

TODAY'S ORDER OF WORSHIP

Welcome by: Don Taylor /Opening Prayer by: Walden David

Morning Assembly Song Leader: Michael Simmons

#121 Come Let Us All Unite to Sing

#797 Lord, We Come Before thee Now

Scripture Reading by: Cameron Cantu

#382 Why Did My Savior Come to Earth?

Lord's Supper and Contribution

#344 Low in the Grave He Lay

Sermon: "Christ: The Gift of God's Love"

John 3:16

#719 Love One Another

#966 Amen

Closing Prayer by: Daniel Balch

Welcome by: Don Taylor

Evening Assembly Song Leader: Michael Simmons

#738 Take the Name of Jesus With You

#827 Sweet Hour of Prayer

Scripture Reading: Tristan Strickhausen

Prayer by: Phillip Strickhausen

#122 The Love of God

Sermon: "The Parables of Jesus"

Matthew 13:10-13

#470 Victory in Jesus

#939 O Why Not Tonight?

Closing Prayer by: Wayne Noonkester

Other Opportunities For Spiritual Growth

Sunday: 9:00am — Bible Study Classes, 10:00am — Worship, 6:00pm — Worship

Wednesday: 10:00am — Ladies Bible Class, 7:00pm — Bible Study Classes

October 7, 2018

"Stand Firm in...Liberty"

Galatians 5:1

The Sovereignty of God

The sovereignty of God is the bedrock of Scripture and Christian faith. Specifically, his power as the source of all political authority is attested in both the OT and NT. This does not divinize any particular government or make their acts *ipso facto* the will of God—in fact, their acts are often explicitly contrary to his will in Scripture; rather, governmental authorities are created through the existence of human society, but God orders them so his purpose is finally accomplished.

Ultimately, God is king. And that theme resounds throughout all Scripture.

In the Exodus

This is of vital relevance for the existence of Israel and the Biblical account of history. God's covenant with Israel was based on his gracious act of deliverance from Egyptian bondage. In this, he was repeatedly opposed by Pharaoh. Not only did God overcome this resistance through the power exhibited in the plagues visited upon Egypt, but the most revealing statement about God's control of events discloses that Pharaoh was only a foil to manifest the power of God: *[F]or this purpose I have raised you up, to show you my power, so that my name may be proclaimed in all the earth (Exod 9:16).*

While this is the most overt statement of God's ordering of the existing authorities, examples could be multiplied to show God's sovereign control in the Exodus event against opposition (e.g., **Exod 7:4-5; 10:1-2; 14:3-4**). The point is clear: God ruled above the greatest power of the Ancient Near East, achieving his purpose for the sake of his people; he even utilized the resistance of that power to leave no doubt about his management of affairs. The song of Moses sums it up well in its concluding exclamation: *The Lord will reign forever and ever (Exod 15:18).*

In the Exile

No OT book reveals this principle more clearly than Daniel. When Nebuchadnezzar erects a golden image and demands it be worshipped on penalty of death, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego refuse, trusting that God had a power greater than the king and would deliver them from the fiery furnace (**Dan 3**). God found Belshazzar wanting because of his pride and defiance, ripping his kingdom away and giving it to the Medes and Persians (**Dan 5**). Against the irrevocable death decree for those who prayed to anyone other than Darius, God affirmed Daniel's life by shutting the mouths of the lions in the den (**Dan 6**).

The foremost example in the book is the humbling of Nebuchadnezzar in Dan 4. In keeping with a dream he had which was interpreted by Daniel as a warning of impending judgment, Nebuchadnezzar is walking on the roof of his palace and surveying the city, when he boasts of his power and glory seen in the splendor of Babylon (**4:28-30**). *While the words were still in the king's mouth, there fell a voice from heaven, O King Nebuchadnezzar, to you it is spoken: The kingdom has departed from you...until you know that the Most High rules the kingdom of men and gives it to whom he will (Dan 4:31-2).*

Our Sick

Doris Trahan is taking chemo treatments.

Phillip Cottle is at home.

Frances Petree is in Northeast Hospital.

Patrick Smith, Gayle Coleman's brother in law is in the hospital and not doing well.

Jo Ella McKewen had a heart procedure done last week.

