

The Lord is Majestic

A robe,” the woman said, holding a small paper plate with fruit and cheese cubes on it. “It’s very striking!”
Brendon smiled back at the woman. “Thank you so much.”

Brendon’s colored oil painting was among more than 20 works of art displayed at the gallery. His work, along with that of eight other graduate students, had been selected for exhibit. He also had a black and white pencil drawing in the show but was most proud of his oil painting.

An elderly man joined the woman observing Brendon’s piece. The background of clouds, subtle shadowing, and other colorful, dramatic marks both framed and somewhat concealed the back of the regal white, purple, and gold robe. Brendon didn’t want the viewer to focus on the person in the robe, or any physicality of God. He wanted to show the magnificence, splendor, power and might of the Lord through the image of royal clothing.

“This is wonderful young man,” the elderly gentleman said. “How much is it? I’d like to purchase it for my home office.”

Brendon handed the gentleman the brochure of the art pieces and their corresponding prices. The man scanned the pamphlet.

“It’s worth every penny and more,” he said, turning to head toward the sale table.

1. *What aspect of creation stands out most to you?*
2. *Where do you glimpse the creative ingenuity of God?*
3. *In what aspects of creation do you find it most difficult to see God’s glory?*

Robed in Majesty

Psalm 93:1–2 KJV

1 The LORD reigneth, he is clothed with majesty; the LORD is clothed with strength, wherewith he hath girded himself: the world also is stablished, that it cannot be moved.

2 Thy throne is established of old: thou art from everlasting.

Psalm 93:1–2 NIV

¹ 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.

² Your throne was established long ago;
you are from all eternity.

“The LORD reigns” (Ps. 93:1). This psalm starts out with a confident declaration of the position and power of God. This declaration was a particularly bold one after the fall of the southern kingdom of Judah (586 BC), as God’s people lived under the dominion of foreign powers. The destruction of Solomon’s glorious temple and the loss of national sovereignty made it difficult for some to affirm that the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob was the ruler of all creation.

Despite the appearances on the ground, the writer of the psalm describes the Lord as “robed in majesty and armed with strength” (Ps. 93:1). This imagery connotes royalty and authority. God is the great king, and majesty and strength characterize Him, so much so that they are like garments on Him. The kingly imagery invites our respect and awe.

After affirming the reality of God’s reign, the writer next describes the world as “established, firm and secure” (Ps. 93:1). The subject change from “the Lord” to “the world” can seem somewhat surprising, but attention to the parallelism of Hebrew poetry can clarify the author’s point. After two lines that similarly emphasize God’s reign by referring to His regal “garments,” the third line expands upon that point with a different image. The

psalmist describes the world's foundation as "secure" because it implies its permanence. This permanence comes from God's rule over it. In other words, the earth is securely "established" because it is the kingdom over which God forever reigns. This line thus reiterates the point of the first two—the cosmic dominion of the God of Israel—in a fresh way.

Verse two addresses God directly: "Your throne *was* established" and "you *are* from all eternity" (emphasis added). The psalmist here shifts attention from the present reality of God's reign to its perpetuity. Using the poetic device of parallelism, the author affirms God's eternal dominion with two different images. In the first line, "your throne" is another way of referring to God's kingship, and the establishment of this "throne" occurred "long ago." The second line is even more specific: the divine king has actually reigned "from all eternity." In these verses, then, the psalmist emphasizes that God's rule has lasted and will last forever.

4. *How is the Lord described in these verses?*

5. *What do these verses say about the rule of God?*

Lord Over All Creation

Psalm 93:3–4 KJV

3 The floods have lifted up, O LORD, the floods have lifted up their voice; the floods lift up their waves.

4 The LORD on high is mightier than the noise of many waters, yea, than the mighty waves of the sea.

Psalm 93:3–4, NIV

³ The seas have lifted up, LORD, the seas have lifted up their voice; the seas have lifted up their pounding waves.

⁴ Mightier than the thunder of the great waters, mightier than the breakers of the sea—the LORD on high is mighty.

In these verses, the psalmist compares the powerful

waves of the sea to the power of God. The seas are described as “lifting up” their “voice” and their “pounding waves” (Ps. 93:3). The psalmist is describing the sight and sound of powerful water, a force that invokes both awe and fear. A flooding sea could destroy crops or wash away homes, and storms threatened fishing and impeded navigation. Three times, the psalmist repeats “the seas have lifted up,” and the force of the water seems to build with each repetition (Ps. 93:3).

This imagery carried an additional nuance in the ancient Near Eastern context. The seas were often viewed as symbols of chaos and disorder, a threat to the harmony of the well-ordered cosmos. God’s victory over the seas and their creatures is a common motif in the Old Testament (Isa. 27:1; Job 26:12; Pss. 74:13; 89:9). With the three-fold repetition and expansion of the image, the psalmist here emphasizes the frightening power of the chaotic seas.

Yet as powerful as they are, the forces of chaos pale in comparison to the almighty God. In verse four, the psalmist describes God as “mightier than the thunder of the great waters, mightier than the breakers of the sea.” God demonstrated His incomparable might by establishing the world (v. 1) and His reign over it (v. 2), thus quelling the chaotic seas. God is the one who created the seas. He rules over them (see Gen. 1:9–10, 20–22; Ps. 89:9). He is more powerful than the sound and the force of the waters.

