

Peace and Justice Reign

Zechariah 8:1-17; Psalm 96:9-10

What is the Biblical Definition of Reign

Definition from the KJV Dictionary

REIGN, . L. regno, a derivative of rego, regnum. 1. To possess or exercise sovereign power or authority; to rule; to exercise government, as a king or emperor; or to hold the supreme power.

What does the reign of God mean?

The **reign of God** is the love of **God** according to which we live, and when the **reign of God** is lived by all of us, when it's come to its fullness in everyone, but especially the poor will have the good news proclaimed to them, as Jesus said.

What does reign mean spiritual?

A **reign** is the period of a person's or dynasty's occupation of the office of monarch of a nation or of a people or of a **spiritual** community. In most hereditary monarchies and some elective monarchies there have been no limits on the duration of a sovereign's **reign** or incumbency, nor is there a term of office.

Three Things We Should Know About God's Reign

Psalm 96:9–10,

Worship the Lord in the splendor of holiness; tremble before him, all the earth! 10
Say among the nations, "The Lord reigns! Yes, the world is established; it shall never be moved; he will judge the peoples with equity."

We continue in Psalm 96 — a psalm about expansion of God's glory, our call to declare it, and the splendor of his holiness.

These same themes continue here. We are called to worship the Lord (verse 9) and we are commanded to declare him (verse 10). More specifically, all the earth is called to worship him and we are called to declare to all the nations that he reigns.

The reign of the Lord is central here. It has been the theme of Psalms 93–100. And even before this section, Psalm 22:28 tells us, "For kingship belongs to the Lord, and he rules over the nations." God is the one in charge. That's what it means to be king.

Verses 10–11 say more. There are three implications of what God's reign. First, his reign is universal; second, his reign is the ground of our most basic security; and three, his reign is cause for us to fear.

1. The Lord's reign is universal.

Verse 10 begins with the audience of God's reign. "Say among the nations," the text says. This is audience to whom we are commanded to declare the news that the LORD is king. The implications are huge. We declare this news to all the nations because the LORD is king over all the nations. Everyone on the face of the earth needs to hear this news because it applies to them. It is about them. It is for them.

"The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof" (Psalm 24:1). But could you imagine living your whole life on this earth and not knowing to whom it belongs? Not knowing to whom you belong? This is the state of the nations. This used to be our state... before we heard the news that Jesus is Lord and believed. Someone told us. Someone declared it. And we are called to keep saying it.

God's reign is universal. Therefore, we are commanded to tell the news of him to all peoples. It's in our proclaiming — in the gospel's advance — that God gathers his people to himself and extends the triumph of his goodness and power.

2. The Lord's reign grounds our most basic security.

The declaration "The Lord reigns!" is followed by two supporting ideas in verse 10. First, elaborating the meaning of his reign, we are told that "the world is established; it shall never be moved." Essentially, because the Lord reigns the earth is not going to spin out of orbit. It's not carelessly vulnerable to apocalyptic meteors crashing into it and wiping everything out. This has never happened. The earth is still here. We are proof of that.

But ever wondered why that's the case? Psalm 96:10 tells us it is because God is in control. God's reign means the most basic needs of life, like rain and the sun rising and a stable planet that doesn't evaporate, occur for the just and unjust (Matthew 5:45). These are facts about God's reign that mean good for every single person on earth.

This most basic security, which is often taken for granted, is grounded in the wondrous reality that the Lord reigns.

3. The Lord's reign is cause for us to fear.

The second supporting idea of the Lord's reign in verse 10 is that the Lord will judge all peoples with righteousness. The Lord reigns, which means he is the judge, which means every soul has a good reason to be terrified.

He judges fairly, you see. A slip up in the system reflects a lack of purity on his part. And there's no such lack of purity. He is perfectly holy, utterly righteous. Every wrong will be punished. This is terrifying for us, for all peoples, because we have done a lot of wrong. We are sinners, every last one of us (Romans 3:23). And that means that we are under the severe judgment of God. We deserve his wrath.

But there is a place where this terror becomes a blessing. It's in the cross of Jesus.

The Bible is clear that Jesus died for our sins (1 Corinthians 15:3), that he was put forward by the Father as a propitiation by his blood (Romans 3:25). Jesus, completely blameless and faithful, went to the cross to take upon himself all of our wrong. God judging people according to what they deserve, meaning our damnation, and by his grace, Jesus stepped up as our substitute. He took all of that righteous judgment upon himself for our sake, and in exchange we are united into him and his righteousness forever.

By our faith in him, we are united to Jesus in such a way that we are no longer seen as peoples to be judged, but sons and daughters who are welcomed home. So let us go tell it on the mountain, over the hills and everywhere. Let us say it among the nations.

Reflection

1. Why are we commanded to declare the news of God's reign among the nations?
2. What does it mean that the world is established? What is its significance?
3. How does the terror of God's judgment become a blessing of peace?