

The Lord Is King



SABBATH—JANUARY 13

READ FOR THIS WEEK'S LESSON: Psalm 8; Psalm 100; Psalm 97; Psalm 75; Psalm 94:14; Galatians 3:26–29; Psalm 19:7.

Because the Lord is King,
we can trust Him to keep
us safe on this earth.

MEMORY VERSE: “The LORD is King. The LORD wears majesty [royal beauty] and strength like [the same as] clothes. He is ready [strong], so the whole world [the earth] is safe [will continue for as long as the Lord plans]. It [the earth] will not be shaken [will not end until God says so]” (Psalm 93:1, ERV).

THE BOOK OF PSALMS teaches us that the Lord is King of the whole earth. The Lord made everything. He keeps everything going, too. As our King, the Lord is fair and holy. His laws are good. His laws give life to everyone who obeys them. The Lord is also a fair Judge. He protects life on this earth. He rewards the people who obey His law and punishes the ones who disobey Him. The Lord decides when He will punish and when He will reward. He will reward and punish when He is ready, in His own time and not ours.

God's promise with Israel is why He keeps this earth safe. His promise shows us His saving plan. As part of His promise, God adopted Israel as His people above all other people groups on the earth. The Lord keeps His promise to His people. He continues to care for us even when, at times, we sin against Him.

Because the Lord is King, we can trust Him to keep us safe on this earth. The poets who wrote the Book of Psalms want us to understand this Bible truth. When we do, we can serve God, as the poets did, with our whole heart.

THE LORD MADE US (Psalm 8 and Psalm 100)

Read Psalm 8 and Psalm 100. What do these two psalms, or poems, teach us about God and His people?

The Bible teaches us that God made everything. The beauty of the skies shows us that our God is very powerful (Psalm 19:1–4; Psalm 97:6). God’s name is the most wonderful Name in the whole earth (Psalm 8:1, 9)! The Lord has been alive forever (Psalm 93:2). The Lord will continue to live forever, too (Psalm 102:25–27). He is more powerful than the “gods” of other nations or people groups. “The ‘gods’ of those nations are only statues that some human made from gold and silver” (Psalm 115:4, ERV), nothing more. These statues “have hands, but cannot feel” (Psalm 115:7, ERV). But “the deep places of the earth are in His [God’s] hand. . . . And His hands made the dry land” (Psalm 95:4, 5, NLV).

Several psalms, or poems, taught Israel that God controls nature. The other nations worshiped nature as a god. Psalm 29, Psalm 93, and Psalm 104 tell us that the Lord is the King over the whole earth. The Lord is more powerful than anyone or any other god. Not all statues are made from stone, wood, or gold. Some people worship false ideas the same as gods. These people trust in self, and not God. This false idea is the same as bowing down to a statue. Psalm 100:3 tells us God is the only One we should worship because He made us.

Everything God made shows us His love. Everything in the skies and earth owes its life to God. God keeps everything alive and going (Psalm 95:7; Psalm 147:4–9). God also chose Israel to be His people and His sheep (Psalm 100:3). These two ideas show us that God wants to be close to us in His heart. Only the Lord can bless us and give us success. So, the Lord is the only One worthy of our worship and trust. In the Book of Psalms, the poets tell every living thing on earth to praise God and be joyful. Yes, this earth is not perfect because of sin. But we see God’s wonderful love in everything He made. That’s why the Book of Psalms tells us we should worship God.

“But why is man important to you? Why do you take care of human beings?” (Psalm 8:4, ICB). What does this verse teach you about God’s love? The Bible says that God “counts the stars and names each one” (Psalm 147:4, ICB). How much more do you think God cares for you than the stars?



The beauty of the skies shows us that our God is very powerful (Psalm 19:1–4; Psalm 97:6).

THE LORD IS KING (Psalm 97)

The idea that God made everything is connected closely to the teaching that God is King. Psalm 93:1, Psalm 96:10, Psalm 97:1, and Psalm 99:1 announce: “The LORD is King” (ERV). We see this idea in the whole book of Psalms.

The Lord has honor, royal beauty, and strength (Psalm 93:1; Psalm 104:1). “Clouds and darkness are all around Him” (Psalm 97:2, NLV). The Lord also wears “light like [the same as] a robe [a coat]” (Psalm 104:2, ERV). These word pictures teach us that the Lord is very powerful. They also teach us that the Lord’s strength and royal beauty are beyond anything we can imagine in our minds.

