

# The LORD Reigns

Psalm 93:1-5

*Halifax: 30 July 2006*

## **Introduction**

As most of you know, it is my practice to break from our regular sermon series every few weeks and preach from a Psalm that corresponds to the theme of our series.

- In our series in Matthew, we have just completed chapter 20.
  - For some time, we have seen Jesus headed up to Jerusalem with His disciples for the last time...
    - He has told them several times that on this visit, He will be betrayed, arrested, and crucified; and that on the third day, He will rise again.
    - In chapter 21, we will see what happens when he first enters Jerusalem...
      - We will see Him welcomed as Messiah by the crowds shouting Hosanna,
      - We will see Him purifying His Father's house,
      - We will see His authority questioned,
      - And we will see Him proclaiming His authority to His enemies.

All of this has to do with the reign of our Lord...

- some excepting Him as their King and others opposing Him...

There are many Psalms I might have chosen that would suit this theme,

- but one that speaks directly about the Lord's reign that we have not used in the past as a Psalm of Focus is Psalm 93.
  - Psalm 93 is a song for you to sing in celebration of the reign of our Lord Jesus.
    - Now of course if you are not reconciled to Him, it is not a song you can sing with sincere joy at all—
      - unless you repent and trust in Him, it is a song about your destruction...
    - But you who are trusting in Him,
      - It is a Psalm you can sing and ought to sing with great joy and comfort!

TRANS> You begin this Psalm with a simple, yet marvellous announcement...

## **I. You triumphantly announce that the Lord reigns.**

- This triumphant announcement is the first thing we will consider as we examine this Psalm...

- A. This is the kind of announcement that is made when you are accepting the king and His rule!
1. The same language is used of earthly kings when they were had just been crowned as king...
    - a. To acknowledge it, the people would shout out, “King so in so reigns.”
      - In other words, it carries that idea that he has just begun to reign.
    - b. This is not to say that Jehovah wasn’t reigning before,
      - but it is to focus on particular manifestation of His reign or on your acceptance of it...
        - As when you have just come to recognise Him and declare, “Jehovah reigns”
        - Or when He has just made His regal character known by some great act and with joy His people cry out,
          - “The LORD reigns!”
  2. There are many examples of this...
    - a. Israel did this when the LORD brought them out of Egypt...
      - 1) In Exodus 15, Moses taught them a song that began like this...
        - Exodus 15:1-5: “Then Moses and the children of Israel sang this song to the LORD, and spoke, saying: "I will sing to the LORD, For He has triumphed gloriously! The horse and its rider He has thrown into the sea! The LORD *is* my strength and song, And He has become my salvation; He *is* my God, and I will praise Him; My father’s God, and I will exalt Him. The LORD *is* a man of war; The LORD *is* His name. Pharaoh’s chariots and his army He has cast into the sea; His chosen captains also are drowned in the Red Sea. The depths have covered them; They sank to the bottom like a stone.”
      - 2) And ended like this...
        - Exodus 15:18: “The LORD shall reign forever and ever.”
      - 3) It was not that the LORD did not reign before He delivered them from Pharaoh...
        - It was rather that they were not convinced of His reign until then because as far they were concerned, Pharaoh was their ruler.
        - Now they saw that the LORD was their ruler.
        - He had revealed Himself as their reigning Lord.
    - b. Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon also came to declare God’s reign at last...

- 1) For several years, the Lord kept showing this pagan king that He, Jehovah, reigns over all...
  - That He is God most high who rules in the kingdom of men and gives power to one while abasing another.
  
- 2) Nebuchadnezzar didn't get it at first...
  - But finally when the LORD made him like a beast that roams in the meadow and eats grass like an ox,
  - He at last understood that the Lord reigns. In Daniel 4:34-35, he declares as much:
    - Dan 4:34-35: "And at the end of the time I, Nebuchadnezzar, lifted my eyes to heaven, and my understanding returned to me; and I blessed the Most High and praised and honored Him who lives forever: For His dominion *is* an everlasting dominion, And His kingdom *is* from generation to generation. All the inhabitants of the earth *are* reputed as nothing; He does according to His will in the army of heaven And *among* the inhabitants of the earth. No one can restrain His hand Or say to Him, "What have You done?""
  
