

“God’s Promises, Priorities & Treasures”
Psalms 48, 87, 89, 102, 114, 127, 132
Steve Mood

Introduction

- In the Psalms for this week’s lesson God promises that David’s line will continue forever:
- **Psa. 85:35-37** *Once for all I have sworn by my holiness; I will not lie to David. His offspring shall endure forever, his throne as long as the sun before me. Like the moon it shall be established forever, a faithful witness in the skies.*
- **Psa. 132:11** *The Lord swore to David a sure oath from which he will not turn back: “One of the sons of your body I will set on your throne.*
- We also saw that Jerusalem, or Zion, is a priority for His protection since He treasures the Holy City:
- **Psa. 48:1** *Great is the Lord and greatly to be praised in the city of our God! His holy mountain.*
- **Psa. 87:1-2** *On the holy mount stands the city he founded; the Lord loves the gates of Zion more than all the dwelling places of Jacob.*
- The lesson did a great job emphasizing these points, but as I looked at these Psalms something else was brought to my attention, something else we should look at and pay attention to.
- In early 1974 I became a Christian and within the first year a couple of the ladies in my Bible study group had found a new book, a book that talked about who God is and what He is like. That book, Knowing God by J. I. Packer, has revolutionized my life and walk with the Lord. I have read it many times, and as I have said before, I try to read it at least once per year.
- In chapter one of that book, it relates the following from the introduction to a sermon given January 7, 1855 by the twenty-year-old minister, C. H. Spurgeon:
- *It has been said by someone that the “proper study of mankind is man.” I will not oppose the idea, but I believe it is equally true that the proper study of a Christian is the Godhead. The highest science, the loftiest speculation, the mightiest philosophy, which can ever engage the attention of the child of God, is the name, the nature, the person, the work, the doings, and the existence of the great God who he calls His Father. There is something exceedingly improving to the mind in a contemplation of the Divinity. It is a subject so vast, that all our thoughts are lost in its immensity; so deep, that our pride is drowned in its infinity.*
- This section of Psalms tells us much about the nature and character of our God. My goal today is that you see God as He has been revealed in these Psalms, and that you will be changed when you realize how mighty, awesome, and wonderful God is, who loves us, and whom we are to worship, adore, and obey. Let us be ready to see our God and echo what Isaiah said to Israel:

- **Isa. 40:9** *Go on up to a high mountain, O Zion, herald of good news; lift up your voice with strength, O Jerusalem, herald of good news; lift it up, fear not; say to the cities of Judah, “Behold your God!”*
- **Lesson**
- **Point #1: God is eternal**
- **Psa. 48:13-14** *that you may tell the next generation that this is God, our God forever and ever. He will guide us forever.*
- **Psa. 132:13-14** *For the Lord has chosen Zion; he has desired it for his dwelling place: “This is my resting place forever; here I will dwell, for I have desired it.”*
- Have you ever reflected upon the fact that God is eternal? That He has always existed? That He is the first and the last? That He has no beginning and no end?
- **Isa. 42:6** *Thus says the Lord, the King of Israel and his Redeemer, the Lord of hosts: “I am the first and I am the last; besides me there is no god.*
- **Rev. 22:13** *I am the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end.*
- He was before there was a universe:
- **Gen. 1:1** *In the beginning, God...*
- God is self-existent. No one or thing made God. He has always existed and He will always exist. Before the universe was created there wasn't anything but God: Not empty space, not a void, not a blackhole. There was nothing except God. God doesn't have a starting point; He has always been and always will be. God will never cease to be God.
- Is this comforting or scary? For me it is extremely comforting, for the God I worship will always be there and I can trust He will never stop being God. If He has given me eternal life, then I can believe Him for He is eternal.
- **Point #2: God is immutable**
- **Psa. 102:26-27** *They will perish, but you will remain; they will all wear out like a garment. You will change them like a robe, and they will pass away, but you are the same, and your years have no end.*
- Closely related to God's eternity is the concept that God does not change, that He is immutable. He has always been the same. What He has been is what He is today and what He will be in the far future. This speaks about who God is and what He is like. As Packer says in Knowing God:
- (1) His life does not change: **Psa. 32:2** *Your throne is established from of old; you are from everlasting.*
- (2) His character does not change: **Ex. 34:6-7** *The Lord, the Lord, a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness, keeping steadfast love for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, but who will by no means clear the guilty...*

