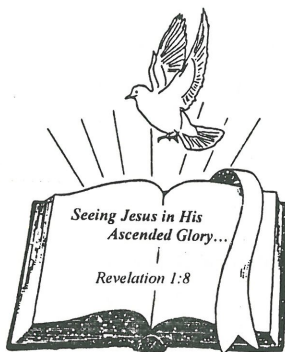


Seeing Jesus in His Ascended Glory...

The Lord of Hosts



Teaching 2 of 4

"To regain her lost power the church must see heaven opened and have a transforming vision of God."

A.W. Tozer

Well of Life Ministries

Altha Burts

Table of Contents

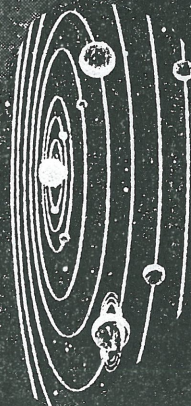
Lord of Hosts Diagram	Page 2
Teaching Notes (Unedited)	Page 3
Reflections for Going Deeper	
Boasting in the Name of the Lord	Page 13
The Lord of Hosts	Page 14
For Further Reflection	
The Supremacy of God	Page 20
The Sovereignty of God	Page 23

Beholding JESUS in His Power and Authority

He is the LORD OF HOSTS

LORD OVER ALL STELLAR HOSTS

God created the heavens
and the earth Gen 1:1



He upholds the universe by the
Word of His power Hebrews 1:3

LORD OVER ALL HEAVENLY BODIES



Magi following
the star Mat 2:1

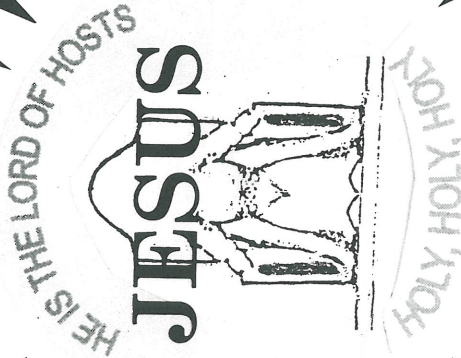


The sun stands still
Joshua 10:13

LORD OVER ALL ANIMAL HOSTS



God shut the lion's
mouth Dan 6:22

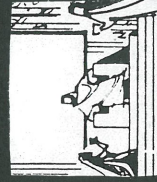


LORD OVER THE FEATHERED HOSTS



Ravens brought Elijah
Bread and meat
I Kings 17:6

LORD OVER HUMAN HOSTS



The king's heart is in
the hand of the Lord
Proverbs 21:1

LORD OVER ANGELIC HOSTS



Angel of the Lord struck
185,000 Assyrians
II Kings 19:35

LORD OVER THE ELEMENTS



Crossing the Red Sea
Ex 14:22



Jesus calms the storm
Luke 8:22-25

Teaching Notes (Unedited)

These notes are provided as a rough draft in hopes that it will aid you in your review and study of this teaching/communication of 7/01/02.

This evening's teaching is the second in a four part series, entitled Seeing Jesus in His Ascended Glory!

During our time together, we came to understand that coming to see Jesus in His ascended glory is really a journey of the heart, and it is Jesus Himself that initiates that journey. He is constantly beckoning us to come up higher (Rev 4:1), to behold Him in His glory (II Cor 3:17-18; John 1:13-14).

Yet, for many of us, we came to realize that we sometimes fail to respond to His beckoning.

When we hear Him we do not turn to see what He is saying to us, because we don't stop long enough in order to do so.

And for some of us, we do stop, but we tend not to 'stay' long enough to truly 'see' Him, in order to receive a fresh revelation of His glory.

For others, we realized that we have not yet 'learned' how to position ourselves in order to receive from Him, or that we even had to do so.

*"My people perish for lack of knowledge," the prophet Hosea says.
Hosea 4:6*

Well, what better way to begin this evening than to once again go higher, behind the veil, to see Jesus as John saw Him on the island of Patmos... a vision (unveiling) intended for the whole church.

Turn with me now to Revelation 1:9-20, as we focus on the description of Jesus that the apostle John gives us in this passage.

⁹I, John, both your brother and companion in the tribulation and kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ, was on the island that is called Patmos for the word of God and for the testimony of Jesus Christ.