- 3) This was true of the Lord all along the way,
  - but at last Nebuchadnezzar was able to declare it because the Lord had clearly made it known to Him.
  
3. But we have an even greater reason to declare that the Lord reigns today than either Israel or Nebuchadnezzar had.
  - a. We have an historical event displaying our LORD's reign to us of such great proportions that it calls for the fresh declaration that "the LORD reigns" from day to day and from generation to generation!
    - We live in the day when we can look back and see the triumph of our Lord Jesus Christ over sin and death!
    - We are able to see how He came into the world and offered Himself a sacrifice to take away our sins...
    - And how God demonstrated His acceptance of that sacrifice by raising Him from the dead.
  
  - b. If it is glorious to see Israel coming up from Egypt and the Red Sea,
    - How much more glorious is it to see Jesus, the Head of the Church, rising triumphantly over the curse and the grave for us all!
      - Truly, the LORD has triumphed gloriously!
    - We were justly condemned, sentenced to the darkness of Hell forever and ever, but He overcame for us by His suffering and death in our place...

- So that all who believe are justified!
  - When He rose, the whole church, in a sense, rose with Him, because it is by virtue of His acceptance and victory that we are all accepted.
  - If you have seen what He has done, you have every reason to sing:
    - “The LORD reigns!” with freshness as long as you live!
    - It is reality that ought to dawn on you almost like a fresh new discovery every day!
- c. Isaiah the prophet envisions the church singing this when they hear the glorious gospel—the Good News of His victory!
- In Isa 52:7, he says:
    - Isa 52:7-10: How beautiful upon the mountains Are the feet of him who brings good news, Who proclaims peace, Who brings glad tidings of good *things*, Who proclaims salvation, Who says to Zion, “Your God reigns!” Your watchmen shall lift up *their* voices, With their voices they shall sing together; For they shall see eye to eye when the LORD brings back Zion. Break forth into joy, sing together, you waste places of Jerusalem! For the LORD has comforted His people, He has redeemed Jerusalem. The LORD has made bare His holy arm in the eyes of all the nations; And all the ends of the earth shall see The salvation of our God.
  - Here comes the missionary with good news of God’s saving grace to the world and people joining in to say, “The LORD reigns.”
    - After the cross, we have reason to sing “The LORD reigns” with a richness of meaning that was unknown to those who lived before the coming of our Lord.

TRANS> Indeed, we what this Psalm goes on to explain about His reign...

- B. We see that He is clothed with majesty and that He has girded Himself with strength!
- You see how the Psalm goes on to say that as verse 1 continues...
    - v. 1: “The LORD reigns, He is clothed with majesty; The LORD is clothed, He has girded Himself with strength.”
1. The idea of being...
- a. **clothed** with majesty indicates that He has manifested His majesty to us...
    - Just as a king wears his crown and His royal garments so that people will know who He is,
      - so our Lord has clothed Himself with majesty,
        - appearing in thunder and cloud on Mount Sinai...
        - High and lifted up in the temple to Isaiah...
        - on the Mount of Transfiguration to His disciples...

- And in resurrection glory when He ascended in heaven before their eyes.
- b. And the idea that He has girded Himself with strength indicates that He has shown us His holy arm—His saving strength as our captain in arms...
- He did this when He conquered the Egyptians for His people of old, and then led them to victory in Canaan...
  - He did it far more when He rose from the dead...
  - And He will do it marvellously again when He comes at the end of the age.

TRANS> He has shown His reign to us not only as a prince, arrayed in glorious majesty; but also as a captain of the army, riding forth to conquer our enemies.

2. His appearing to us in these ways shows us clearly that **He** is the One who reigns.
- a. And because it is HIM, Jehovah, the LORD, we can take confidence that the world will not be moved...
- As verse 1 goes on to say:
    - “Surely the world is established so that it cannot be moved.”
- 1) He has shown us clearly that He is ruling the world!
- It is not just here on its own from eternity as the pagans have always supposed...
  - It is here for His glory and purpose...
    - It is **established** by Him for Himself.
    - It is not running at random to some uncertain end, but it accomplishing His purposes.
- 2) Consider even how He displayed His majesty and glory to the whole world in the day of Noah...
- In the great flood, He destroyed the world in order to preserve it...
    - And then He promised that He would not destroy it in that way again but would maintain it for His purposes.
    - He promised that He would keep it in order that He might redeem it.
      - It is established by Him so that it cannot be moved.
      - That is why it continues from day to day and from year to year.
- b. Learn from this that we are not here for ourselves, but for Him...

