

Lamed | Thy Word is Settled

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[0 : 0 0] Thank you so much. The very first verse that we looked at tonight, it says, O Lord, thy word is settled in heaven. God's word is settled in heaven, which means simply it will not change on earth.

It will not always make sense to you. It will not always give you what you want. It will not always keep you out of storms. But something else that it will never do is it will never let you down.

God's word will never let you down. It is firmly fixed in the heavens. No trouble that you've ever had here on earth can contradict it. No trial can ultimately challenge it.

And no sin can tarnish it. Nothing that's done on this world can change the word of God. It has been eternally fixed. You've heard testimonies of Voltaire, different people that said the word of God would cease to exist.

And then God puts a printing shop in his house, right? After he dies. Story after that. You can't change it. You can't change one ounce of scripture here. It has been set in heaven.

[1 : 0 2] And you'd say, well, that seems silly. Well, people have given their entire lives to try and contradict the word of God, and it stays unchanged. So first off, we see here that his word is eternally fixed in heaven.

And we can trust the word of God because the God of the word is faithful. He is faithful. His word is faithful. Verse 89 points to heaven for the trustworthiness of God's word.

But verse number 90 tells us that the earth affirms it. Verse 90. Thy faithfulness is unto all generations. Thou hast established the earth, and it abideth.

The very stability of this world, and speaking more specifically about the earth, depends on God's faithfulness. So let it be true about our own world, meaning the earth that we live in testifies of the faithfulness of the Lord in our own worlds, the one we create.

You know, the one that you pick your kid up, and you bring him here, and you take him there. The one where, Mom, you had to fix supper before church in a little bit of time. The one that you have problems in. The little ecosystem that we're living in.

[2 : 1 0] Let it also be stable, because his faithfulness is unto all generations. He has established the earth. You know, the earth is close enough to the sun that we don't freeze, even though it feels like sometimes we're going to get very close to it, right?

But it's far enough away that we don't burn. That's amazing, isn't it? The sun continues to rise in the east, and it goes down in the west because of God's faithfulness. And I've heard legend of some people have seen it do both in the same day.

They've seen the sun come up, and they've seen it come down, all right? So now, I usually try to pick one or the other. And so it happens consistently all the time. And so the psalmist is saying that there's a very stability to the world that depends on God's faithfulness.

He does that. Mother Nature doesn't do that. The earth doesn't do that. God did that. He is faithful. And so when you say, everything's flying out of control, and everything's not going the way that I thought it was, that's not true.

The sun came up like it always does. The rain came in when it was needed. Everything is happening. All the major things of this world are controlled, and you've seen, and he cares for his own.

[3 : 19] Billy Sunday grew up in an orphanage, I believe, in Iowa. He was an evangelist, early 1900s. And he said this. He said, I'm a Christian because God says so.

I did what he told me to do, and I stand on God's word, and if this book goes down, I'll go with it. He says, I can establish my life on the word of God, that no matter what else is going on, I know that I can live my life trusting in this.

So heaven and earth do not stand on their own. God sustains them. Verse 91. They continue this day according to thine ordinances, for all are thy servants. They all are doing what he has requested of them.

They are all doing as he has commanded, his ordinances, his decree, his plans that he has put in there. Remember the day when the disciples recognized this, and their fear was exceeding, it says in Mark 4, 41, and Jesus calms the storm, and they say, what manner of man is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?

They were encouraged in that, that a response to their fearfulness was God saying, watch me show you that I'm in control of this storm. Well, that was the day they recognized that.

[4 : 39] Hope you've had a day where you've recognized that as well. Recognizing that God has stabilized the world should help you stabilize your little world. Even in affliction, we can delight in the steadfast word.

Martin Luther said, the Bible is alive. It speaks to me. It has feet. It runs after me. It has hands. It lays hold of me. I love this so much.

The Bible is not antique or modern. It is eternal. The Bible is not antique. It's not modern. It's eternal. I love that church.

I really do. I would love that to be a reflection. We don't want to be a church that's trying to look like what a church in the first century looked like because we wouldn't have air conditioning, right? And we're not trying to look like a church that's the most modern and has everything out there.