¹⁰I was in the Spirit on the Lord's Day, and I heard behind me a loud voice, as of a trumpet,

¹¹saying, "I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last," and, "What you see, write in a book and send it to the seven

churches which are in Asia: to Ephesus, to Smyrna, to Pergamos, to Thyatira, to Sardis, to Philadelphia, and to Laodicea.”

¹²Then I turned to see the voice that spoke with me. And having turned I saw seven golden lampstands,

¹³and in the midst of the seven lampstands One like the Son of Man, clothed with a garment down to the feet and girded about the chest with a golden band.

¹⁴His head and hair were white like wool, as white as snow, and His eyes like a flame of fire;

¹⁵His feet were like fine brass, as if refined in a furnace, and His voice as the sound of many waters;

¹⁶He had in His right hand seven stars, out of His mouth went a sharp two-edged sword, and His countenance was like the sun shining in its strength.

¹⁷And when I saw Him, I fell at His feet as dead. But He laid His right hand on me, saying to me, “Do not be afraid; I am the First and the Last.

¹⁸I am He who lives, and was dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore. Amen. And I have the keys of Hades and of Death.

¹⁹Write the things which you have seen, and the things which are...

Seeing the splendor of the Lord Jesus was likened to nothing John had seen before in Jesus!

But remember, when John saw the Lord transfigured on the mountain, he was struck with wonder! Here John falls before God as dead when he sees Jesus in His ascended glory.

Now let's not over 'spiritualize' his encounter... John is actually seeing Jesus; he is describing what he is seeing even though what he is seeing is highly symbolic as well.

John was never the same after this day!

At this point, let me quote from Watchman Nee in his book, What Shall This Man Do?

“In the book of Revelation, God shows us an aspect of His Son not shown to us in the Gospels. In the gospels we see Him as Savior,

in Revelation as King, in John's Gospel as Alpha, and in Revelation as Omega. The one displays His love, the other His majesty. In the upper room Jesus girds himself about the waist, for service; at Patmos He is discovered girt about the breasts, for war. In the Gospels His mild eyes melted Peter; in Revelation they are as a flame of fire. There His voice was gentle, calling His own sheep by name, gracious words proceeded out of His mouth; here His voice is terrible as the sound of many waters, and from His mouth there proceeds a sharp two-edged sword, striking death to His foes.

It is not enough that we know Jesus as Lamb of God and as Savior of the world; we must know Him **also** as God's Christ, God's King, and God's Judge. When we see Him as Savior, we say, "How lovable!" and lean on His bosom. When we see Him as Monarch we say, 'How terrible!' and fall prostrate at His feet. The one issues in thanksgiving, the other in worship. To see Him now as King is, one might almost say, to see "another" Christ, to experience 'another' salvation."

Holy is His Name!

But **why** this grand revelation of His Person?

For what **reason** did Jesus reveal Himself to John this day?

Why is He revealing Himself to us this evening?

We know that Jesus is not revealing Himself for any 'self-centered' purpose – it is not in His nature to do so. He is always full of purpose and 'other-centeredness,' isn't He?

So what is the purpose of this grand revelation to John... and to us? It is **for us**, that we might partake of His Person and of His glory, and **experience** our position in Christ as overcomers... experience His Reign in and through our lives (Rev 2:7, 11, 17, 26; 3:5, 12, 21; Eph 2:6; Rom 5:17).

As John says in his gospel,

*"And of His fullness we have all received, and grace for grace."
John 1:16*

A note from the Spirit Filled Life Bible opens this verse up to us a little when it says,

"The fact that John states that grace comes from His fullness teaches that grace is more than God's disposition or impersonal

favor. It is God meeting us at our point of need in the Person of Jesus Christ, including all of His power and provision.” (John 1:16; Heb 4:14)

Isn't that exciting?!

So, John is not just reporting to us that this is the way He is now, but this is *how* He is now **and**, there are things about Him... that He has become in His glory... that have specific meaning and purpose for us.

There are parts of His person that are revealed in His ascended glory that have specific power to work where you and I are in our lives.

How can we know this?

We come to know this when we read the seven letters to the churches, following this revelation, each begins with reference to a part of the vision that John had of the Lord Jesus. Each letter begins with a reference to a part of the vision John had of Jesus in chapter one.

