

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 pages 11 and 13), list some of the things that God created.

• **If** you have time, read the Bible passages listed under Additional reading on page 13. What else do you learn about God the Creator?¹

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. Gaebelin, editor. *The Expositor’s Bible Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1990).

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

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 (at right and continued on page 13), 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.

Today's Bible Reading

Psalm 33:6-7

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 95:6-8a

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..."

John 7:16-17

¹⁶ Jesus answered, "My teaching is not my own. It comes from the one who sent me. ¹⁷ Anyone who chooses to do the will of God will find out

(Day 1 Questions & Today's Bible Reading continued on page 12-13)

God Is Sovereign - Day One *(continued from page 11)*

• **What** does Psalm 119:73 (on page 13) ask Him to give us?

• **From** Psalm 146:5-6 (on page 13), 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

*(cont. from page 11)
whether my teaching
comes from God or
whether I speak on my
own.*

Psalm 119:73

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

Psalm 146:5-6

*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.*

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 (on page 15), 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 (at right and continued on page 17) say about this?

Today's Bible Reading

Psalm 9:8

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

Psalm 67:4

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

Psalm 74:12

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

Psalm 103:2-5

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

- **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?

(Day 2 Questions & Today's Bible Reading continued on page 16-17)

Today's Bible Reading

(cont. from page 15)

*you with love and
compassion,*

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

Psalm 9:7

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

Psalm 145:13

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

• **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 (at right and continued on page 21), where did some people find themselves, and why were they there?

Today's Bible Reading

Psalm 106:7-8,13-15

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 107:10-15

¹⁰ *Some sat in darkness, in utter darkness, prisoners*

(Day 3 Questions & Today's Bible Reading continued on page 20-21)

God Is Sovereign - Day Three *(continued from page 19)*

• **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 8 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

(cont. from page 19)
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 unfailing love and his wonderful deeds for mankind.

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 (on page 23), since God is King, what does He have the right to do regarding all people?

From Psalm 9:16-20 (on page 23 and continued on page 25):

- **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?

Today's Bible Reading

Psalm 9:7-8

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 9:16-20

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.

- **Read** Psalm 51:3-4 (on page 25). What did David, the psalmist, recognize about himself, even though he was one of God's people and loved the Lord?

(Day 4 Questions & Today's Bible Reading continued on page 24-25)

God Is Sovereign - Day Four *(continued from page 23)*

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 8 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

(cont. from page 23)

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

Psalm 51:3-4

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.*

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 (on page 27). 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 (at right and continued on page 29) 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 8 for help with this.)

Today's Bible Reading

Psalm 1:1-3,6a

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 32:1-2

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

² *Blessed is the one whose sin the Lord*

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."

(Day 5 Questions & Today's Bible Reading continued on page 28-29)

God Is Sovereign - Day Five *(continued from page 27)*

- **How** do Psalm 5:11-12 and Psalm 32:6-7 (both on page 29) 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

(cont. from page 27)

does not count against them and in whose spirit is no deceit...

Psalm 5:11-12

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 32:6-7

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.

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 (on page 31) 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 (on page 31 and continuing on page 33), what is all of creation looking forward to?

Today's Bible Reading

Psalm 89:1-4

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 96:11-13

¹ Let the heavens rejoice, let the earth be glad; let the sea

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

(Day 6 Questions & Today's Bible Reading continued on page 32-33)

God Is Sovereign - Day Six *(continued from page 31)*

- **In** Psalm 102:15-16 (on page 33), 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

(cont. from page 31)

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 102:15-16

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.

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.