But we want to be a place that reflects the eternal nature of God's word. It isn't antique. It isn't modern. But it is eternal. Heaven and earth will pass away, but your soul and this word will last forever.

[5 : 44] It's the thing that's making it through all of this. So cling to it, right? It is the raft. It is the boat that is going to make it when everything else passes away.

So verse 89 tells us that God's word is settled in heaven. Verses 90 and 91 tells us that God's word stands. And then the next verses, 92 through 95, says that God's word is sufficient.

God's word is sure hope and affliction. Verse 92, unless thy law had been my delights, I should then have perished in mine own affliction. Without God's word, I would have been a goner.

We have seen many times in the Bible the connection between Bible study and affliction. In Psalm 119.67, it says, Before I was afflicted, I went astray, but now I have kept thy word.

Affliction has caused us to return to the word. Psalm 119.71, It is good for me that I have been afflicted, that I might learn the statutes. God, thank you for the affliction that has caused me to learn your statutes.

[6 : 48] Psalm 119.75, I know, O Lord, that thy judgments are right, and that thou in faithfulness has afflicted me. I trust you, Lord, and I know that you are faithful, and your justice, your discernment, your decisions in this world, they are always right.

Do you think we should start a Bible study? Maybe men, we call it affliction Bible study, right? We get together, we beat up each other for a moment, and then it draws us to the word. That would be unnecessary, right?

We live in a fallen world that will provide plenty of this for us. Just stick around. Devotion to God does not exempt you from affliction. We should be guaranteed that we will have trials, we will have tribulations, we will have afflictions.

We all know that, right? So how come every time it happens, we look so shocked by it, right? And we do. And then God says in all these verses, we can go back to and say, I'm in affliction, but Lord, I'm going to come closer to you in this.

I'm in affliction, but I know you're still faithful. Lord, I'm in affliction, but I know your statutes are true. And so the word of God helps here. John Phillips says, The word of God helped the psalmist keep his sanity.

[7 : 56] It gave him something to hang on to when his world was falling apart. It was a rock, an anchor. He was able to keep his feet on the solid rock when surrounded by the quicksand of mincing circumstances.

He was able to throw out his anchor and feel the cable hold its drifting boat against the rising wind and perilous grief. This word can do that for you.

It most certainly can. It has and it always will. And so we delight in God's word. It will keep you when you cannot keep yourself.

When you are just undone, it will put you back together again. The light that we have is not just in the hearing of God's word, but it's in the doing.

It's not just in the hearing of God's word, but it is in the doing. Afflictions draws forth the worth of God's word, which otherwise might not be known. I have not appreciated this word on a criminal level, on a high offense.

[9 : 00] It's meaning just the way that I read through a chapter of the Bible where I was not paying attention. I don't know if Jason Holt ever listens, but I remember in college he had to read through the Old Testament. So I think he was reading in one chapter.

He had an earbud of one book in one ear and an earbud in the other, trying to listen to the Bible for a class. And that's horrible, Jason. We're very disappointed. All right. And did that, but I haven't been much better, Sean.

I have read and just went on autopilot and just not seen anything of it. Or I have just taken what was right across the top, what has always been told to me, what I read about it, and I have not realized I can just live my life digging into that verse.

I could just spend the rest of my day in this. I haven't appreciated it as I should, but affliction, it draws it out. Affliction causes you to open up the Bible differently on days that you don't have to need it as much, or you don't believe that you need it.

Because godliness is not perfection, but it's a determination that please God. And the Word, and it brings us back to it. Because the Word gave him life, the psalmist here determined that he would remember it.

[10 : 10] Psalm 119, 93. I will never forget thy precepts, for with them thou hast quickened me. Lord, I'm never going to forget what you said to me, because it made me alive when I thought I was dead.

Is that what we saw last time we were together? His loving kindness that it persook the precepts. I almost was consumed in the earth. They were persecuting me wrongfully.

They dig pits, and it says here, but I did not forget thy precepts when I felt I was going to be consumed. And so the word, the settled word, may unsettle you at times.

So I told you how it's the settled word, and it will help you when you're unresettled. But the Word of God will also unsettle you when you're wrongfully settled. I hope I don't get tongue-tied here for a second, okay?