- (3) His truth does not change: **Isa. 40:8** *The grass withers, the flower fades, but the word of our God will stand forever.*
- (4) His purposes do not change: **1 Sam. 15:29** *Also the Glory of Israel will not lie or change His mind; for He is not a man that He should change His mind.*
- We can trust that how God is and how He acts today will be how He is and acts in the future. We as people change every day, but God doesn't. The God who has existed before there was a universe is the same God today, and He has not changed.
- **Point #3: God is creator**
- **Psa. 89:11-12** *The heavens are yours; the earth also is yours; the world and all that is in it, you have founded them. The north and the south, you have created them; Tabor and Hermon joyously praise your name.*
- **Psa. 102:25** *Of old you laid the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the work of your hands.*
- God made the universe. He made it out of nothing. He did not use some preexisting eternal matter, for He even made the matter that became the universe. He founded the universe. He created the universe. But just as important as this is that He maintains and sustains the universe. If God so desired the universe would disappear if He didn't sustain it. Speaking of Jesus, the New Testament indicates:
 - **Col. 1:16-17** *For by Him all things were created, both in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things have been created through Him and for Him. He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together.*
 - **Heb. 1:3** *He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature, and he upholds the universe by the word of his power.*
 - We are not made by chance, or sustained by some mysterious force that has always existed. The earth will continue to exist until God decides that it shouldn't. Man can't destroy it. Gravity or supernovas can't destroy it. Pollution can't destroy it. Only God can destroy what He has made. And He is holding it together, sustaining it for His purposes and plans.
- **Point #4: God is sovereign**
- **Psa. 102:12** *But you, O Lord, are enthroned forever; you are remembered throughout all generations*
- **Psa. 89:13-14** *You have a mighty arm; strong is your hand, high your right hand. Righteousness and justice are the foundation of your throne; steadfast love and faithfulness go before you.*
- God is in control of the whole universe. He is ruler over all. He is the sovereign that decides what happens. God's throne is a picture of His ruling and control over everything. The world thinks that our planet and all that is in it is made by chance and governed by laws of nature, or controlled by equal powers of good and evil. It is God, the only God, who rules:

- **1 Chr. 29:11-12** *Yours, O Lord, is the greatness and the power and the glory and the victory and the majesty, for all that is in the heavens and in the earth is yours. Yours is the kingdom, O Lord, and you are exalted as head above all. Both riches and honor come from you, and you rule over all.*
- Throughout the Bible the supremacy and sovereignty of God are proclaimed over and over again. A. W. Pink in his book The Attributes of God says:
- *God's supremacy over the works of His hands is vividly depicted in Scripture. Inanimate matter, irrational creatures, all perform their Maker's bidding. At His pleasure the Red Sea divided and its waters stood up as walls (Exo. 14); the earth opened her mouth, and guilty rebels went down alive into the pit (Num. 16). When He so ordered, the sun stood still (Josh. 10); and on another occasion went backward ten degrees on the dial of Ahaz (Isa. 38:8).*
- None can stop God's hand. None can tell God that He is wrong and should do something a different way. None have the right or privilege to rule or govern without God's good pleasure and permission. We can be assured that what happens in our life does not surprise God or change His plans. We can trust Him that He is in control and knows what is happening and why. Did God have to come up with a Plan B after Adam sinned? No. We don't always know why something happens, but we can be assured that:
- **Rom. 8:28** *And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose.*
- We can trust God. We know that God has our best interests at heart and we are daily being conformed to His image and to become more like Him. Is life easy? Has God promised us wealth, good health, a good paying job, a long life, or no pain and distress? The answer to all of these questions is a resounding no. Do we trust God and know that He is in control? The answer to these is yes.
- **Point #5: God is great**
- **Psa. 48:1** *Great is the Lord and greatly to be praised in the city of our God! His holy mountain.*
- **Psa. 89:6-7** *For who in the skies can be compared to the Lord? Who among the heavenly beings is like the Lord, a God greatly to be feared in the council of the holy ones, and awesome above all who are around him?*
- **Psa. 114:7-8** *Tremble, O earth, at the presence of the Lord, at the presence of the God of Jacob, who turns the rock into a pool of water, the flint into a spring of water.*
- God is greater than anything else or creature. He alone is the greatest. There is nothing that compares with Him. He is unique and is worthy of our worship and praise. Over the last few years, we have heard of the **GOAT**, or the Greatest of All Time. But it is God who is great and there is nothing else that is like God or compares to Him. He is awesome above all else. Whatever you have or the abilities you have, when compared to who God is, are nothing when compared to Him.
- He is beyond comparison and frankly, sometimes beyond our ability to understand Him:

