ as predicted in the Matthew 13 parables and 2 Thessalonians 2:10-12 and instead disciple those who will believe in preparation for Christ's future kingdom! (Acts 1:8; Matthew 28:19-20)

(2) To avoid falling into the error of misinterpreting Scripture, what led to the errant postmillennial view, we note how this view arose in Church History (as follows): (a) "(T)he [Christian] Alexandrian school of theology in Egypt led by Clement of Alexandria and Origen" tried "to harmonize systematic theology with Platonic philosophy. As this was possible only by interpreting Scripture in a nonliteral sense and regarding Scripture as one great allegory in which the apparent sense was not the real sense, much of the literal meaning of Scripture was lost, including the doctrine of a literal millennium following" Christ's "second advent." (John F. Walvoord, The Blessed Hope and the Tribulation, 19 , p. 12) (b) In the "fourth and fifth centuries," bishop "Augustine" used "a literal, historical, and grammatical interpretation of noneschatological (non-prophetic) passages, and a nonliteral or figurative interpretation of prophetic Scriptures . . . Thus amillennialism [where the literal thousand year earthly reign of Christ is denied and the Church replaces Israel] became the accepted doctrine of the Roman Catholic Church" and the "Protestant Reformers . . . were amillennial and opposed premillennialism," Ibid., p. 12-13. (c) Out of amillennialism – that held that God's kingdom is the era between Christ's first and second coming, the kingdom occurring mainly in heaven, or especially the last thousand years of it on the earth – grew postmillennialism. This view held to a thousand-year era created on earth by the Church's dominion of the world just before Christ's Second Coming to earth, Ibid., p. 13-14.

(3) The **lessons** we gain on avoiding mishandling Scripture from how [amillennialism and] postmillennialism arose are as follows: (a) First, we must not harmonize Scripture with secular philosophy but hold to Scripture as our sole and final authority for faith and practice, 2 Timothy 3:13-17. [This is a problem today as many evangelicals try to harmonize Genesis 1-2 with evolution only to produce errors that counter historic Bible beliefs!] (b) Second, we must interpret Scripture in its (i) literal, (ii) grammatical and (iii) historical contexts (iv) consistently, be it in handling (v) prophecy or (vi) non-prophetic parts of the Bible. (cf. Christ's example in Mark 12:24-27 and Matthew 5:18)

May we trust in Christ Who died as our Atoning Sacrifice for sin that we might receive God's gift of eternal life. May we reject the postmillennial, reconstructionist and dominion theology view that the Church will usher in God's worldwide kingdom, and may we favor the Biblical premillennial view that Christ will set up His world rule through a regenerated nation Israel at His Second Coming to earth as predicted in Psalm 47!