

Lesson 1 — God Is Sovereign

“Sovereign” means having supreme power or authority.

- He is Creator.
- He is King.
- He rules now, though creation is in rebellion.
- He will judge evil.
- He will reward the godly.
- He will establish His righteous rule on earth.



Remember, as you work through each day's study, pray and ask God to help you know, understand, and apply His truth to your life.

God Is Sovereign - Day One

Read: Psalm 33:6-7 • Psalm 95:6-8a • John 7:16-17 • Psalm 119:73 • Psalm 146:5-6

The book of Psalms is the hymnbook of Israel. The 150 collected psalms praise the Lord, His Word, and His goodness.

In this study we will look at some of the themes found in Psalms. The Lesson 1 theme is “God is Sovereign.” Today we will see what the psalmists say about God the Creator.

Many psalms proclaim that God reigns or rules over everything. In other words, He is *sovereign*. This is because He is the Creator. He made everything that exists, and His power maintains all that He created.

- **From** today’s Bible verses (printed on the right side of the next page), list some of the things that God created.

- **If** you have time, read the Bible passages listed under Additional reading on the next page. What else do you learn about God the Creator?¹

- **From** Psalm 95:6-8a (at right), what are we called to do and why?

¹ In Psalm 74:13b-14, when referring to “the monster” and “Leviathan,” the psalmist chose the language of Canaanite mythology to celebrate Yahweh’s victory over the nations. (Frank E. Gaebelien, editor. *The Expositor’s Bible Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1990).

Creation witnesses to God’s existence. His Word, the Bible, also tells us this truth. Yet many still choose to deny God’s existence.

- **Do** you believe that what He says through His creation and through His Word is true? Why or why not? From John 7:16-17, what did Jesus say was the prerequisite to knowing if what He taught was from God? If you have doubts—but truly want to know if it is true in order to know and obey God—ask Him to show you His truth, and He will do it.

- **What** does Psalm 119:73 ask Him to give us?

- **From** Psalm 146:5-6, how will God care for His people, and for how long? He is able to do this because He is the Creator and He is sovereign. If you would like to, write these verses in your own words, putting your name into the passage.

- **Take** time now to thank and praise God for all of Creation. What aspects of His creation and His continuing care for it are most meaningful to you?

Today’s Bible Reading

⁶ By the word of the Lord the heavens were made, their starry host by the breath of his mouth. ⁷ He gathers the waters of the sea into jars; he puts the deep into storehouses.

— Psalm 33:6-7

⁶ Come, let us bow down in worship, let us kneel before the Lord our Maker; ⁷ for he is our God and we are the people of his pasture, the flock under his care. Today, if only you would hear his voice, ⁸ “Do not harden your hearts...”

— Psalm 95:6-8a

Jesus answered, “My teaching is not my own. It comes from the one who sent me. Anyone who chooses to do the will of God will find out whether my teaching comes from God or whether I speak on my own.

— John 7:16-17

Your hands made me and formed me; give me understanding to learn your commands.

— Psalm 119:73

⁵ Blessed are those whose help is the God of Jacob, whose hope is in the Lord their God. ⁶ He is the Maker of heaven and earth, the sea, and everything in them—he remains faithful forever.

— Psalm 146:5-6

Additional reading:

Genesis 1-2
Psalm 74:12-17
Psalm 100

God Is Sovereign - Day Two

Read: Psalm 9:7-8 • Psalm 67:4 • Psalm 74:12 • Psalm 103:2-5 • Psalm 145:13

Today we will look at how the Psalms testify that God is King over everything in heaven and on earth.

- **From** Psalm 9:8 and Psalm 67:4, over whom does God rule?

- **From** the same verses, how does the Lord rule? Look up “equity” in the dictionary.

- **As** their King, the Lord redeems His people. He acts on their behalf. What do Psalm 74:12 and Psalm 103:2-5 say about this?

- **What** is most meaningful to you today from the list in Psalm 103:2-5 of benefits God bestows on us? Why not write a prayer here, thanking Him for these things?

- **From** Psalm 9:7 and Psalm 145:13, how long will God’s kingdom stand?

- **How** does it make you feel to know that God is and always will be King over everything in heaven and on earth? How will you live your life differently in light of this knowledge?

Today’s Bible Reading

He rules the world in righteousness and judges the peoples with equity.

— Psalm 9:8

May the nations be glad and sing for joy, for you rule the peoples with equity and guide the nations of the earth.

— Psalm 67:4

But God is my King from long ago; he brings salvation on the earth.

— Psalm 74:12

²*Praise the Lord, my soul, and forget not all his benefits—*

³*who forgives all your sins and heals all your diseases,*

⁴*who redeems your life from the pit and crowns you with love and compassion,*

⁵*who satisfies your desires with good things so that your youth is renewed like the eagle’s.*

— Psalm 103:2-5

The Lord reigns forever; he has established his throne for judgment.