And so when you're settled in the wrong place, the Word of God will unsettle you. And let me express here what I'm saying here. Abraham said, promised with his son Isaac that had been promised to him that he had been waiting for, probably imagining that all the trials were over him, and now he has his reward.

[11 : 19] He gets to teach his son how to play baseball, which is what he was waiting for, right? All the things that he had been imagining. But then here comes the Word of God in Genesis 22, verse 2. And he said, The Word of God came, and it unsettled him.

He was in a place, and it came to him. Moses led his sheep to Mount Horeb. He was contented shepherd with a wife and children. Then he hears the Word of God from a fire that he could not escape.

Exodus 3.10, Come now, therefore, and I will send thee unto Pharaoh, that thou mayest bring forth my people, the children of Israel, out of Egypt. Hosea lived in the northern kingdom, feared God, kept his commandments.

He received the command. But unlike the other prophets, he was told in Hosea 1.2, The beginning of the word of the Lord by Hosea. And the Lord said unto Hosea, Go take unto thee a wife of whoredoms and children of whoredoms, for the land has committed great whoredom departing from the Lord.

His life became unsettled. His life got overturned. How the Word of the Lord came. There was a mother of our Lord took her child to the temple. And all of all the prophecies, she heard a prophecy that went like this.

[12 : 41] Luke 2.34-36. And Simeon blessed them and said unto Mary his mother, Behold, this child is set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel, and for a sign which shall be spoken.

And yea, a sword shall pierce through thine own soul also, and the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed. The Word of God came to a settled position and it unsettled people.

When you see the Word of God running at you full speed, you've got to recognize, I have to move or get out of the way because the Word of God is not changing. When you're in a position and you realize that in my life, that the Word of God is calling for something different, it will unsettle you.

But God never speaks in an unsettling word to His people, except to give us peace. So we can say this when we come to the Word of God and lay it out in front of us. We can say, whatever idols need to be shattered, shatter them.

Whatever lies need to be broken, break them. Discomfort me, rework me, unsettle me, whatever it takes to bring me to you.

[13 : 47] That's what we come to the Word of God to do. We do not keep it confound. We do not tell it what to say to us. But we come to us and say, we come here today for reproof, correction, for instruction and doctrine.

You are God and I am not. These are your words and the words that are in my mind and in my heart. They may or may not be your words, but I want to hear from you today. Then lastly here, God's Word is beyond perfection.

So not only during a time of affliction, but just beyond perfection. Verse 96, I've seen an end of all perfection, but thy commandment is exceeding broad. So this could be a summary of the book of Ecclesiastes.

I've seen the end of all perfection. It contends that even the best things in the world are limited, finite, and tainted, and nothing is perfect. The new iPhone you got is not new anymore because you've taken it out of the store, right?

It loses value. Everything in life. I think Chinese food loses value the quickest, all right? You need to eat it at the place. But everything in life eventually feels like that.

[14 : 48] It is great in the moment, but you give it a little bit of time and you're going to see that it just loses the flavor. It just loses. Kind of like fruit-stripe gum for you young people, okay?

You know that? It lasts like a second, and then it's just gone. Everything in life has the fruit-stripe gum amount of goodness to it. It is eventually going to run out. But not this word.

No, no. It is exceedingly broad. Have you ever been in a place where God's word was unmatched by your circumstances? Like, man, God, I've really put myself in a position here.

And he's like, I got nothing for you. You know? That would be horridness. But that is never the case. We will never be in a circumstances where God's word does not have comfort or something to say to us.

It's exceedingly broad. Only God's word can give hope to the lost person who is facing an uncertain eternity. Nothing else can. It just can't. Me and Micah were helping a guy not a few years ago and I went, he had lost a loved one and I went to get him a card.

[15 : 49] And I just remember standing in the aisle looking at all those cards and realizing none of these brought any hope at all. They were actually lies. I just couldn't do it. No time is not going to heal this. And I'm just looking at it one after another.

Without this word of God, there would be nothing in this world that would give hope to a person, a lost person who is facing a certain eternity. Only God's word can give joy to the sick person who is suffering the pain of chronic sickness or disease.