Each feature of His personality or each physical feature that is described is reflective of a spiritual truth about His person. There is selectively a 'reaching back' to that vision, lifting out of it a portion of the expression of Jesus seen in that vision, that meets the needs of that particular church.

In other words, as you **study** each one of the seven letters, you will find that the trait, the attribute, or the characteristic symbolized in this revelation was the very facet of His glory they needed to 'enter into' in order to meet their particular need.

For example:

- As you 'see' His eyes like a flame of fire.... you come to realize He manifests His discernment toward us so that it will also 'happen' in us.
- As you 'see' His feet like fine brass... having to do with His dominion, you come to realize that He manifests His dominion to us in order to invite us into dominion with Him (Rev 2:27; Matt 16:17-19).

This is what we discover through these passages!

We discover that many facets of His person, what He has come to be in His glory are designed to answer *our* practical needs; they are designed specifically to meet us where we are.

When we discover this truth for 'ourselves,' we begin to realize that all of our circumstances have been allowed, or designed, to press us into a fresh

revelation of His glory and a new partaking of His grace. We will learn to cooperate, to **stay positioned**, in order to receive from Him (Rev 1:10).

As it was with the Israelites, so it is with us... new crisis and peculiar needs always call forth the need for fresh revelations of the glory of our God that would move our hearts toward confidence of His care for us, and strong reliance upon Him for our needs.

And as Kay Arthur writes, "The longer Israel journeyed with her God, the more familiar she became with His character and ways. The revelation was progressive" (Lord, I Want to Know You).

At this point, let me share from my own experience. Many years ago when:

- Esther was beginning puberty,
- Joshua was experiencing physical problems,
- Greg and I were working through differences in child rearing, and
- Many people seemed to be falling away from the Lord, and
- The world situation was increasingly unstable...

I began to 'realize' I needed a deeper, wider, more global revelation of the Lord's Supremacy. Life was getting just too complicated for me!

Yes, I had come to know Him in many ways. One way I came to know Him was as my Provider. When I was still a single woman, I was a local missionary, as well as being sent out-of-state to minister for a period of time. During those years I learned of His faithfulness to care for me financially and emotionally as a single woman, just to name a few.

Also, through my years of walking with Him, I have come to know Him as my Healer. He has taken me through the healing of many different psychological and emotional difficulties:

- A mental breakdown
- Drug addiction
- Homosexuality
- Bulimia
- Anorexia
- A learning disability
- Deep depression, and
- A number of physical problems

But then there came a time when I realized I needed to come to know Him in a 'new way.' My circumstances were changing and I had a 'new need'. I needed to go deeper!

I needed to have more faith, in Him, to care and protect people who were very dear to me, yet were out of my control:

- The care for my husband, who at the time was going through some very deep trials,
- The care for and protection of my children, and
- All the rest of the world I was so concerned about.

So my question to the Lord was "How can I be brought to a 'place' of absolute certainty that all is under Your control... everything in life, every circumstance, no matter how difficult it gets, with my husband, my children and the world around me?"

In faithfulness, the Holy Spirit impressed on my heart that I needed to come to know Jesus as the Almighty One.... The Omnipotent One.... as the Lord God Almighty! That I needed to become more conscious of His Almightyness... I needed to come to know Him as the **Lord of Hosts**!

Again, I share the fruit from my personal pursuit, findings, and illuminations with you this evening (Proverbs 2:1-11).

This evening we are going to focus on Jesus as the **Lord of Hosts**!

As we do we will experience our faith rising, as we see Him in His all encompassing majesty and sovereignty...His transcendence...His holiness... His supremacy.

Let's focus our attention on Revelation 1, verse 8. In this verse we read,

"I am the Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the End, says the Lord, who is and was and is to come, the Almighty."

Jamieson, Faucett, Brown points out that in the oldest manuscripts we read, **"The Lord God." Almighty** – Hebrew, Shaddai, and Jehovah Sabbaoth, i.e. of Hosts - **the Lord of Hosts.**"

The Lord of Hosts! Commanding all the hosts or powers in heaven and on earth.

This title expresses His absolute supremacy, His infinite resources, and His deep desire and commitment to intervene on behalf of His people at any given moment of their need. The Lord of Hosts is a *relational* title.

Jesus is the Lord of Hosts!

Not only Lord, but the Lord of Hosts. The Psalmist says, "Who is the King of glory? The Lord of Hosts, He is the King of glory" (Psalm 24:10).

