

# PRAYER AND PRAISE 23 // 18 AUGUST 2020

## Reading: Psalm 97

This psalm makes sure that we give our attention to God above all else. Before beginning reading, ask yourself, what characteristics of God are most significant in your mind.

+ Read (1-6) The Glory of the Lord. What is God like?

Consider his character (2), his judgements (3), his awesome fearfulness (4, 5). If this is what he is like, why should “*the earth be glad*” and “*the distant shores rejoice*” (1)? Think what a world would be like if there were no God like this.

Remember: The pictures of (2-5) are a reminder of God revealing himself to his people at Sinai [Exodus 19:16 - 20] when he established his covenant with them. (6) Picks up Psalm 19 with its double revelation of God in his creation and his word. The fact that God is seen in creation is used by Paul in Romans 1:19, 20 - nobody has an excuse not to seek him.

+ Read (7) What is the proper response of the pagan to God?

Consider what the pagan had to change and what the “gods” must do. [“gods” could refer to images, or God’s heavenly creatures or both. In either case they represent an authority other than God. It is a fiction or lie to trust their character or power.]

+ Read (8-9) Gladness!

[“Zion” and the “villages of Judah” represent God’s people.]  
What is the basis for them being glad?

Notice in these verses the double title of God “LORD” Covenant keeping God; and “Most high” all powerful.

→ Our God is a great big God and he holds us in his hand.

## Prayer Focus

Read and keep open Matthew 11:25 - 30 as you pray.

### Come to Him to receive [25, 26]

Pray for the child-like heart to receive what the Lord reveals by his Spirit in his Word.

Pray for others who do not yet know Jesus to be open to having the gospel revealed to them. Pray for specific people.

Give thanks. People coming to Jesus is what the Father deeply desires - he does not need persuading.

### Come to Him to be unburdened [27]

Give thanks that we do not have to get rid of burdens before we come to Jesus.

Give thanks - the invitation is to “all” who are burdened.

Pray: Hand over the burden to the Lord; whatever it is he already knows about it - work, witness, temptation, sin, anxiety, family etc.

### Come to Him to serve [29, 30]

Animals are yoked to work. There is service for Jesus for us to do.

Pray for willingness to work as the Lord assigns.

Pray to “learn from me [Jesus]”.

Give thanks: His burden is light.

The promise is of rest for the soul for all who come to serve.

### Come to ponder the heart of Jesus [29]

“I am gentle and lowly in heart”. Worship this Saviour.

### **Creed: holy catholic church**

*“Just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many are one body, so it is with Christ.”*

*1 Corinthians 12:12.*

Give thanks for belonging to a body which is open to all who will believe, and for Christ the head of that body.