TODAY'S ORDER OF WORSHIP

Welcome by: Bobby Rader / Opening Prayer by: Daniel Balch
Morning Assembly Song Leader: Danny Balch

#851 I'll Fly Away
#535 The Glory-Land Way

Scripture Reading by: Pierce Balch
#286 Wonderful Story of Love

Communion Devotional by: Don Lynn
Lord's Supper and Contribution

#881 Mansion Over the Hilltop
Sermon: " The Master of the Vineyard"
Matthew 20:1-16

#852 When the Roll Is Called Up Yonder
#859 When All of God's Singers Get Home
Closing Prayer by: Gus Tristan

Our small groups will meet tonight.
Ken Coleman's group will meet at 5:00 p.m.
at the building.

Other Opportunities For Spiritual Growth

Sunday: 9:00am — Bible Study Classes, 10:00am — Worship, 5:00pm — Worship
Wednesday: 6:30pm — Bible Study Classes

Oct. 6, 2024

"Stand Firm in…Liberty"

Galatians 5:1

God's Sovereignty

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**).

Family News & Notes

WHAT'S HAPPENING WITH YOUR CHURCH FAMILY

Our Sick

Rickey Lucas is having pain throughout his body. The Dr. will be trying some form of blocker to reduce/control his pain.

Continued Prayers
(Need cards, phone calls & visits)

Steve Ward, Caitlin Smith, Virginia Cole, Ken Coleman, Joe Edd Stifflemire, Donna Wilson, Jo Ella McKewen, Oscar Cantu, Jennifer Stelly, Dr. Hugo Thomas, Veronica Valant, Steve Ward, Geri Cryer, Gloria McKelroy, Yalonda Jackson, Cassandra Valent, Linda Frank, Scott Overton

Shut Ins
(Need cards, phone calls & visits)

Jim Smith, Winona Angelle, Catherine Parker, Peggy McIntosh, Lois Watts, Willo Dean Ellis

Our Missionaries

Aaron & Marisa Bailey in Montepuez, Mozambique , Rod Kyle in the South Pacific, Mani Pagidopali in India

Upcoming Activities

Elders, Deacons, Minister meeting, Monday, Oct. 7th at 6:30 p.m.

We will have a Houston Food Bank truck on Thursday, Oct. 17th at 8:-00 a.m.

Homecoming is Sunday, Oct. 27th

Food Bank

We served 162 families on Tuesday, Oct. 2nd at our food bank. That equals to 536 individuals. We had 18 volunteers.

Elders	Deacons	Minister
Ken Coleman	Zach Arthur	Bryant Perkins
Bobby Rader	Daniel Balch	
Don Taylor	Danny Balch	
Robert Ward	Walden David	
	Gus Tristan	

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The foremost example in the book is the humbling of Nebuchadnezzar in **Daniel 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 (**v. 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* **(v. 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.

Bryant Perkins