He is not only Lord, but also the Lord of Hosts – plural. He is the Lord of Hosts. What does the term 'hosts' mean? What does it include? Why is it in the plural? It means Jesus is Sovereign... **in every realm!** In Hebrew everything in creation is included in the term 'hosts' (Complete Word Study of the O.T.).

Now let us look more in-depth at what it means to call Jesus the Lord of Hosts. Let us behold the scope of His sovereignty together, and experience our faith rise, as we grow in our knowledge of our God and Savior Jesus Christ, and how He meets man's needs through His unlimited power.

Jesus is sovereign in every realm:

(The diagram in this book is provided to facilitate visually this teaching.)

- He is Lord of the angelic hosts above. He created all angelic beings and they carry out His will and purpose on our behalf, as Hezekiah learned when one angel, at our Lord's command, slew 185,000 Assyrians (II Kings 19:35, Isaiah 37:36).
- Jesus is also the Lord of all feathered hosts of the sky. His power brought the birds into being and they willingly act as messengers when needed, as Elijah discovered when the ravens fed him (I Kings 17:1-6).
- Jesus is Lord over the elements, as Moses and all of the children of Israel experienced when they walked on dry land through the parted walls of the Red Sea (Exodus 14:21-29).

The wind blows where He pleases, "Then Jesus arose and rebuked the wind, and said to the sea, 'Peace, be still.' And the wind ceased and there was a great calm." The disciples expressed that even the winds and the sea obey Him (Mark 4:39, 41).

- Jesus is Lord over all human hosts, and would have us cease from fearing man, whose breath is in his nostrils (Isaiah 2:22).

Proverbs 21:1 "The king's heart is in the hand of the LORD, like the rivers of water; He turns it wherever

- All the Promises of the Bible by Herbert Lockyer

So what happens in our heart when we come to 'see' Jesus as **the Lord of Hosts**?

As Jesus is *actively* contemplated and elevated as the Lord of Hosts in our hearts, our faith rises! We begin to 'see' Him as the Lord God Almighty! Lord of every realm!

As The Pulpit Commentary so reverently comments:

- His elevation, as the Lord of Hosts, in our hearts, fills us with humility, reverence, and adoration.
- His elevation, as the Lord of Hosts, in our hearts, encourages us to pray with strong confidence that we shall be heard (I Samuel 1:11, Zechariah 8:21; Matt 26:53; Eph 3:20).
- His elevation, as the Lord of Hosts, in our hearts, strengthens us in labor "work for I am with you, sayeth the **Lord of Hosts** (Haggai 2:4).
- His elevation, as the Lord of Hosts, in our hearts, will console us in trouble "The Lord will protect His own" (Psalm 34:7; Isaiah 8:13). He is the Protector and Avenger of the oppressed (James 5:4).
- His elevation, as the Lord of Hosts, in our hearts, incites us to contend against His foes, to "fight the good fight of faith." As David said to the Philistine, "You come in to me with a sword, with a spear, and with a javelin, but I come to you in the Name of the **Lord of Hosts...**" (I Samuel 17:45).

Can you hear Jesus saying,“

Come up higher church... behold My glory

I am the Lord God Almighty,

the Lord of Hosts

and the whole earth is filled with My Glory!

Holy, Holy, Holy is My Name!”

Reflections For Going Deeper

Do You Boast In the Name of the Lord?

"Some boast in chariots, and some in horses; but we will boast in the name of the Lord, our God" (Psalm 20:7, NASB).

When you are in trouble or in need, where do you run for help? What is your first instinct? Do you run to man or to God? Unfortunately, if you are honest, it is probably to man. When you are hurting or confused, when you don't know what to do, whose counsel do you seek first? Isn't it usually the counsel of another human being rather than the counsel found in waiting upon God in prayer? Why is it? Why do we run to man before we run to God? Why is it we boast in chariots or horses rather than in the name of our LORD? Is it because we can 'see' chariots and horses? In Old Testament days, chariots and horses were two means of protection and/or escape. Today our chariots and horses come with different labels, shapes, and forms; even so, they are still visible means of help, escape, or protection. Yet are these really a source of safety? No. "The horse is prepared against the day of battle: but safety is of the LORD" (Prov. 21:31).