- As it says at the end of Romans 11—in the conclusion to great doctrinal portion of Romans...
  - Rom 11:36: For of Him and through Him and to Him *are* all things, to whom *be* glory forever. Amen.
- You will never make sense of this world until you understand that it was created and is preserved for God’s glory...
  - He is glorified in the salvation of sinners...
    - When He saves them, He displays His marvellous grace and brings them into His holy fellowship forever, perfecting them in holiness and happiness...
      - In this way, His grace is held up for both angels and men to see.
  - And He is also glorified in the judgement of sinners...
    - When He sends a sinner to destruction, He shows the glory of His wrath and His hatred against His image profaned...
    - He makes known His zeal for purity and His opposition to lies and corruption.
- c. The world will not fail to accomplish His purposes...
  - He has established it so that it cannot be moved...
  - He reigns over all things, and there is nothing that happens here with out Him.
    - Proverbs 16:4 says:
      - Prov 16:4: The LORD has made all for Himself, Yes, even the wicked for the day of doom.

TRANS> He has shown us clearly by His acts of mercy and judgement that He reigns.

C. There is a sense in which He began to reign when He rose from the dead—

- and began to reign over us in particular when we believed...
  - and a sense in which He has yet to begin His reign when He brings down all His enemies at the last day.
  - But we must understand as well that He was reigning all along—right from the beginning.
- 1. Our Psalm goes on to declare to this in verse 2:
  - Psalm 93:2: Your throne is established from of old; You are from everlasting.”
  - Our stability is grounded in His stability...

- He is working out His purpose all along and will continue to do so.
2. The Lord has been on the throne of the world since He created the world...
- Acts 15:18 states:
    - Ac 15:18: Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world.
      - There are no accidents or surprises for Him.
  - God had a plan when He made this world, and He has been working out that plan from the very beginning...
    - It is our privilege to see His reign more and more as He reveals it throughout history...
      - and to have more and more occasions to say:
        - “The Lord reigns...”
        - But let us always recognise that though we come to understand this as He shows His reign to us...
          - His throne was truly established of old...
          - He is not one who has lately come to the throne,
            - but the one who has reigned over us from the beginning.
            - Let Him continue to reveal His reign to us more and more.
3. And not only that, but you need to understand that He Himself is from everlasting...
- Even before He created the world,
    - Already, He lived in the eternal joy of communion with the society of Himself—as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
      - He is in no way dependent on the world, but the world is in every dependent on Him.
  - When you understand this, it helps you to see just how stable the world is...
    - It is not the product of one who is evolving, or who came to be what He is after the world was made...
    - It is the product of one who is unchanging and whose work is certain.
  - In creating the world, His love poured out from that glorious company of the Trinity and reached forth to create a world where His glory would be revealed.
    - It is our privilege to see that revelation and to worship Him as our God who reigns.

- What security is ours when we know that He who establishes us is from everlasting and cannot fail to accomplish His purposes.

TRANS> Do you see His reign?

- Do you rejoice that He reigns?
- Can you sincerely join your voice to the words of this Psalm and say:
  - “The LORD reigns?”
- If you can, then you can draw a tremendous comfort from His reign—
  - a comfort that you declare when you sing verse 3-4...

## II. Because He reigns, all opposition to Him will fail.

- This is the second thing we declare when we sing this Psalm...
  - Having declared that He reigns, we now declare that all opposition to Him will fall.

A. It is fully acknowledged in verse 3 that He has enemies that rise up against Him...

- It says:
  - Psalm 93:3: The floods have lifted up, O LORD, The floods have lifted up their voice; The floods lift up their waves.