Only God's word can give comfort to the grieving person who is standing over the remains of a loved one who has died. Only God's word can give peace to the anxious person who is facing a severe financial crisis.

Only God's word can give strength to the troubled person who is enduring family discord. Only God's word can give guidance to the confused person who is wrestling with a difficult decision.

Only God's word. God's word can give peace. And so we seek his precepts. I am thine. Save me, for I have sought thy precepts. It's a true devotion that does not say, I know the Bible.

[16 : 55] It says, I belong to God. I am thine. I had a friend that went off the seminary at Vanderbilt, and he talked about after being there a few years, how he didn't believe in God at all, and he would sit at a coffee shop across from the place as a kid would walk in, and he would write articles, and he would say, they believe in God, but they're about 25 feet away from walking into a room, and they'll never believe in him again.

Because what they did is they wanted to know about a book and about a history, but they didn't want to say, I belong to him. The psalmist gave a reason why the Lord should save him, for I have sought your precepts.

He belonged to God, but he was not perfect, yet but did not use his lack of perfection as an excuse for a life of rebellion. I am thine. Save me. Do not allow what people do to change your devotion to the Word of God.

Charlotte, if you'll come, we're going to sing here in a moment. Not me and you. That'd be weird. All right? But we're going to sing together as a congregation, and so she'll need to be at the piano. And I'm going to end here with a story that was told by H.B. Charles because I want you to consider the role of the Word of God in your life.

So novelist Lloyd Douglas lived in a boarding house during his college days. A retired music teacher lived on the first floor, and they share this daily ritual.

[18 : 18] Douglas would come downstairs, he would open up the man's door, and he would say, well, what's the good news? And the man would pick up his tuning fork, and he would tap it on the side of his wheelchair, and he would say, that is middle C.

Go ahead, hit middle C. That's right. All right. He would hit the tuning fork, and he would say, that is middle C. And he would say, that is middle C. Every time I say middle C.

All right, all right, yeah. That is middle C. It was middle C. It was middle C yesterday. It will be middle C tomorrow. It will be middle C a thousand years from now.

The tenor upstairs sings flat. The piano across the hall is out of tune. But my friend, that is middle C. The word of God is middle C in our lives.

No matter who is singing. Stop it, Charlotte. All right. All right. No matter who is singing off key, no matter how bad the piano across the hall is out of tune, the word of God is today middle C, tomorrow middle C, and for all eternity, it will be middle C.

[19 : 30] And we will hear it ringing out for all eternity. It's wonderful. It is fixed in heaven. Let's pray this scripture together, and then we'll sing before we leave. Heavenly Father, I thank you for your word.

Lord, I thank you for how it came from heaven to us and that it is fixed there. Because, Lord, we know about this world from experience and from your word that it is always changing and that it will one day be gone.

But we have today the eternal words of life in our hands, Lord. And where else could we go? Lord, without this word, Lord, I would have no place to hide. And, Lord, without your word, I'd find no place for comfort.

Without this word, Lord, I'd offer no hope. Without this word, Lord, I'd find none of the joys. But, Lord, I thank you that I have it. So your word, Lord, it is settled in heaven. And your faithfulness has been unto all generations, to my grandfather and before him and forever.

Lord, this word has been established. You came speaking the man in the garden, and you have communicated with us, Lord, through your word. You have made yourself known. Lord, we continue according to your ordinances.

[20 : 36] This earth does. It moves and it turns. The sun will come up and it will go down upon your bidding. They are your servants. And, Lord, unless it was for your law, unless it was for your word, I would have perished in my affliction.

Father, the things in this world are too great for me if you would not have given me a lifeline to you that is found in your word. So I say thank you. I will never forget your precepts, for with them thou hast quickened me.

And I am thine, Lord, and you saved me. I sought your precepts. I found them. The wicked have waited to destroy me, but I will consider thy testimonies.

I have seen an end of all the perfection, but the commandment, Lord, it is exceeding broad. Heavenly Father, I thank you for your eternal word that is fixed in heaven.

In Jesus' name I pray. Amen.