Read Psalm 97. What does Psalm 97:2, 10 tell us about the Lord as King? How big is the Lord’s kingdom? (Read Psalm 97:1, 5, 9 for the answer.)

The Lord is King over the whole earth (Psalm 47:6–9). As King, the Lord shows us mercy. He is fair and holy. He makes the earth safe. He does what is right for His people (Psalm 98:3; Psalm 99:4). He is our Savior (Psalm 98:2) and our Judge (Psalm 96:10). The things that God made show us His kingdom (Psalm 96:5). God’s kingdom is an everlasting kingdom. No other kingdom is more powerful or as wonderful (Psalm 45:6; Psalm 93:1, 2; Psalm 103:19). God’s kingdom joins everyone in heaven and on earth in praise to God (Psalm 103:20–22; Psalm 148). The Book of Psalms shows us that humans everywhere will announce that the Lord is King (Psalm 96:10; Psalm 97:1; Psalm 99:1; Psalm 145:11–13).

But not all people say the Lord is King now. Evil people refuse to honor God as King. They make fun of God and hurt His people (Psalm 14:1; Psalm 74:3–22). Worse, many evil people enjoy much success. God is very patient with them. The poets who wrote the Book of Psalms are troubled when they see that God is patient with evil people. But the poets trust in God’s strength and in His holy work as Judge (Psalm 68:21; Psalm 73:17–20). In the same way, God’s people today trust in Jesus’ saving work for them (Matthew 12:26–28). They wait with joy for Him to come as King at the Second Coming (1 Corinthians 15:20–28).

“Hate evil, you who love the Lord” (Psalm 97:10, ERV). Why should our love for God cause us to hate evil? How is our love for God connected to our hating evil?



The poets trust in God’s strength and in His holy work as Judge (Psalm 68:21; Psalm 73:17–20).

GOD IS THE JUDGE (Psalm 75)

Read Psalm 75. This psalm shows us that evil people like to brag. Why does God warn them not to brag?

The Lord is the All-powerful King. He is also the Giver of the Law (Psalm 99:7) and a Judge (Psalm 98:9; Psalm 97:2). The Lord will judge and destroy the evil ones who attack His kingdom (Psalm 75:8–10; Psalm 96:13).

In Psalm 75, several word pictures show us that God will destroy evil people. In Psalm 75:8, we see a cup with red wine. This cup shows us that God is very angry because of sin and suffering (Jeremiah 25:15; Revelation 14:10). In Psalm 75:10, God says He will destroy evil people, but He will honor His people who love and obey Him. God chooses the time (Psalm 75:2) when He will judge everyone. The Bible teaches us that His work as Judge will happen at the end of time (Psalm 96:13; 1 Corinthians 15:23–26).

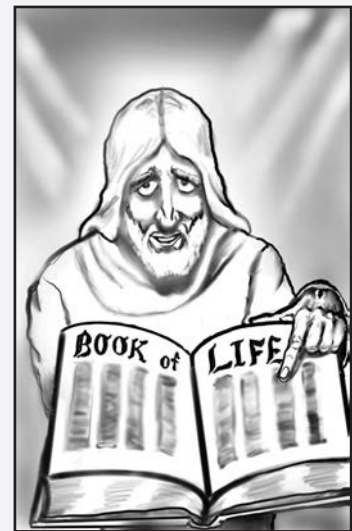
Part of God's work as Judge includes looking into people's hearts. Read Psalm 14:2. This verse helps us remember Genesis 6:5, 8. Both sets of verses show us that God will look at people's lives. He will save as many people as He can. He will do this work before He comes again to reward His children and punish evil people.

How will God do this special work as Judge?

First, God saves His people from the evil ones who are trying to hurt them (Psalm 97:10; Psalm 146:9). God gives everlasting life to His followers who have no pride in their hearts (Psalm 149:4). Second, evil people will be destroyed forever (Psalm 97:3). Some poets in the Book of Psalms talk about how human weapons are useless against the Judge from heaven (Psalm 76:3–6). The Lord is a forgiving God. At the same time, He punishes the sins of the people (Psalm 99:8). Both evil people and holy people must explain to God the reasons for their behavior in this life.

God's work as Judge starts with His people. Next, God judges everyone else on earth (Deuteronomy 32:36; 1 Peter 4:17). One poet in the Book of Psalms asks God to judge him. At the same time, the poet depends on God's holy life and mercy to protect him (Psalm 7:8–11; Psalm 139:23, 24).