1. Three times His enemies are referred to as “floods” or “rivers” “lifting up.”

- What an apt description of His foes...
  - a. First, they are said to lift **themselves** up.
    - 1) This is a description of pride.
      - Pride is the lifting up of oneself...
      - It is the thing that ruins angels and men.
        - Angels and men were created to serve God and to draw their strength and life from Him...
          - That is their glory...
          - But when they are lifted up,
            - they cut themselves off from God and lose their glory...
            - They become corrupt and defiled—
              - I mean, who would even want to live forever in this world that is so full of sin?



- 2) It is the great deception that entered the world when Eve first listened to the Serpent who told her...
- “You will be like God.”
    - She thought this would be a good thing—to be in charge and to run her own life and make her own decisions about good and evil...
    - She was proud and did not realise that she was not capable of such responsibility...
      - She and Adam sought great things for themselves that were too great for them to handle.
      - This world of sin is the result of man’s independence...
        - And it is not nearly as bad as it would be if God did not continually restrain us to preserve us.

TRANS> Surely even the most sanctified among you can find plenty of the remnants of this pride in your soul...

- The whole human race lifted itself up against the reign of God so the reign of God is opposed...
  - His enemies are like a flood lifted up.

b. Second, these floods are said to lift up their **voice**...

- 1) The Lord’s enemies not only swell within, but they also speak great swelling words—pompous words...
- God has given them all their abilities, but instead of giving thanks they boast as if He is not the author of them...
  - God has given them all that they possess—their food and clothing—but they boast as though it was by their own wisdom and skill that they attained them.
  - God has given them their authority and their places, but they speak without regarding Him.
  - But perhaps the greatest boast is when they say that they should be accepted of God because they are good...
    - It is the height of arrogance to rebel against the LORD and then say its not that bad...
- 2) There are those who lift up the voice of pride so as to say that even though they walk in their own ways, they will prosper...
- This is the lies of the world...
    - That a person can commit sexual immorality and be full and complete...

- That a person can rebel against parents and prosper...
- That a person can abort their baby and still live in peace...
  - This is the lifting up of the voice against God's truth.

3) And then there are those who lift up their voice directly against God...

- They say that He is not just...
- They say that He did not create the world...
- They say that His Son is not God...
- They speak against the Church and against God's ordinances.

TRANS> You see then that rebels to the LORD not only lift up themselves against Him, they also lift up their voice...

- Who among you has control of your tongue?
  - How often do you lift up your voice against the LORD!
- c. Then thirdly, there are those floods who lift up their waves—
  - That is, they commit deeds of violence against the Lord...

1) They did this against Him when He was here...

- They not only spoke against Him,
- but they scourged Him and nailed Him to the cross...

TRANS> But this is not the only time they do it...

2) All through the history of the world, Christ has been beaten and scourged and legislated against and murdered...

- Not in His own person, but in the person of His people.
- The floods lift themselves up to persecute His people—
  - They try to discourage them and rid of the earth of them.
  - This they do to rid the earth of the LORD Himself if they can.
    - Our Lord counts every attack against His people as an attack against Himself.
- And not only that, but even when unbelievers murder and harm each other it is still an attack against the LORD...
  - For the image of God is in man and every man who attacks another man is guilty of attacking the image of God.
  - This includes not only acts of violence, but also acts of immorality that deface God's image.

3) And brethren, you are not immune from this...

- Whenever you are lazy and slack, you cheat others out of the service of love you might have shown them...

TRANS> So you see the three ways the floods are lifted up against the Lord.

- They lift themselves up, they lift their voices up, and they lift their waves up...

2. These “floods lifted up” are all around us...and too often in us...

- They are deadly and destructive.
  - a. I have mentioned Hollywood that tells you you can follow your own lusts and live happily and prosperously...
    - This is a dangerous lie that drags many professing Christians to destruction.
    - It is a flood that tries to sweep you away to destruction...
  - b. So also, political powers often come as floods against us...
    - Sometimes making it illegal to speak the truth or to own a Bible or to meet for the worship of God...
      - Millions have been killed by such floods.
      - Islam is a persecuting religion that is on the rise today.
        - Wherever it is in power,
          - it oppresses and often slaughters the worshippers of the truth.

TRANS> Now all these floods raging against you might make you terrified...