Continued Prayers

(Need cards, phone calls & visits)

Gwen Pettit, James Scott, Gary Nielsen, Harold Cryer, Steve Ward, Jackie David, Frank & Tina Garcia, Bill Lunceford, Eric Davis, J. P. Williams, Mark Wilcox, Robert White, Dayla Hale, Caitlin Smith

Shut Ins

(Need cards, phone calls & visits)

Jim Smith, Pauline Taylor, Winona Angelle, Pat Henley, Myrtle Sheffield, Ronnie Rubit, Joe Leonard, Dr. Ronald Davis, Frances Petree

Our Missionaries

Aaron & Marisa Bailey in Mwanza, Africa, Rod Kyle in the South Pacific

Upcoming Activities

Elders, Deacons, Minister meet Monday, Oct. 8th at 7:00 pm.

Deacons meet today at 4:45 pm.

Primetimers will be going to the Ranch Hand Café on Tuesday, Oct 9th at 4:45 pm. A sign up sheet is on the bulletin board.

Singing at Magnolia Place Health Care Sunday, Oct. 14th at 4:00 pm.

We will have a Houston Food Bank truck on Thursday, Oct. 18th at 8:30 am.

Men's Prayer Breakfast is Saturday, Oct. 20th at 8:00 am in the family life center.

Homecoming is Sunday, Oct 28th. We will be having a meal in the family life center after morning service.

Happy Birthday

Happy Birthday to Pauline Taylor. Mrs. Taylor's birthday was Saturday, Oct. 6th. She turned 105 years old.

Plastic Bags

The Food Bank is in need of plastic grocery bags. A barrel is in the foyer.

Communion Preparation: Tania Balch

Nursery Attendants: Jane Tinkle, Rita Upton

Communion Preparation for Sunday, Oct. 14th: Dani Brister

Nursery Attendants for Sunday, Oct. 14th: Marsha Rader

continued from front page

the Most High rules the kingdom of men and gives it to whom he will (Dan 4:31-2).

In the Psalms

The theme of God as king is a major focus of the Psalms. Many hymns celebrate his enthronement in Zion, the place of his rule among his people; but his reign is not confined to Israel, as they praise him as king over the nations, the powers of chaos, and the entire universe. Perhaps no psalm expresses it better than the enthronement hymn of **Psalm 47**. Read it in its entirety, as it is only 8 verses.

Other examples from the OT could be noted, but these are sufficiently representative to demonstrate that the concept of God as sovereign king was ubiquitous in ancient Israel. It is the basis of the Exodus, the source of hope in the midst of exile, and the confession of her worship.

Over Rome

This understanding is reinforced in the NT. Jesus states the principle emphatically in his trial before Pilate. Confronted with silence in his interrogation, Pilate attempts to bully Jesus into answering him. "You will not speak to me? Do you not know that I have authority to release you and authority to crucify you? Jesus answered him, "You would have no authority over me at all unless it had been given you from above" (**Jn 19:10-11**).

Arguably the best NT illustration of God's sovereignty is the book of Acts. The apostolic preaching repeatedly emphasizes God's reversal of the verdict of the authorities in crucifying Jesus in the resurrection. In fact, the earthly powers were unwittingly serving God's purpose, as Jesus was *delivered up according to the definite plan and foreknowledge of God (Acts 2:23)*. This is forcefully stated in the believers' prayer in the aftermath of their first opposition (**Acts 4:25-28**). The thread runs throughout the entire narrative of Acts: mocking the Sanhedrin in releasing the apostles so they return to teach in the temple (**Acts 5**); the inversion of Cornelius, a Roman official, now bowing to Christ as Lord (**Acts 10**); God's judgment against the Roman-appointed Herod (**Acts 12**); the Philippian earthquake demonstrating God's control of the justice system (**Acts 16**); Paul, a prisoner bound for Rome, directing shipwrecked Romans (**Acts 27**). In fact, the concluding episode of the book is Paul, *proclaiming the kingdom of God and teaching about the Lord Jesus Christ with all boldness and without hindrance (Acts 28:31)* as God's kingdom overcomes all human opposition. Throughout Acts, God, not the government, is sovereign, accomplishing his purpose for his people.

The concept of God's sovereignty is deeply ingrained in 1st-century Jewish thought and Christian experience. He is the one in control over and above human governments.

"Stand Firm in...Liberty"

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