

Pine Knoll Sabbath School Study Notes

First Quarter 2024: *The Book of Psalms*

Lesson 3 “The Lord Reigns”

Read for this week’s study

Psalm 8; Psalm 100; Psalm 97; Psalm 75; Psalm 105:7–10; Galatians 3:26–29; Psalm 25:10.

Memory Text

“The LORD reigns, he is robed in majesty; the LORD is robed in majesty and armed with strength; indeed, the world is established, firm and secure” (Psalm 93:1, NIV).

Lesson Outline from Adult Sabbath School Study Guide

- I. Introduction
- II. The Lord Has Made Us
- III. The Lord Reigns
- IV. God Is the Judge
- V. Ever Mindful of His Covenant
- VI. Your Testimonies Are Very Sure
- VII. Further Study

Questions and Notes for Consideration

Facilitator: Jon Paulien

1. A major theme of the Psalms is the idea that God is the sole and ultimate ruler of the universe. If you believe God is everything that we see in Jesus, this belief provides great security and confidence in the future. It is no wonder that the psalmists served God with undivided devotion. Having said that, what picture of God would leave a person very insecure? (Sabbath Afternoon’s Lesson)
2. There are six major views of God in the world: 1) Naturalism, 2) Pantheism, 3) Deism, 4) Deterministic Theism, 5) Appeasement Theism, and 6) Benevolent Theism. The view that you take to a large degree determines how you view God’s power and, therefore, whether or not your view of God results in security or fear. (Sabbath Afternoon’s Lesson)
3. Read Psalm 8. How do you reconcile the contrast between the view of humanity in verses 3-4 and that of 5-6? How is God portrayed in this psalm? (Sunday’s Lesson)
4. Read Psalm 100. Many of the peoples surrounding Israel believed in nature gods (appeasement theism). How does this psalm view that perspective? What are the

- implications of the idea that God is both great and good? How do you reconcile the tension between those two concepts? (Sunday's Lesson)
5. Read Psalm 97. What is God's reign like? How far does His domain extend? Why should our love for God cause us to hate evil? How are these two concepts related? (Monday's Lesson)
 6. Read Psalm 75. Why is the boasting of the wicked in vain? Read Psalm 96:10-13. The psalms invite people to rejoice in anticipation of God's judgments. In what way are the judgments of God good news? (Tuesday's Lesson)
 7. How can people have peace with God and assurance of salvation at the time of judgment? See Psalm 94:14 and Daniel 7:22. How is it that the promises to Israel apply to the church? (Wednesday's Lesson)
 8. Read Psalm 19:7. According to the psalmist, God's supreme rulership is exercised through His laws or "testimonies". Why does the psalmist suggest that following God's laws is the best way to live? (Thursday's Lesson)
 9. How does the Great Controversy theme help us to understand why there is so much turmoil and suffering in this world? (Friday's Lesson)

Thoughts from Graham Maxwell

How would it be possible to face such a judgment at the hands of Someone so well informed and be unafraid? Well, unafraid of what and unafraid of whom? The same John who warned us in that first angel's message that the hour of the judgment has come, is the one who explains how it is possible to face the judgment without fear. Look at the next passage, 1 John 4:16-18:

God is love, and whoever lives in love lives in union with God and God lives in union with him. Love is made perfect in us in order that we may have courage on the Judgment Day. . . . There is no fear in love [now that is not the word reverence this time. It is terror. There is no fear in love.]; perfect love drives out all fear. So then, love has not been made perfect in anyone who is afraid, because fear has to do with punishment. (GNT)

So John's point is surely crystal clear. That if we really know the truth about God and if we like what we know, then there is no need to be afraid even of the final judgment. Or is this only speaking of gentle Jesus, the Son? Some derive comfort from the thought and the fact, as the Bible says, that God has given all judgment to the Son. Look at John 5:22: "The Father judges no one, but has given all judgment to the Son." (RSV) And many find that much more comforting, because you are much more likely to receive merciful treatment at the hand of the Son than of the Father. Is that true? I've heard some say with real gratitude, "I have no fear of the judgment because I know I have a Friend in court."

And I ask, "Who is that Friend?"

Then comes the warm response, "Why, Jesus, of course."

"You mean the Father is no Friend of yours?"

