**Trust the Mighty Lord**

Text: Psalm 93

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**Scriptures:** Matthew 14:22-33; Psalm 93

**Songs Chosen:** [SttL] 163, 93, 69, 467, 529

**Series:** Kingship Psalms

**Theme:** The Lord is the trustworthy eternal holy King who is mightier than all the forces of chaos and evil

**Proposition:** Be hopeful and confident in the Lord who strong and trustworthy.

**Introduction**

**Uncertainty** is a word which describes many aspects of the lives of many people in this pandemic affected world. It isn’t as though uncertainty in life is anything new, but that there is now increased uncertainty over the economy, employment, finances, relationships, and both physical and mental health. As human beings, we naturally desire security. When there is constant uncertainty, we can feel stressed, anxious and fearful. Sometimes our bodies and minds can become sick as a result.

What is the opposite of uncertainty? Certainty! Confidence, sureness, about the present and future. Psalm 93 is one of a number of psalms (also 29; 47, 95, 96, 97, 98, 99) which focus on divine Kingship. This short psalm expresses a **confident hope in the Lord**, the covenant God, who has certainly promised to those to whom He has shown mercy ‘I will be your God, and you will be my people’ (Jer 7:23). He is the Lord who powerfully reigns, the King whose Word is entirely trustworthy and the Living God who dwells in the midst of His holy people. We’re going to look at the text of Psalm 93 under three headings:

1. A psalm about God’s reign
2. A psalm about God’s power
3. A psalm about trust in Christ
4. **A psalm about God’s reign**

The Treaty of Waitangi between Queen Victoria and Māori was signed in 1840, and as a result, the British sovereign became New Zealand's monarch, our head of state. A monarch is a ‘*sovereign head of state, especially a king, queen or emperor’*. A monarchy is ‘*a form of government with a monarch at the head*’. Even though we do not routinely see our monarch – we do have one here in New Zealand! Her official title is “*Elizabeth the second, by the grace of God, Queen of New Zealand and Her other realms and territories, head of the Commonwealth, Defender of the Faith*”.

The monarchy of New Zealand is the constitutional system of government in which a hereditary monarch is the sovereign and head of state of New Zealand. All executive authority is vested in the monarch, and royal assent is required for parliament to enact laws. However, the monarch's authority is subject to the conventional stipulations of constitutional monarchy, and her direct participation in these areas of governance is limited.

Historically, in many cultures, when in their official role, a monarch sits on a throne, dressed in fine clothes, often with a symbol of their power and authority in their hand such as a sceptre. This is the imagery used in Psalm 93 to reveal the Kingship of the Lord God. “*The LORD reigns; he is robed in majesty; the LORD is robed; he has put on strength as his belt*” (v1). The Lord is ‘armed’ with a belt of strength. God is the Divine Warrior who defends His subjects and delivers them from harm.

The Queen of New Zealand has not always been a monarch. She ascended the throne on the death of her father, King George VI, on 6 February 1952 and was crowned on 2nd June 1953. In contrast, the reign of the Great Monarch in Psalm 93 is revealed in these words: “*Your throne is established from of old; you are from everlasting*”. God’s kingship predates time. For Him there has never been a ‘coronation day’. He has always reigned. He had not stopped ruling this world when Psalm 93 was written. He has not stopped ruling the world today, even though many things seem uncertain and unstable from a human point of view.

He is greater than any human king, queen, president or parliament. He is not bound by time so that He becomes weaker as the years progress, nor is He tired by the work of governing. He is a Mighty Lord, which brings us to our second point.

1. **A psalm about God’s power**

When we were over on the West Coast recently, Jenny and I watched the waves breaking on the beach at Hokitika. There was a ‘no swimming’ sign there because of the treacherous undertow and strong currents. Being in the water can be dangerous because, as creatures who survive by regularly breathing in air, when we are submerged under water for more than a short time, we drown.

In the Bible, the watery sea is a symbol of danger, chaos, and evil. For example in Psalm 93 verses 3 and 4. “*The floods have lifted up, O LORD, the floods have lifted up their voice; the floods lift up their roaring. Mightier than the thunders of many waters, mightier than the waves of the sea, the LORD on high is mighty!*” (v3-4).

Sometimes we can feel overwhelmed in life by the many pressures and stresses which come upon us as our health, relationships or finances come under threat. It can seem like we are drowning. It can feel like you can’t breathe. Anxiety, fear and panic can well up inside us. When the prophet Jonah was actually thrown into the sea, he cried out to the Lord from within the belly of a great fish. “*For you cast me into the deep, into the heart of the seas, and the flood surrounded me; all your waves and your billows passed over me*” (Jonah 2:3). Jonah thought he was going to drown.