What is the problem? Why do so many Christians run to the arm of flesh rather than to the arms of our all-sufficient God? I think, Beloved, it is because most of us do not really know our God. Why is it that many collapse in the day of trouble and testing? Why is it that they are immobilized rather than taking an aggressive stand in the face of fear? It is because Christians, for the most part, cannot boast in the name of their God.

What do I mean when I say, "boast in the name of our God"? *To boast in* means *to have confidence in, to trust in*. Therefore, to boast in God's name means to have confidence in His name. In Biblical times, a name represented a person's character. Therefore, God's name represents His character, His attributes, His nature. To know His name is to know Him. To boast in His name is to have confidence in Who He is!

In the day of trouble or of need, we are to run to our God, to put our trust in Him. That is why He says, "Call upon me in the day of trouble; I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me" (Psalm 50:15).

Is your heart troubled in any way? Is there fear of any kind lurking in the shadows of your consciousness? Do you feel insecure about anything at all? If the answer to any of these questions is in the affirmative...

Let us **boast** in the name of Jesus, the Lord God Almighty, the Lord of Hosts!

From Lord, I Want to Know You by Kay Arthur

The Lord of Hosts

The name *Jehovah-Sabaoth* is translated "The LORD of hosts," and it appears more frequently in Scripture than any other of the names of God. For example, in the last three books in the Old Testament we find this name not less than 91 times; 14 times in Haggai, 53 times in Zechariah, and 24 times in Malachi.

The word *sabaoth* means "to mass together, to assemble," the underlying thought being that of warfare. As a general would assemble his army together for combat, so God has His armies, or hosts, that He assembles to fight His cause on earth for the protection of His people. Thus the name *Jehovah-Sabaoth* has come to be associated with warfare. It appears in connection with the movements of Jehovah in times of national crises in Israel.

Stevenson says, "It would be a mistake to think that the title *Jehovah-Sabaoth* refers only to the heavenly hosts. For this word 'hosts' is used also concerning Israel. At the very beginnings of their history as a nation, in their deliverance from Egypt we read, 'all the hosts of the LORD went out from the land of Egypt,'¹ and that term is, from then onwards, frequently applied to them. The title *Jehovah-Sabaoth* therefore embraces both the heavenly and earthly hosts of the LORD; and the thought expressed in it is the joining of the heavenly forces with the earthly people of God—the bringing of heavenly power to the aid of His elect." We are not in disagreement with this teaching, however it seems quite clear that the "hosts" of the Lord are more often than not the angelic hosts. When Jacob was returning to Canaan, "the angels of God met him. And when Jacob saw them, he said, This is God's host."² David recognized that the angels were considered to be the hosts of Jehovah.³ Actually all of this is not too important. It is not the hosts of the Lord that will occupy us in this study but rather the Lord of hosts.

But before we proceed in our study, look at a further use of the word "hosts." It is used with regard to the heavenly bodies, more particularly the stars. After God finished the work of creation we read, "Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them."⁴ Further on in the Pentateuch we read of "the sun, and the moon, and the stars, even all the host of heaven."⁵

¹ Exodus 12:41

² Genesis 32:1-2

³ Psalm 103:20-21

⁴ Genesis 2:1

⁵ Deuteronomy 4:19

Let me remind you at this point that our God and Saviour is the *Lord* of hosts, that is, He is absolutely superior to, and sovereign over His creation, whether that creation be in the realm of the stellar heavens, or angels, or men. All things were created by Him⁶ and all things are controlled by Him.⁷

The first appearance of this name in Scripture is at a time of national corruption and confusion.⁸ Anarchy prevailed in Israel.⁹ Despite the defection of the Israelites, there was at least one godly Levite from Ephraim, Elkanah by name. Year after year he and his wife kept the feasts of Jehovah, bringing sacrifices to worship.¹⁰ They both prayed that God would deliver His people. They asked God to give to them a baby boy that they might raise him to be the deliverer of the nation.¹¹ The point not to be overlooked, however, is the fact that Elkanah was conscious that if there was to be deliverance for his people, *Jehovah-Sabaoth* must bring it to pass, the *Lord* of the invisible and invincible armies. Both Elkanah and his wife are crying to *Jehovah-Sabaoth*.