Verse four ends by declaring that “the LORD on high is mighty.” This description evokes the earlier portrayal of God as reigning king. The repetition of the word “mighty” here reinforces that kingly imagery, as this term is used to describe the majesty of rulers. These verses remind us that God is king over all of creation.

6. *What did the seas represent for ancient Near Eastern peoples?*

7. *What do these verses say about God’s power and authority?*

Teachings That Stand Firm

Psalms 93:5 KJV

5 Thy testimonies are very sure: holiness becometh thine house, O LORD, for ever.

Psalms 93:5 NIV

⁵ Your statutes, LORD, stand firm; holiness adorns your house for endless days.

The psalmist concludes this poem by addressing God directly, just like in verse two. Here he offers two further affirmations of God's eternal reign over the world. First, the psalmist describes God's "statutes" or "testimonies" as "firm." The Hebrew word for "statutes" appears throughout the Old Testament in reference to the commands that God had given to His people (see Deut. 4:45; 6:17; 2 Kings 23:3; Ps. 25:10). God's statutes reflect His right to govern the world as the ruler of creation. God gives righteous statutes because all wisdom and understanding come from Him. Just as God has "established the world" and His reign over it as firmly and securely (vv. 1–2), so His royal decrees "stand firm" (v. 3). This assertion could serve as comfort to God's people when other cultures seemed to prevail and other ways of life seemed to prosper.

The writer then declares that "holiness" is what decorates God's "house" (Ps. 93:5). The term "holiness" means sacred or set apart. And God's "house" often refers the temple of the Lord (for instance, 2 Sam. 7:5–6). Here the psalmist may mean the temple in Jerusalem, but he may also refer to a heavenly temple (compare Heb. 9:11, 23–24; Rev. 11:9). Or perhaps he means all creation, which is like a giant temple for the creator. The author describes holiness as a permanent characteristic of God's temple ("for endless days"), thus affirming once again that God has unique and enduring reign over the world He has made.

8. *What is described as standing firm in these verses? Where has the word "firm" been used before?*

9. *What does this verse say about the house of God?*

A Mad King

The extravagant “Mad King Ludwig,” the King of Bavaria from 1864 to 1886, was no ordinary king. He was shy, introverted, and shirked many of his official duties. He was known as “the fairytale king.” He had an intense love of art, music, and architecture, which inflamed rebel ministers who wanted him gone. Eventually, they brought a report against Ludwig that referred to his erratic behavior, extravagance, and reclusive ways. They accused him of insanity. The day after he was removed, his body was found in Lake Starnberg. The exact cause of his death remains a mystery to this day.

Kings are imperfect human beings, and many have been seduced by power, greed, and lust. While others have tried to be just in their rule, all kings have one thing in common: their rule ends. That end can come peacefully but often plays out tragically. A person cannot trust in a king because they all are imperfect and ultimately fail.

King David realized his own shortcomings and knew that his life could be cut short at any time. He composed many psalms that shifted the focus from his fears and troubles to the all-knowing King.

King David, like the writer of Psalm 93, was aware that God’s steadfastness is solid like a rock. God is trustworthy. He would deliver David from his enemies. King David’s focus was heavenward. Christians living in a fallen world should always direct their focus in that same direction—toward the King of all Kings.

10. *What characteristics set a fair, just king apart from a corrupt, evil king?*

11. *Do you think it’s a good idea to put your trust in a world leader, whether they appear to be good or not? Why or why not?*

12. *What kingly attributes does God possess that makes Him the perfect King of Kings?*

A King Who Provides in Every Way

In the ancient world, kings were expected to be just and to create laws that would protect the people. Now, take those expectations and apply them to God. Does He check all those boxes? God our king cares for us. Through Him, we find provisions in every way.

► *Reflect on a time when you faced a chaotic situation and felt overwhelmed. Did you think that the problem was insurmountable? Or were you able to focus on the fact that God in His power is bigger than anything you may face? Take time to meditate on how great God truly is and to praise Him for those things you've observed.*

Areas where you can recognize God's rule in your life:

Strategies for building trust in God as your king:

KEY VERSE

The LORD reigneth, he is clothed with majesty; the LORD is clothed with strength, wherewith he hath girded himself: the world also is stablished, that it cannot be moved. —Psalm 93:1 KJV

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

DAILY BIBLE READINGS FOR NEXT WEEK'S LESSON

Week of January 6 through January 12

(See *The Quiet Hour* and *Cross devotionals* on these passages.)

- Mon.** Revelation 19:11–21—Faithful and True.
- Tue.** 1 Chronicles 29:10–20—God Makes Great and Gives Strength.
- Wed.** Isaiah 52:1–12—Our God Reigns.
- Thu.** Psalm 47—Shout Joyfully to God.
- Fri.** Philippians 2:1–13—Exalted through Obedience.
- Sat.** Mark 4:35–41—The Wind and Waves Obey Jesus.
- Sun.** Psalm 93—Robed in Majesty.