- **Rom. 11:33** *Oh, the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments and how inscrutable his ways!*
- **Isa. 46:5,9** *To whom will you liken me and make me equal, and compare me, that we may be alike? ... or I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is none like me.*
- God is mighty. God is powerful. God can do whatever He pleases because He is greater than anything or anyone. Nothing compares to Him. God rules overall and He has the power to implement His plans and decrees.
- **Point #6: God is righteous**
- **Psa. 48:10** *As your name, O God, so your praise reaches to the ends of the earth. Your right hand is filled with righteousness.*
- **Psa. 89:14** *Righteousness and justice are the foundation of your throne; steadfast love and faithfulness go before you.*
- *God always acts in accordance with what is right* and He is the *final standard of what is right* (Grudem, Systematic Theology). He is without sin and never does anything with impure motives. God is not evil and always does what is holy and right. He is morally perfect. He always does what is just. He never wrongs us. He treats people with what they deserve and provides salvation freely to those whom He chooses.
- We can trust God because He is without sin or impure motives. He alone is the standard for righteousness and there can be no standard outside of this by which we can measure righteousness or justice, despite what the world thinks about itself. It is God whom we need to obey and it is God whom we should follow.
- **Point #7: God is faithful/truthful**
- **Psa. 89:1-2** *I will sing of the steadfast love of the Lord, forever; with my mouth I will make known your faithfulness to all generations For I said, “Steadfast love will be built up forever; in the heavens you will establish your faithfulness.”*
- **Psa. 89:5** *Let the heavens praise your wonders, O Lord, your faithfulness in the assembly of the holy ones!*
- **Psa. 89:28** *My steadfast love I will keep for him forever, and my covenant will stand firm for him.*
- **Psa. 89:35** *Once for all I have sworn by my holiness; I will not lie to David.*
- When we think about God's faithfulness what comes to mind? God does what He says He will do. He is the final standard of truth. He is also the true God. He is reliable and He can be trusted for what He has promised He will do. We should have absolute confidence in what God says and what He will do. I am not even sure that our society believes today that there is actually a truth that should be believed. Everything seems to be relative. But we know that there is a truth and it is based upon God's character and His word. God knows all things. He understands all things. He knows what is going to happen and what He has told us in prophecy can be trusted 100%. Have no doubts about God or what He has promised. What He has predicted has happened exactly as He said it would. Can we trust God today? Yes!

What He says has happened, has happened just as He said. What will happen in the future will happen just as He has said it will.

- The steadfast love in these verses refers to:
- *God's unfailing love, a love that is based on the covenant relationship and that issues forth in the loyalty God shows His faithful people.* - Tremper Longman, Psalms, TOTC
- God is faithful, trustworthy, and has shown His kindness to us, for He has a covenant with those who are His elect:
- *Eph. 1:3-5 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, even as He chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before Him. In love He predestined us for adoption to Himself as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of His will.*
- What God has told us is true. What He has said and promised to us He will fulfill. We can believe everything He has told us and promised.
- **Summary**
- **Point #1: God is eternal** – He has always existed and always will exist. There was never a time that He didn't exist. He existed before there was a universe.
- **Point #2: God is immutable** – He does not change. His character does not change. He is not whimsical or capricious, changing His mind every day. He the same yesterday, today, and forever.
- **Point #3: God is creator** – He has made everything. There is nothing that has come into being that He has not created. He has made us and all the animals. He has made this beautiful and awesome universe.
- **Point #4: God is sovereign** – He is in control, He has a plan, and His plans will be implemented. What He decides happens. What He allows to happen does. What He plans to do will occur.
- **Point #5: God is great** – There is nothing that compares to God, He is unique, He is beyond all. There is nothing in the whole universe that compares to God. For He is the greatest and beside Him nothing is comparable.
- **Point #6: God is righteous** – All that He does and plans is righteous and without sin or impure motives. He always does what is just and right. He is always good.
- **Point #7: God is faithful/truthful** – All that He says will happen for He is faithful to what He is says and all that He says is true. We can trust Him for He has the power to implement what He plans. He is truthful and never tells us a lie.
- **Application**

- (1) Read the Bible and reflect on what is revealed about God – Read all the Bible, read it every day. It doesn't matter if you read it quickly or slowly. Reread Psalms this summer and see what it tells you about God.
- Ask yourself four questions as you read it: (a) What does it say? (b) What does it mean? (c) What does it tell us about God? (d) What can I apply to my life? The Bible is not some great literature for us to merely read or a decorative item sitting on a coffee table. It is a book that is meant to change us.
- (2) Trust God – He alone is trustworthy and He alone always has our best interests at heart. No matter what happens continue to turn to God each and every day and throw yourself before the feet of God in prayer and trust in Him. Seek Him and walk in the power of the God who has loved us and cares for us.
- (3) View the world from God's viewpoint, not your own or the world's – God calls us to turn to Him and turn away from sinful ways of the world. He wants us to be holy and righteous. Get your mind off the small things of life but put it directly on the God who created and sustains the universe. Behold your God and get to know Him better, for we will reside with Him for the rest of eternity.
- **Isa. 40:10-11** *Behold, the Lord God comes with might, and His arm rules for him; behold, His reward is with him, and His recompense before him. He will tend His flock like a shepherd; He will gather the lambs in His arms; He will carry them in His bosom, and gently lead those that are with young.*
- After our prayer, please stand for the doxology. Let us pray.