In course of time God answered the prayers of Elkanah and Hannah, and Samuel was born.¹² The boy's parents kept their promise to the Lord, and so "Samuel grew, and the LORD was with him."¹³ But Israel had not yet surrendered to the *Lord* of hosts. When Israel attacked the Philistines, the Philistines killed about four thousand men in Israel's army. This was proof that *Jehovah-Sabaoth* was not with them, for His hosts can know no defeat. Still Israel did not turn to Him. Instead, they turned to the ark of the covenant for help, and said, "Let us fetch the ark of the covenant of the LORD out of Shiloh unto us, that, when it cometh among us, it may save us out of the hand of our enemies."¹⁴ Here was no crying to God, no confession of sin, but merely a superstitious belief that there was some power in the ark. They brought the ark of the Lord into the camp, but the Lord of the ark was not there, and the result was disastrous. The Philistines attacked Israel this time, and about thirty thousand Israelites fell in battle and the ark of God was taken.¹⁵

Among the thirty thousand slain were Hophni and Phinehas, sons of Eli the priest. When the ninety-eight-year-old priest heard the tragic news, he fell off his seat and broke his neck. This now meant that the nation had no priest, no successor to the priesthood, and no ark of God. During the closing days of the war, the wife of Phinehas gave birth to a son. Upon hearing of the tragic

⁶ Colossians 1:16

⁷ Hebrews 1:3

⁸ 1 Samuel 1:3

⁹ Judges 21:25

¹⁰ 1 Samuel 1:1-9

¹¹ 1 Samuel 1:10-11

¹² 1 Samuel 1:20

¹³ 1 Samuel 3:19

¹⁴ 1 Samuel 4:3

¹⁵ 1 Samuel 4:10-11

defeat and loss of the nation, as well as the loss of her husband, she named the newborn son *Ichabod*, meaning, "The glory of the Lord is departed." How sad that the *Lord* of hosts was available to His people to deliver them, but they would not turn to Him!

Samuel grew old, and the elders of Israel came to him to ask for a king to rule over them like the Gentile nations. God told Samuel to give the people their request,¹⁶ and Saul was chosen as Israel's first king. At the inaugural ceremony Samuel said to Saul, "Thus saith the LORD of hosts, I remember that which Amalek did to Israel, how he laid wait for him in the way, when he came up from Egypt. Now go and smite Amalek, and utterly destroy all that they have, and spare them not; but slay both man and woman, infant and suckling, ox and sheep, camel and ass."¹⁷ God wanted Saul to know that it would not be the resources of the king that would bring victory, but *Jehovah-Sabaoth*. God knew that many of the Israelites would no longer sense their need of Him now that they had a great military leader like Saul. So he reminds Saul that it is *Jehovah-Sabaoth* who says, "Now go and smite Amalek." When Israel defeated Amalek back in the days of Moses and Joshua, it was Jehovah who won the battle and who said, "The LORD will have war with Amalek from generation to generation."¹⁸ The battle belongs to *Jehovah-Sabaoth*, and He only can lead to victory and bring deliverance. But Saul was slow to learn this, thus we read, "the Spirit of the LORD departed from Saul."¹⁹

But God was preparing a younger man to replace the proud and self-centered Saul upon the throne of Israel. He was a ruddy stripling named David, a son of Jesse. In spite of his youth he had learned well the lesson that *Jehovah-Sabaoth* is invincible in battle. David appeared on the scene at a time of national crisis when Israel was at war with the Philistines. His father sent him to the army camp to visit his brothers. He promptly responded in obedience, and early the following morning he was on his way. When he arrived, it was just in time to see the men of Israel, including his own brothers, flee in fear from the challenge of a Philistine by the name of Goliath. The Philistine was a big man to be sure, more than nine feet tall, but not too big for *Jehovah-Sabaoth*. David volunteered to fight Goliath even though King Saul sought to dissuade him. When Saul saw that David would not be dissuaded, he consented, but along with his consent he insisted that David wear his royal armor. This David

¹⁶ 1 Samuel 8:4-7

¹⁷ 1 Samuel 15:2-3

¹⁸ Exodus 17:16

¹⁹ 1 Samuel 16:14

refused to do, saying, "I cannot go with these."²⁰ Saul's armor was that of a man after the flesh, and David obviously knew something of the truth that "though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh: (For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds)."²¹ "No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life; that he may please Him who hath chosen him to be a soldier."²² John Bunyan rightly described the Christian life as a "holy war." The struggle is a spiritual one, thus we need to know that it is "Not by might, nor by power, but by My spirit, saith the LORD of hosts."²³