The Book of Psalms invites us to feel joyful that God is our Judge (Psalm 67:4; Psalm 96:10–13; Psalm 98:4–9). Why is God's work as Judge good news for everyone?



God will look at people's lives. He will save as many people as He can.

REMEMBERING GOD'S PROMISE (Psalm 94:14)

In Daniel 7:9, 10, we read about the time when God will judge all people, both the dead and the living. Why can God's people have peace with God during this time? Read Psalm 94:14 and Psalm 105:7–10 for the answer.

God's people can trust in God to save them because the Lord "lives in Jerusalem. His home is on Mount Zion" (Psalm 76:1, 2, ICB). So, God is with His people. God also gives His people His everlasting promise (Psalm 94:14; Psalm 105:8–10). God's people are very precious to Him. God works to keep His people safe in Him. He forgives their sins (Psalm 103:3). God teaches and blesses His people. He makes them strong (Psalm 25:8–11; Psalm 29:11; Psalm 105:24). God judges His people and accepts them. God helps them to become holy. He shows His people that He cares (Psalm 94:8–15).

In Psalm 105, we read about Israel's history. In everything that happened, good or bad, God was there. He kept His promise to His people. God led Joseph to Egypt. God used Joseph to save his family and other people from the terrible food shortage (Psalm 105:16–24). The Lord chose Moses to lead His people out of Egypt. God did many miracles to save His people at that time (Psalm 105:25–38).

The Lord gave His people the Promised Land (Psalm 105:11, 44). God protected His people (Psalm 105:12–15). God made His people grow large in number (Psalm 105:24). He saved His people from their enemies (Psalm 105:37, 38). God gave His people what they needed each day to live (Psalm 105:39–41). The Lord controls everything that happens to His people. The poets who wrote the Book of Psalms wanted God's people to always remember this Bible truth.

When God remembers His promise, He does more than think about it. He takes action. He helps His people (Genesis 8:1; Psalm 98:3; Psalm 105:42–44). How do God's people remember Him? They honor Him.

God commands His people to obey His laws (Psalm 78:5–7; Psalm 105:45). God also wants Israel to tell other people about Him. The Lord wants everyone to join Israel in enjoying the blessings of His promise (Psalm 105:1, 2). Then God can protect them, too (Psalm 89:28–34).

Why are the promises that God made to Israel also for us? What does Jesus give us that helps us answer the question? Hint: read Galatians 3:26–29.



In everything that happened to Israel, good or bad, God was there. (Read Exodus 15.)

THE LORD'S TEACHINGS ARE PERFECT (Psalm 19:7)

Read Psalm 19:7; Psalm 93:5; Psalm 119:165; Psalm 1:2, 6; Psalm 18:30; and Psalm 25:10. What same message do we read in all of these verses?

The Lord is the One who made us. He is our King and our Judge. He controls the earth. These Bible truths help us to trust in His laws and teachings. The Lord's laws teach His people how to worship Him and live for Him (Exodus 32:15). The Lord's laws and teachings "do not change" (Psalm 93:5, NlrV). God's kingdom continues forever. He made this earth and keeps it going (Psalm 93:1, 2). So, we always can depend on God and His laws.

God tells us that we can trust His promises and His commands. God also commands His people to trust in Him and obey His laws.

At the same time, we live on an earth filled with sin. Sometimes, human laws and human judges are not fair. The poets who wrote the Book of Psalms use a special word picture to show that human laws are not always fair. The word picture they use is an earthquake or a shaking (Psalm 18:7; Isaiah 24:18–21). God's law teaches His people how to live so that they will not be afraid or lost when He judges them. God's people obey His law. So, nothing will "shake" or destroy their faith in God during that time (Psalm 112:1, 6, 7). Psalm 119 says, "Those [people] who love your law enjoy great [much] peace. Nothing can make them trip and fall" into sin (Psalm 119:165, NlrV). God protects His people and leads them all their lives (Psalm 1:2, 3, 6).

God's Word, the Bible, is the same as a lamp. It shows His people the road that leads to God. The Bible also protects God's people from the traps of their enemies (Psalm 119:105, 110). Does the peace we get from loving God's law (Psalm 119:165) mean that we won't have troubles? Of course not! What Psalm 119 means is that we get peace from letting God and His love live in our hearts.