- They sweep many away in their path...
- But if you know that the LORD reigns, you do not need to be terrified!
- The floods may have lifted up...

B. But “the Lord on High is mightier than the noise of many waters, than the mighty waves of the sea.”

- That is what it says in verse 4...
  - Yes, the enemies are acknowledged in verse 3, but their weakness to harm the LORD who reigns is declared in verse 4...
- 1. He who created them all by speaking His word has not lost His voice...
  - He can destroy them with a mere word.

- His voice is mightier than their voice...
  - With His voice, He can give life or He can bring death.
  - Their words cannot reach Him to hurt Him.
    - He reigns above their noise, but they have no control over His voice.
  
- 2. So also, His waves are mightier than their waves...
  - a. Is there an oppressive political power that persecutes His people?
    - Is there some mighty worldly power like Islam or like Egypt of old?
    - You do not need to fear...
      - He can easily send His plagues against them to bring them down.
      - He raised up Pharaoh and made him strong in order that he might show that He was Lord by bringing him down.
    - He is still Lord today...
      - If Islam is on the rise and is causing great destruction it is not Islam that we need to fear, but the LORD...
        - He is sending them to chasten His people and to bring them to repentance.
  
  - b. Is it the pressure of Hollywood that brings the church down?
    - God will bring His judgements against Hollywood in due time...
      - Does He not afflict many with Sexually transmitted diseases?
      - These are His direct judgement against their immorality.
    - Do not be enticed by their swelling words and promises of prosperity if you follow their ways...
      - Their promises are lies...
      - There is a momentary pleasure, but it leads to destruction and ruin.
        - Do not give credence to their lies.
        - Hear what Deuteronomy 29 says of the one who says...
          - Deut 29:19: 'I shall have peace, even though I follow the dictates of my heart'
          - It says
            - Deut 29:20-21: The LORD would not spare him; for then the anger of the LORD and His jealousy would burn against that man, and every curse that is written in this book would settle on him, and the LORD would blot out his name from under heaven. And

the LORD would separate him from all the tribes of Israel for adversity, according to all the curses of the covenant that are written in this Book of the Law.

3. Do not be intimidated by the floods even when they rise to great heights.
  - a. Matthew Henry compares them to a glow worm next to the rising of the Sun...
    - They cannot touch the LORD...
    - He reigns on high and He will destroy them all with the breath of His mouth.
    - Do not fear them or be impressed with them when they arise in pomp and prosperity...
    - Their glory will not last...
  - b. Charles Spurgeon says of these swelling, noisy waves,
    - “They are all foam and fury, noise and bluster, during their little hour,
    - and then the tide turns or the storm is hushed,
    - and we hear no more of them;
    - while the kingdom of the Eternal abides in the grandeur of its power.”
  - c. What consolation is in these words, “Jehovah reigns.”
    - Oh that we could truly grasp their full weight as we live in this world...
    - How small the raging waves are against His heavenly throne!
    - Believe and take heart!

TRANS> But knowing that our LORD reigns not only gives you confidence against the rising floods of opposition...

- You can also be sure that...

### **III. Because He reigns, His promises to us are certain.**

- This is the third thing we declare when we sing Psalm 93...

A. In verse 5, we turn our voice to speak to God and say,

- v. 5: “Your testimonies are very sure.”

1. His **testimonies** speak of His words to His people...

- Especially His covenant promises of salvation...
- This is how God reveals His salvation to us—through His holy word...