— Psalm 9:7

Your kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and your dominion endures through all generations.

— Psalm 145:13

God Is Sovereign - Day Three

Read: Psalm 106:7-8,13-15 • Psalm 107:10-15

Even though creation is in rebellion against God, He rules today. Because of sin, the natural inclination of all people is to turn aside from God's truth and go their own way (see Romans 3:10-12). The psalmists illustrated this pattern by looking back at the behavior of their own people, Israel.

- **From** Psalm 106:7-8, how did the Israelites rebel against God? Why did He save them from the Egyptians?
- **In** Psalm 106:13-15, what was their next step of rebellion? How did God respond this time?

God saved His people from Egyptian slavery in spite of their rebellion. But later in the wilderness, He gave them what they asked for—and their craving ended in sickness. Today we also easily forget God's many kindnesses to us. At times He sends trouble into our pathway, just to get our attention.

- **How** has God been kind to you? Do you sometimes forget to listen to Him? How has He called you back into fellowship with Him?
- **From** Psalm 107:10-15, where did some people find themselves, and why were they there?

- **What** did they finally do, and what happened then?

- **What** was their response to the Lord for His powerful intervention?

Stop and think about how God loves you. He doesn't care whether you are a failure or a success by human standards. He has already provided everything you need in Jesus Christ. (See page 4 if you aren't sure what this means.)

The first thing to do is to give thanks for that fact. Then allow His love to free you from your fears and distress.

- **Write** a prayer to the Lord here. Tell Him what you have learned about Him and about yourself today. Ask Him to help you to trust Him and to stay in relationship with Him no matter what your circumstances.

Today's Bible Reading

⁷ When our ancestors were in Egypt, they gave no thought to your miracles; they did not remember your many kindnesses, and they rebelled by the sea, the Red Sea. ⁸ Yet he saved them for his name's sake, to make his mighty power known...

¹³ But they soon forgot what he had done and did not wait for his plan to unfold. ¹⁴ In the desert they gave in to their craving; in the wilderness they put God to the test.

¹⁵ So he gave them what they asked for, but sent a wasting disease among them.

— Psalm 106:7-8,13-15

¹⁰ Some sat in darkness, in utter darkness, prisoners suffering in iron chains, ¹¹ because they rebelled against God's commands and despised the plans of the Most High. ¹² So he subjected them to bitter labor; they stumbled, and there was no one to help.

¹³ Then they cried to the Lord in their trouble, and he saved them from their distress.

¹⁴ He brought them out of darkness, the utter darkness, and broke away their chains.

¹⁵ Let them give thanks to the Lord for his unending love and his wonderful deeds for mankind.

— Psalm 107:10-15

Additional reading:
Psalm 76
Romans 3:10-12

God Is Sovereign - Day Four

Read: Psalm 9:7-8 • Psalm 9:16-20 • Psalm 51:3-4

Today we will look at what the Psalms tell us about how God judges evil.

- **From** Psalm 9:7-8, since God is King, what does He have the right to do regarding all people?

From Psalm 9:16-20:

- **How** does God act on behalf of the needy and afflicted—those whom “the nations that forget God” have oppressed?

- **When** the nations (the wicked) stand in God’s presence, what will they realize and how will this affect them?

- **Read** Psalm 51:3-4. What did David, the psalmist, recognize about himself, even though he was one of God’s people and loved the Lord?

Every person will be held accountable to God the King. Revelation 20:11-15 describes the final judgment of all people. Verse 15 says, “Anyone whose name was not found written in the book of life was thrown into the lake of fire.” When you trust Jesus Christ as your Savior, your name is recorded in that book. (See page 4 for more information.)

- **What** do you feel when you look ahead to the final judgment? Write down your thoughts and pray about this now.

Today’s Bible Reading

⁷ *The Lord reigns forever; he has established his throne for judgment.*

⁸ *He rules the world in righteousness and judges the peoples with equity.*

— Psalm 9:7-8

¹⁶ *The Lord is known by his acts of justice; the wicked are ensnared by the work of their hands.*

¹⁷ *The wicked go down to the realm of the dead, all the nations that forget God.*

¹⁸ *But God will never forget the needy; the hope of the afflicted will never perish.*

¹⁹ *Arise, Lord, do not let mortals triumph; let the nations be judged in your presence.*

²⁰ *Strike them with terror, Lord; let the nations know they are only mortal.*

— Psalm 9:16-20

³ *For I know my transgressions, and my sin is always before me.*

⁴ *Against you, you only, have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight; so you are right in your verdict and justified when you judge.*

— Psalm 51:3-4

Additional reading:
Revelation 20:11-15

God Is Sovereign - Day Five

Read: Psalm 1:1-3,6a • Psalm 5:11-12 • Psalm 32:1-2,6-7

Today we will see what the Psalms tell us about how God will reward the godly or the righteous.