"Oh, I didn't mean that."

"Then what did you mean when you said that you were happy to have a Friend in court and Jesus is your Friend? Is the Father no Friend? What of the Holy Spirit?"

You remember Jesus' words to Philip in John 14:7, 9: "If you had known me, you would have known my Father also. . . . He who has seen me has seen the Father." (RSV) If you knew this to be true, you would never say, "I am grateful that I have a Friend in court and I mean Jesus and not the Father." You couldn't say that, could you?

Some derive comfort from the thought, as they face the final judgment at the hands of One who knows us in such detail, that when their cases come up for consideration, Jesus will be there interceding with the Father in our behalf. Does that mean that because gentle Jesus is pleading with the Father, we are more likely to receive merciful treatment? Think what that implies about the Father! Is the Father less loving and less forgiving than the Son? Who says that He is exacting, unforgiving, and severe? Are we even going to, in expressing our doctrines, seem to support Satan's charges against our God?

Remember Jesus' words in John 16:26, next on the list: "I need make no promise to plead to the Father for you [or, as we had in an earlier Bible Reference Sheet, Goodspeed's translation: there is no need for me to intercede with the Father for you. Why not?]. For the Father himself loves you." (*Phillips*) The Son does not love us more than the Father, or understand us better than the Father, or is more sympathetic than the Father. ***If we have seen the Son, we have seen the Father.*** {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series, Conversations About God, #9, "There Is No Need to Be Afraid of God" recorded March 1984, Loma Linda, California} *To listen to the entire audio of the above reference, click on the following direct link:*

<http://pkp.cc/9MMCAG>

The Bible makes it plain that there is nothing arbitrary about the judgment. There is no arbitrary standard by which we are measured. There are no arbitrary decisions made. Look at John 3:19: "And this is the judgment, that the light has come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light." (RSV) You see, if we have turned down the truth, we have not been won to trust and a willingness to listen. Therefore, God has not been able to help us and to heal us. There are no new hearts and right spirits. We are not the kind of people who would be safe to admit to the hereafter. There is nothing arbitrary about that. Look also at John 12:47, 48:

If any one hears my sayings [this truth and light that I brought] and does not keep them, I do not judge him [I thought all judgment had been given to Him? Well, He says, “actually I don’t judge him.” It works this way.]. . . . He who rejects me and does not receive my sayings has a judge; the word that I have spoken will be his judge on the last day. (RSV)

You see, we are judged by the truth. It is a matter of simply diagnosing our condition. It is a consequence. It is a result. There is nothing arbitrary about it all. And then what God does to those who have turned down the truth (and so He has not been able to heal them) is not arbitrary. For what does God do to those who reject the priceless truth? What else can He do in a free universe but sadly give them up? As we read last week, and look again at Romans 1:25, 28: “Because they exchanged the truth about God for a lie. . . . God gave them up to a base mind and to improper conduct.” (RSV) He sadly gave them up to what they chose to do anyway. In the end even, God simply recognizes, and diagnoses and announces the results.

In those awesome words of Revelation 22:11, as He looks at his people in the end, some who have rejoiced in the truth and some who have turned it down, He says, “Let him who does wrong continue to do wrong; let him who is vile continue to be vile; let him who does right continue to do right; and let him who is holy continue to be holy.” (NIV) Just go on doing what you are doing. Go on being what you are. You see, there is nothing arbitrary. There is no need to fear God in this. We have made our choice and we are reaping the results, both good and bad. {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series, Conversations About God, #9, “There Is No Need to Be Afraid of God” recorded March 1984, Loma Linda, California} *To listen to the entire audio of the above reference, click on the following direct link: <http://pkp.cc/9MMCAG>*

Further Study with Ellen White

In the creation of man was manifest the agency of a personal God. When God had made man in His image, the human form was perfect in all its arrangements, but it was without life. Then a personal, self-existing God breathed into that form the breath of life, and man became a living, intelligent being. All parts of the human organism were set in action. The heart, the arteries, the veins, the tongue, the hands, the feet, the senses, the faculties of the mind, all began their work, and all were placed under law. Man became a living soul. Through Christ the Word, a personal God created man and endowed him with intelligence and power. {MH 415.1}