- Because He is the LORD who reigns,
    - All His testimonies are not just sure, but **very** sure...
  - As in providence His throne is beyond all danger,
    - so in revelation His word is beyond all question...
  - You can count on it more than you can count on your legs to hold you up or you lungs to take another breath...
2. He is able to perform all that He has promised, even when it seems impossible to us ...
    - a. He promised Abraham and Sarah a son when they were too old to conceive...
      - And then he delivered...according to His word.
    - b. He promised Israel deliverance from Egypt—and they doubted because as soon as Moses came to rescue them, their oppression increased...
      - but God delivered on His promise and they were set free.
      - Has He not promised us deliverance from Satan and all our enemies?
    - c. He promised to them the conquest of Canaan, and they doubted again when they saw the strength of the people and their fortresses...
      - But God brought these enemies down with ease...
        - He gave His people an inheritance when it seemed impossible!
  3. Now consider what impossible thing has He promised us?
    - a. He promised us an inheritance with His Son—the Son of God—
      - The Son of God who has enjoyed glorious eternal fellowship in His Father’s house from all eternity...
        - He has loved Him and been loved by Him from everlasting...
    - b. The LORD has promised to bring us, His elect people, into His house...
      - We are called His brothers by adoption, and His bride that He is preparing to bring into His house...
        - We are going to live in this house that holiness adorns...
        - He promises to bring us into this glorious fellowship!
          - John 17:24-26: “Father, I desire that they also whom You gave Me may be with Me where I am, that they may behold My glory which You have given Me; for You loved Me before the foundation of the world. O righteous Father! The world has not known You, but I have known You; and these have known that You sent Me. And I have declared to them

Your name, and will declare *it*, that the love with which You loved Me may be in them, and I in them.”

c. How can this be?

1) Holiness adorns God’s house and we are not holy...

- How then can we be given an inheritance in this house?
- Holiness means that there has never been anything there that defiles,
  - no lies, no unloving words, no disharmony, no selfishness, no shade of sin or imperfection.
  - It is a house entirely with corruption or anything unworthy of God.

2) There are two things that seem to make it impossible for us to receive this glorious inheritance...

a) First, that we should be loved by God as Christ has been loved by God.

- That we should be recipients of this great love...
- How could this be, seeing that we are sinners who only deserve to be judged by God?

b) Second, that we should love God the Father as the Son has loved Him...

- Our love is so weak and so inconsistent... so unworthy of our God.
- How could this be that we will be like Jesus?
  - That we will live in this house without corruption when there is so much corruption in us now?

TRANS> The answer to these two questions is one and the same.

B. We are able to receive an inheritance in God’s holy house because the LORD reigns...

- That is it—He has all power to do it because He reigns over this world and conforms it entirely to His purposes.
- And if that purpose is to bring the nations of the earth into His holy house, He will must certainly do it...
  - Nothing can stop Him!
  - His testimonies are sure because He is sure.

1. First, see what our reigning Lord did to make us objects of love who were once objects of wrath...

- The Father sent the Son to redeem us,
  - and the Son has come in our flesh to represent us...

- And having come, He has borne God's wrath and curse for us...
  - All our iniquities were laid on Him and He paid the penalty for them all.
- By faith in Him, we are set free from sin and death.
  - In this way, we are made the objects of the Father's love instead of the objects of His wrath!
  - He has done the impossible because He is Lord!

TRANS> His testimony of promise is sure because He reigns! He has made a way for us to be accepted in His house...

2. Second, how is it that He can make us to love who are so deficient in love?
  - How can He make us come to experience the full joy of loving God?
    - How can He ever make us fit to live in heaven who are so rebellious?
  - He has promised to do it at our death and complete it at our resurrection so that we can move into our full promised inheritance...
    - He has said that we shall be holy as He is holy, that we shall be like Him because we shall see Him as He is.
    - Already, if you are a believer, He has given you His Spirit to begin this glorious work in you...
      - The Spirit is given to you now as a deposit of what is going to come...
      - He has turned your heart toward God so that you might repent and believe... and this is only the beginning—only the down payment of the full transformation that is yet to come.
        - He was able to change your heart because He reigns...
        - He will perfect you in holiness because He reigns...
          - Though it may seem impossible, it is not impossible for Him.
          - His testimonies are very sure!
            - You can count on it!

3. Because He reigns,
  - His house will be holy!
    - There will be nothing in it that defiles... all will love according to their capacity—
      - We will love according to our full capacity as creatures...
      - And God will go on loving with His infinite capacity as God...



- He will bring His elect into this glorious holy house because He reigns.
- He will not deceive us...
  - Our enemies will not keep us from what He has promised...
    - We will live in His holy house forever and ever in the fellowship of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.
  - His promises are sure because He reigns forever...
    - You who have come to Him for salvation are secure forever.
    - Blessed be our Lord who reigns forever and ever. AMEN
      - It will ever be so!