

Joy and Fear
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Psalm 47 verses 1 and 2 present us with something that seems rather contradictory at first: "Clap your hands all peoples! Shout to God with songs of joy! (2) For the LORD, the Most High, is to be feared, a great king over all the earth." So the question this morning is why would there be songs of joy if the LORD is to be feared? We don't generally associate "fear" with "joy".

I can't remember which show it was, but one of the old Christmas claymation TV shows has Mrs. Claus telling Santa, "Eat, eat! No one wants a skinny Santa." When you live in a kingdom, and your safety and security rests upon whether or not the king has to power to defend and protect you, no one wants a weak king. That's just the reality - if your king is weak, if he's a pushover, people are going to bowl you over and bring about great destruction. That historically played out in the History of Israel, where weak and wicked kings brought about ruin for their people.

And now consider the LORD - the God whom we are to "fear, love, and trust above all things." Is there anyone who can go toe to toe with the LORD and defeat Him? Is there anyone who's going to pull a fast one on Him and get the better of Him? Nope. He is the top of the top - when it comes to a fight, the LORD is always the One to be feared.

And He fights, He rules for you.

This is part of our joy, our confidence. No matter what battles Satan or the world or our own sinful flesh fight against God, we know the outcome. Christ Jesus the LORD has died and risen, and He has ascended victorious, and this He has done to redeem and rescue and save you. And because of His great power and might, even should you die, you will rise to new life for all eternity. And there's not a thing that Satan, or society, or any trouble you come across this week can do to change the fact that the LORD is the Most High.