How does keeping God's laws and following His teachings make your life better? Did you suffer when you broke God's laws and didn't follow His teachings?



God's law teaches His people how to live so that they will not be afraid or lost when He judges them.

ADDITIONAL THOUGHT: Read Psalm 86:5, 15; Ellen G. White, “God’s Love for Man,” pages 9–15, in *Steps to Christ*. We know that God is love. How does this Bible truth help us better understand who God is and how He helps His people? What does the Book of Psalms teach us?

As we continue to study the Book of Psalms, we must think about what the Psalms teach us about God’s love, mercy, and His plan to save us and make the earth new. “The cross teaches us about God and His love. The more we study this topic, the more we will understand God’s mercy, care, and forgiveness. We will see that God and His laws are fair. We also will see the proof of His love. God’s love doesn’t have limits. His love for us is bigger than a mother’s love for her child even if the child refuses to obey her.”—Ellen G. White, *Steps to Christ*, page 15, adapted. In the Book of Psalms, when God judges people for refusing to obey Him, what do these people do? They come back to the Lord and continue to pray to Him for help to save them! Why? Because they know that God’s anger is only for a short time. But His mercy is everlasting (Psalm 103:8).



The more we study the cross and God’s love, the more we will understand God’s mercy, care, and forgiveness.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- ① The Book of Psalms teaches us that God is the King. God is in control of everything that happens on this earth. At the same time, why do we need to understand that a worldwide war between God and Satan is happening all around us? How does this Bible truth help us understand why there is so much sin and suffering on this earth?
- ② The Bible also teaches us that God made us. How does this teaching help us understand who we are and how we must take care of everything God made on this earth? What happens when people don’t follow this teaching? Read Psalm 106:35–42 for the answer.
- ③ What was wrong with the false gods that the people worshiped in Bible times (Psalm 115:4–8)? What about modern false gods? Why are they also a danger to our relationship with the Lord?
- ④ The Bible tells us that God’s work as Judge will start with His people. So, how should God’s people live? How does God judge His people?

“I FOUGHT AND WON”

Pedro was surprised when his sister got angry with him after he came home from church. Pedro lived with his sister in the country of Mozambique in Africa. Pedro’s sister said, “Don’t go back to the Seventh-day Adventist Church, Pedro. It’s not a good church because it has false messengers. If you go again, you can’t live with me anymore.”

Pedro was worried. Family problems forced him to leave his home in the town of Beira to live with his sister. Pedro’s sister lived in Maputo, 700 miles (1,140 kilometers) from Beira. Maputo is the capital city of Mozambique. After Pedro moved to Maputo, he looked for a Seventh-day Adventist Church. Soon he found a church and worshiped there for the first time. When he got home, his sister told him not to go back there again.

Pedro prayed for his sister and kept going to church.

Pedro’s sister tried to force Pedro to stop going to church. She stopped sharing her food with Pedro. Pedro’s sister wanted to make her brother feel very hungry. She hoped he would agree to stop going to church to get some food from her.

Pedro thanked God for taking care of him. He kept going to church. Pedro got ready to go to church on Sabbath morning. His sister told him not to come back. She said, “Are you going to keep going to your church? If you refuse to obey my rules, you can’t live in my house anymore.”

Pedro was sad. He knew that he wasn’t fighting only with his sister. He was in the middle of a spiritual war between Jesus and Satan. Pedro remembered Paul’s words: “Our fight is not with people. It [our fight] is against the leaders and the powers [demons] and the spirits [the devil and his demons] of darkness [evil] in [on] this world [earth]. It [our fight] is against the demon world [Satan’s army of evil angels] that works in the heavens [where God lives]” (Ephesians 6:12, NLV).

Pedro went to church and asked the pastor and church members to pray for him. When Pedro went home later that day, his sister kicked him out. A friend let Pedro stay with him for two nights. Then a church member gave Pedro a job taking care of his house in exchange for meals and a room.

Today, Pedro continues to take care of people’s homes for a living. He worships God every Sabbath. He believes God is working on his sister’s heart. They are friends again. She no longer tells him to stop going to church on Sabbath. Pedro hopes that she will accept the whole Bible truth and learn to love the writings of Ellen G. White.

Pedro says, “I put on God’s battle suit. I fought and won. ‘I can do all things because Christ gives me the strength’ [Philippians 4:13, NLV].”

INSIDE *Story*

by ANDREW MCCHESENEY



**“I put on God’s battle suit.
I fought and won.”**