Ultimately the Lord God Himself is the source of power behind the seas; which He has created Himself and separated from the dry land (Gen 1:9). He is the One who sent the great global flood in the days of Noah, destroying the whole human race, apart from eight people. He is the One who rescued His prophet Jonah from the depths (Jonah 2:10).

Roaring flood waters and thundering waves are very powerful, but they are not as mighty as the Lord their Creator. That is the reassuring contrast which this psalm reveals in verse 4: *“Mightier than the thunders of many waters, mightier than the waves of the sea, the LORD on high is mighty!*”. God subdues all who rise up against Him and against His people. God, and God alone, has total control of all the water in the universe (and everything else too!). “*He gathers the waters of the sea as a heap; he puts the deeps in storehouses*” (Psalm 33:7 – also Psalm 104:7).

When Christ, the Son of God, rebuked the wind and said to the breaking waves on the Sea of Galilee “*Peace Be still!*” (Mark 4:39), He demonstrated His mighty power, revealing the reality that He is God. Brothers and sisters, whatever uncertain and potentially perilous circumstances you face today, or may encounter in the future, King Jesus has the power to protect you and to deliver you safely home to be with Him. Matthew records a time when the disciples were alone in a boat on the water a long way from land. Then, in the midst of the winds and waves, Jesus came to them walking on the water (Matthew 14:26). He is the Mighty Divine Lord of whom Psalm 93 speaks, who said to the terrified disciples in the boat “*Take heart; it is I. Do not be afraid*” (Matt 14:27). He was calling his disciples to trust in Him, which brings us to our 3rd point:

1. **A psalm about trust in Christ**

For the vast majority of New Zealand citizens, we have never been close to the Queen of our country. She lives in a land far far away in a royal palace. In contrast, the Mighty King who is the focus of Psalm 93 is not a remote monarch who just ‘watches us from a distance’. He dwells in the midst of His people.

When the psalmist writes of the Lord’s dwelling place in verse 5 ‘*holiness befits your house*’, he is referring to the tabernacle and the temple which were the places where God manifested his presence amongst His people Israel (e.g. Deut 12:5,11). The Lord’s house is a holy place because God Himself is holy. He is ‘altogether other’. Set apart from all that He has made. He is perfect in every way and worthy of reverence, praise, adoration and worship.

The Mighty King rules by always speaking the truth and issuing commands which are for the ultimate good of all His people. As the psalmist declares “*Your decrees are very trustworthy”.* This is a King whose word is completely reliable. What He says about the past is true. What He says about the present is true. What He says about the future is true. What He says about Himself is true. What He says about you is true. What He says about His house is true.

That ‘house’ is no longer a physical building in Jerusalem, it is the holy catholic Christian church {that we heard about this morning}. Brothers and sisters, we are part of this temple as Peter reveals, writing: “*As you come to him, a living stone rejected by men but in the sight of God chosen and precious, you yourselves like living stones are being built up as a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ*” (1 Peter 2:4-5). God’s house, the living church of Christ Jesus is holy because Christ her head is the ‘*Holy One of God*’ (Mark 1.24).

Jesus Himself dwells in the midst of His people as Immanuel, ‘*God with us*’ (Matt 1:23). He is the Divine Mighty King who has ascended to His throne and has fulfilled His trustworthy decree “*Behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age*." (Matt 28:20) by sending the promised Holy Spirit so that we would never be alone. He is the One who, when He physically dwelt on this earth, said to Peter in the midst of a storm: “Come” (Matthew 14:29).

However, when Peter stepped out of the boat onto the turbulent water and he saw the wind, he was afraid and began to sink and he cried out “*Lord, save me*” (Matt 14:30). In His fear, Peter called out to Jesus, to Whom Psalm 93 points, to help him. For you and me, stepping out of the apparent security of our physical supports like our health, wealth, and comfortable patterns of living into unfamiliar and uncertain circumstances can result in fear and anxiety.

Whilst Peter had spent much of his life in boats as a fisherman, but he had never walked on water before. He began to sink, not because Jesus lacked the strength to hold him up, but because Peter’s trust in Christ wavered in the face of difficult, unfamiliar circumstances. It can be that way for us in our lives too, especially in times of great uncertainty, like now.

Ultimately this psalm points to the need for us to trust in the Mighty King, whose Word never fails.

Are **you** trusting in Jesus today and for the future?

His call to Peter, is His call to you too. “Come”.

Come to Him today knowing that the time is approaching when all who trust in Him will see the glory of the King in the New Heavens and New Earth. There will be no temple there “*for its temple is the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb. And the city has no need of sun or moon to shine on it, for the glory of God gives it light, and its lamp is the Lamb*’ (Rev 21:22-23).

This future is certain and sure because the trustworthy Word of the Mighty Lord is certain. That is why there is no cause for those who trust in Christ to be anxious or fearful, no matter what happens because He is reigns over all this world! The Lord on high is mighty!

AMEN.