

What Will Please God?

Psalm 147:10-11

Introduction:

1. Legal contracts are known for a lot of confusing “mumbo jumbo,” and legalese. Generally, the average person needs help understanding a legal document.
2. Sometimes, in reading the Bible, we may feel like there is some legalese type of language that is difficult to understand.
3. This is especially true when there are some contrasts that seem to contradict each other.

Thesis: What kind of heart and faith pleases God? In this lesson we will look at several texts to try and understand what it means for us to fear God. How can we be **terrified** of God and still find **hope** in Him at the **same time**?

I. Contextual background of Psalm 147

- A. Assigned to the dedication of the wall during Nehemiah’s time - A hymn of praise sung at the dedication (Nehemiah 12:27-43)
- B. Wonderful works of God:
 1. He rebuilt Jerusalem (2)
 2. He heals the brokenhearted and gathers the scattered (2-3)
 3. He has counted and named all the stars (4)
 4. He is omnipotent and omniscient (5)
 5. He lifts up the righteous and brings down the unrighteous (6)
 6. He controls nature and makes sure the animals are fed (8-9; 15-18 - makes sure there is enough moisture for crops)
 7. He ensures peace within borders (14)

II. The Benefits of Fearing God

- A. The Lord takes pleasure in those who fear Him and hope in Him (Psalm 147:11)
 1. The contrast is amazing, and confusing. Fear and hope do not usually go together.
 2. One fears a bear but does not hope in it for salvation; one fears the murderer, but does not hope in his tender mercies; Judas feared the Lord, but refused to hope in God’s mercy (Matthew 27:3)
- B. God’s friends (ESV) are those who fear Him, and He will reveal His eternal covenant with them (Psalm 25:14) - **So fear and friendship go together with God.**
 1. “God favors those who fear Him with secret and confidential communion” (Spence, 1909)¹
 2. “If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our abode with him.” (John 14:23)
 3. The Holy Spirit, “He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I said to you.” (John 14:26)
- C. God delivers those who fear Him, **fear and safety go together.** (Psalm 34:7)
 1. 2 Kings 6:14-18 - The Arameans with a great army, chariots and horses were sent to capture Elisha. The servant was afraid and Elisha said, “Do not fear, for those who are with us are

1 Spence-Jones, H. D. M. (Ed.). (1909). Psalms (Vol. 3). London; New York: Funk & Wagnalls Company.

more than those who are with them.” “And the Lord opened the servant’s eyes and he saw; and behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha (2 Kings 2:6:16; 18)

2. **fear and safety go together**

- D. God loves those who fear Him, so fear and love go together with God (Psalm 103:11)
1. “From the great expanse of the universe the psalmist gets one measure of God’s unlimited love (*hesed*)—as great as the heavens are high! But note the qualifying phrase: **for those who fear him.**” (Tesh, 1999)²
 2. ...so fear and love go together with God

(Just when we are getting a handle on how fear and God go hand in hand, we then run across Isaiah 8:14)

III. A Terrifying Sanctuary

- A. God must be our dread (Isaiah 8:12-13)
1. There is no need to fear man, for what can man do that is worse than what God can do? “And do not be afraid of those who kill the body but are unable to kill the soul; but rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.” (Matthew 10:28)
 2. But, dread is terror, and, why should I dread God?
- B. **“Then”** If God is your dread, then He becomes a sanctuary for you (Isaiah 8:14; cf. 1 Peter 3:14-15)
- C. “Dreading God means dreading running away from God. It means fearing the consequences of leaving him.” (Faithlife Corporation, 2021)³

Conclusion:

1. God takes great pleasure in those who fear Him and hope in Him (Psalm 147:11)
2. When we start relying on our strength, alarm systems, armies, etc., we should fear God and run back to Him (**Psalm 147:10**)
3. The fear of God will drive us to trust in God’s steadfast love and not ourselves (Psalm 147:10)
4. The entire Psalm is a psalm of praise for God’s tender mercies and *khesed* (loyal/covenant love). From the beginning to the cross He has demonstrated His loyal love - plan of salvation.

Study Questions:

1. Based on Psalm 147:10-11, explain what pleases God in your own words.
2. From Psalm 2:14; 34:7; and 103:11, what do you learn about the fear of the Lord?
3. From Isaiah 8:12-14, how would you describe the relationship between the fear of the Lord and hope in the Lord?

References Consulted

² Tesh, S. E., & Zorn, W. D. (1999). *Psalms*. Joplin, MO: College Press.

³ Faithlife Corporation. (2021). Courses | Look at the Book Labs (Version 9.2) [Computer software]. *Logos Bible Software Courses*. Bellingham, WA: Faithlife Corporation. Retrieved from <https://ref.ly/logos4/Courses?plan=72b8f9ed78fa43aba885574713a27a09&screen=5>

- Augustine of Hippo. (1888). Expositions on the Book of Psalms. In P. Schaff (Ed.), A. C. Coxe (Trans.), *Saint Augustin: Expositions on the Book of Psalms* (Vol. 8). New York: Christian Literature Company.
- Briley, T. R. (2000–). *Isaiah*. Joplin, MO: College Press Pub.
- Exell, J. S. (1909). *The Biblical Illustrator: The Psalms* (Vol. I–V). New York; Chicago; Toronto; London; Edinburgh: Fleming H. Revell Company; Francis Griffiths.
- Faithlife Corporation. (2021). Courses I Look at the Book Labs (Version 9.2) [Computer software]. *Logos Bible Software Courses*. Bellingham, WA: Faithlife Corporation. Retrieved from <https://ref.ly/logos4/Courses?plan=72b8f9ed78fa43aba885574713a27a09&screen=5>
- Livingston, G. H. (1968). The Book of Psalms, 73–150. In *Job-Song of Solomon* (Vol. 2). Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company.
- Motyer, J. A. (1999). *Isaiah: an introduction and commentary* (Vol. 20). Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.
- Spence-Jones, H. D. M. (Ed.). (1909). *Psalms* (Vol. 3). London; New York: Funk & Wagnalls Company.
- Tesh, S. E., & Zorn, W. D. (1999). *Psalms*. Joplin, MO: College Press.
- Wiersbe, W. W. (2004). *Be exultant* (1st ed.). Colorado Springs, CO: Cook Communications Ministries.