- **Read** Psalm 1:1-3,6a. How does the psalmist describe the godly or righteous person in these verses?
- **Have** you experienced the joy of delighting in God and His Word? How are you “like a tree planted by streams of water”?
- **In** Psalm 32:1-2 we find another description of the righteous person. Is a person righteous or godly because they work so hard to be good? How does the psalmist say they are counted as righteous?¹
- **Do** you know whether you are counted as righteous in God’s eyes? Why or why not? (Again, see page 4 for help with this.)

¹ See also Romans 4:4-5, “Now to the one who works, wages are not credited as a gift but as an obligation. However, to the one who does not work but trusts God who justifies the ungodly, their faith is credited as righteousness.”

- **How** do Psalm 5:11-12 and Psalm 32:6-7 describe the way God rewards the righteous person?

God does not promise that the godly person will never face suffering or adversity. But He does provide a “hiding place” for those who love Him and who turn to Him when “mighty waters” threaten them.

- **Have** you discovered this truth in your own experience? How did God protect you and enable you to stand even in the mighty waters?
- **Are** you facing suffering or adversity right now? Write a prayer here, asking God for His protection and thanking Him for it.

Today's Bible Reading

¹ Blessed is the one who does not walk in step with the wicked or stand in the way that sinners take or sit in the company of mockers, ² but whose delight is in the law of the Lord, and who meditates on his law day and night.

³ That person is like a tree planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in season and whose leaf does not wither—whatever they do prospers...

⁶ For the Lord watches over the way of the righteous...

— Psalm 1:1-3,6a

¹ Blessed is the one whose transgressions are forgiven, whose sins are covered.

² Blessed is the one whose sin the Lord does not count against them and in whose spirit is no deceit...

— Psalm 32:1-2

¹¹ But let all who take refuge in you be glad; let them ever sing for joy. Spread your protection over them, that those who love your name may rejoice in you.

¹² Surely, Lord, you bless the righteous; you surround them with your favor as with a shield.

— Psalm 5:11-12

⁶ Therefore let all the faithful pray to you while you may be found; surely the rising of the mighty waters will not reach them.

⁷ You are my hiding place; you will protect me from trouble and surround me with songs of deliverance.

— Psalm 32:6-7

God Is Sovereign - Day Six

Read: Psalm 89:1-4 • Psalm 96:11-13 • Psalm 102:15-16

Because God is sovereign, He will establish His righteous rule on earth. Today we will look at what the Psalms tell us about this.

- **What** does Psalm 89:1-4 declare about God's character?

- **What** promise did God make, and how long would it last?

The writers of the New Testament demonstrated that Jesus Christ is the Messiah, the long-expected Son of David who came to earth to fulfill God's plan for the redemption of His people, and who will one day return again to earth to establish God's reign.

- **From** Psalm 96:11-13, what is all of creation looking forward to?

- **When** this event takes place, what will the Lord do?

- **In** Psalm 102:15-16, what does the psalmist say the Lord will do?

The psalmists looked forward to the establishment of Zion, built by the Lord and prepared for His servants. It will be the fulfillment of God's Kingdom on earth.

This hope is expressed so beautifully in the hymn "Jesus Shall Reign" by Isaac Watts:

*Jesus shall reign wher-e'er the sun
Does his successive journeys run;
His kingdom stretch from shore to shore,
Till moons shall wax and wane no more.*

- **Are** you looking forward to Zion, to the righteous reign on earth of Jesus Christ, Son of David, Messiah and Lord? Write a prayer or a poem here, expressing your thoughts.

Today's Bible Reading

¹ *I will sing of the Lord's great love forever; with my mouth I will make your faithfulness known through all generations.*

² *I will declare that your love stands firm forever, that you have established your faithfulness in heaven itself.*

³ *You said, "I have made a covenant with my chosen one, I have sworn to David my servant,*

⁴ *I will establish your line forever and make your throne firm through all generations."*

— Psalm 89:1-4

¹¹ *Let the heavens rejoice, let the earth be glad; let the sea resound, and all that is in it.*

¹² *Let the fields be jubilant, and everything in them; let all the trees of the forest sing for joy.*

¹³ *Let all creation rejoice before the Lord, for he comes, he comes to judge the earth. He will judge the world in righteousness and the peoples in his faithfulness.*

— Psalm 96:11-13

¹⁵ *The nations will fear the name of the Lord, all the kings of the earth will revere your glory.*

¹⁶ *For the Lord will rebuild Zion and appear in his glory.*

— Psalm 102:15-16

God Is Sovereign - Day Seven

Take a few minutes today to review the Bible verses from this week. Write down what has been most meaningful to you.

As you have worked through the study this week, we hope that you have discovered what God's sovereignty means and how important it is.