Infinite love—how great it is! God made the world to enlarge heaven. He desires a larger family of created intelligences (MS 78, 1901). {1BC 1081.2}

All heaven took a deep and joyful interest in the creation of the world and of man. Human beings were a new and distinct order. They were made “in the image of God,” and it was the Creator’s design that they should populate the earth (RH Feb. 11, 1902). {1BC 1081.3}

Next to the angelic beings, the human family, formed in the image of God, are the noblest of His created works. God desires them to become all that He has made it possible for them to be, and to do their very best with the powers He has given them. {MH 397.1}

He has redeemed us out of the careless world and has chosen us to become members of the royal family, sons and daughters of the heavenly King. He invites us to trust in Him with a trust deeper and stronger than that of a child in his earthly father. {ML 289.5}

God is to us a tender, compassionate, heavenly Father. {ML 289.6}

Many are the ways in which God is seeking to make Himself known to us and bring us into communion with Him. Nature speaks to our senses without ceasing. The open heart will be impressed with the love and glory of God as revealed through the works of His hands. The listening ear can hear and understand the communications of God through the things of nature. The green fields, the lofty trees, the buds and flowers, the passing cloud, the falling rain, the babbling brook, the glories of the heavens, speak to our hearts, and invite us to become acquainted with Him who made them all. {SC 85.1}

Through creation and redemption, through nature and through Christ, the glories of the divine character are revealed. By the marvelous display of His love in giving “His only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life,” the character of God is revealed to the intelligences of the universe. Through Christ our heavenly Father is made known as the God of love. {ST, December 15, 1914 par. 5}

The love of God to man is incomprehensible, broad as the world, high as heaven, and as enduring as eternity. {HP 115.5}

In word and in deed the Messiah, during His earthly ministry, was to reveal to mankind the glory of God the Father. Every act of His life, every word spoken, every miracle wrought, was to make known to fallen humanity the infinite love of God. {PK 696.3}

Through the plan of salvation a larger purpose is to be wrought out even than the salvation of man and the redemption of the earth. Through the revelation of the character of God in Christ, the beneficence of the divine government would be manifested before the universe, the charge of Satan refuted, the nature and result of sin made plain, and the perpetuity of the law fully demonstrated. {TMK 366.4}

Then the extermination of sin will vindicate God’s love and establish His honor before a universe of beings who delight to do His will, and in whose heart is His law. {TMK 366.5}

We can understand as much of His purposes as we are capable of comprehending; beyond this we may still trust the hand that is omnipotent, the heart that is full of love. {Ed 169.1}

The Teacher from heaven, no less a personage than the Son of God, came to earth to reveal the character of the Father to men, that they might worship him in spirit and in truth. Christ revealed to men the fact that the strictest adherence to ceremony and form would not save them; for the kingdom of God was spiritual in its nature. Christ came to the world to sow it with truth. He held the keys to all the treasures of wisdom, and was able to open doors to science, and to reveal undiscovered stores of knowledge, were it essential to salvation. He presented to men that which was exactly contrary to the representations of the enemy in regard to the character of God, and sought to impress upon men the paternal love of the Father, who “so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” {RH, November 17, 1891 par. 7}

The Bible shows us God in His high and holy place, not in a state of inactivity, not in silence and solitude, but surrounded by ten thousand times ten thousand and thousands of thousands of holy beings, all waiting to do His will. Through these messengers He is in active communication with every part of His dominion. By His Spirit He is everywhere present. Through the agency of His Spirit and His angels He ministers to the children of men. {MH 417.2}

Above the distractions of the earth He sits enthroned; all things are open to His divine survey; and from His great and calm eternity He orders that which His providence sees best. {MH 417.3}

Not even a sparrow falls to the ground without the Father’s notice. Satan’s hatred against God leads him to delight in destroying even the dumb creatures. It is only through God’s protecting care that the birds are preserved to gladden us with their songs of joy. But He does not forget even the sparrows. “Fear ye not therefore, ye are of more value than many sparrows.” Matthew 10:31. {8T 273.1}

Nothing can happen in any part of the universe without the knowledge of Him who is omnipresent. Not a single event of human life is unknown to our Maker. While Satan is constantly devising evil, the Lord our God overrules all, so that it will not harm His obedient, trusting children. The same power that controls the boisterous waves of the ocean can hold in check all the power of rebellion and of crime. God says to one as to the other, “Thus far shalt thou go, and no farther.” {3BC 1141.5}

Jesus began His work by breaking Satan’s power over the suffering. He restored the sick to health, gave sight to the blind, and healed the lame, causing them to leap for joy and to glorify God. He restored to health those who had been infirm and bound by Satan’s cruel power many years. With gracious words He comforted the weak, the trembling, and the desponding. The feeble, suffering ones whom Satan held in triumph, Jesus wrenched from his grasp, bringing to them soundness of body and great joy and happiness. He raised the dead to life, and they

glorified God for the mighty display of His power. He wrought mightily for all who believed on Him. {EW 159.3}

He who slumbers not, who is continually at work for the accomplishment of His designs, will carry forward His work. He will thwart the purposes of wicked men and will bring to confusion the counsels of those who plot mischief against His people. He who is the King, the Lord of hosts, sitteth between the cherubim, and amidst the strife and tumult of nations He guards His children still. When the strongholds of kings shall be overthrown, when the arrows of wrath shall strike through the hearts of His enemies, His people will be safe in His hands. {PK 176.1}

God, the One infinite and all-wise, sees the end from the beginning, and in dealing with evil His plans were far-reaching and comprehensive. It was His purpose, not merely to put down the rebellion, but to demonstrate to all the universe the nature of the rebellion. God's plan was unfolding, showing both His justice and His mercy, and fully vindicating His wisdom and righteousness in His dealings with evil. {PP 78.3}

God's work is the same in all time, although there are different degrees of development and different manifestations of His power, to meet the wants of men in the different ages. Beginning with the first gospel promise, and coming down through the patriarchal and Jewish ages, and even to the present time, there has been a gradual unfolding of the purposes of God in the plan of redemption. {PP 373.2}

The rainbow spanning the heavens with its arch of light is a token of "the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature." Genesis 9:16. And the rainbow encircling the throne on high is also a token to God's children of His covenant of peace. {Ed 115.1}

The covenant of grace is not a new truth, for it existed in the mind of God from all eternity. This is why it is called the everlasting covenant. {FLB 77.5}

The blessings of salvation are for every soul. Nothing but his own choice can prevent any man from becoming a partaker of the promise in Christ by the gospel. {DA 403.2}

Each law of God is an enactment of mercy, love, and saving power. These laws, obeyed, are our life, our salvation, our happiness, our peace [Psalm 119:165 quoted] (Letter 112, 1902). {3BC 1153.6}

Our Lord adapts Himself to our special needs. He is a shade on our right hand. He walks close by our side, ready to supply all our necessities. He comes very near to those who are engaged in willing service for Him. He knows every one by name. O what assurances we have of the tender love of Christ (MS 51, 1903). {3BC 1153.8}

His law is to extend the shield of divine protection over every soul who puts his trust in Him. {TDG 109.2}

What a God is our God! He rules over His kingdom with diligence and care, and He has built a hedge—the Ten Commandments—about His subjects to preserve them from the results of transgression. In requiring obedience to the laws of His kingdom, God gives His people health and happiness, peace and joy. {CT 454.1}

That law of ten precepts of the greatest love that can be presented to man is the voice of God from heaven speaking to the soul in promise, “This do, and you will not come under the dominion and control of Satan.” There is not a negative in that law, although it may appear thus. It is DO, and Live (Letter 89, 1898). {1BC 1105.2}

When one surrenders to Christ, the mind is brought under the control of the law; but it is the royal law, which proclaims liberty to every captive. By becoming one with Christ, man is made free. Subjection to the will of Christ means restoration to perfect manhood. {MH 131.1}

It is through the mighty agency of the Holy Spirit that the government of Satan is to be subdued and subjected. It is the Holy Spirit that convinces of sin, and expels it from the soul by the consent of the human agent. The mind is then brought under a new law, and that law is the royal law of liberty. Jesus came to break the shackles of sin-slavery from the soul; for sin can triumph only when the liberty of the soul is extinguished. Jesus reached to the very depth of human woe and misery, and His love attracts man to Himself. Through the agency of the Holy Spirit, He lifts the mind up from its degradation, and fastens it upon the eternal reality. {TDG 124.2}