As Goliath approached David he was preceded by his armor-bearer. He cursed David by his gods and then boasted of what he would do.²⁴ In his reply David merely testified as to what *Jehovah-Sabaoth* would do.²⁵ Then David summed up his remarks by saying, "And all this assembly shall know that . . . *the battle is the LORD's*."²⁶ When Moses led Israel out of Egypt he assured the people that "the LORD shall fight for you."²⁷ After the successful crossing of the Red Sea the people sang, "The LORD is a man of war."²⁸ The Lord did fight for them, for their deliverance was a divine work of supernatural power. Explain it as you will, there can be no doubt that a miracle was performed that none but God could accomplish. *Jehovah-Sabaoth* is God's fighting name, and when we turn the battle over to Him, we are assured of victory. So it was with David,²⁹ and so it can be with each of us. Later, at David's coronation we read, "And David went on, and grew great, and the LORD *God of hosts* was with him."³⁰

One of David's first achievements, after he was anointed king, was to bring the ark of God from the house of Abinadab in Kirjath-Jearim up to Jerusalem. The procession of thirty thousand men got as far as Nachon's threshing floor, where the cart toppled, and Uzzah put forth his hand to steady the ark, and dropped dead. The ark remained in the house of Obededom for three months.³¹ At the end of three months the ark was carried on the shoulders of the priests, according to the instructions God gave to Moses,³² and brought to Jerusalem amidst the shouts and singing of the people. In the midst of this ceremony celebrating victory, David wrote Psalm 24. "Lift up your heads, O ye gates; and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in. Who is this King of glory? The LORD strong

²⁰ 1 Samuel 17:39
²¹ 2 Corinthians 10:3-4
²² 2 Timothy 2:4
²³ Zechariah 4:6
²⁴ 1 Samuel 17:43-44
²⁵ 1 Samuel 17:45-46
²⁶ 1 Samuel 17:47
²⁷ Exodus 14:14
²⁸ Exodus 15:3
²⁹ 1 Samuel 17:45
³⁰ 2 Samuel 5:10
³¹ 2 Samuel 6:1-11
³² Exodus 25:14;
Numbers 4:15; 7:9

and mighty, the LORD mighty in battle. Lift up your heads, O ye gates; even lift them up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in. Who is this King of glory? The LORD of hosts, He is the King of glory. Selah.”³³ This is the first occurrence of this name of God in the Psalter and it shows His sovereignty, but the prophetic anticipation will be finally fulfilled when Christ comes again to establish undisputed rule over all the earth. He is our all-conquering Saviour, the Leader over the armies of Jehovah.

The thought expressed in this name is the divine assistance available to God’s children in their hour of need. *Jehovah-Sabaoth* is the Guide and Guardian of His people. Elijah need not fear to appear before Ahab as long “As the LORD of hosts liveth.”³⁴ Likewise Elisha had no fear of the three enemy kings so long “As the LORD of hosts liveth.”³⁵ One man of God did not fear the entire Syrian army, but he could say to his servant, “Fear not: for they that be with us are more than they that be with them.”³⁶ The man who cleaves to the *Lord* of hosts learns, as did Elisha the man of God, that “One man of you shall chase a thousand: for the LORD your God, He it is that fighteth for you.”³⁷ In one night *Jehovah-Sabaoth* slayed 185,000 Assyrians in defense of His own people.³⁸

Let the people of God take courage and be comforted, for the *Lord* of hosts is our Saviour the Lord Jesus Christ.

We may look to *Jehovah-Sabaoth*
with unquestioning confidence.

³³ Psalm 24:7-10

³⁴ 1 Kings 18:15

³⁵ 2 Kings 3:14

³⁶ 2 Kings 6:16

³⁷ Joshua 23:10

³⁸ 2 Kings 19:31-35

For Further Reflection

The Supremacy of God

In one of his letters to Erasmus, Luther said, "Your thoughts of God are too human." Probably that renowned scholar resented such a rebuke, the more so, since it proceeded from a miner's son; nevertheless, it was thoroughly deserved. We too, though having no standing among the religious leaders of this degenerate age, prefer the same charge against the majority of the preachers of our day, and against those who, instead of searching the Scriptures for themselves, lazily accept the teaching of others. The most dishonoring and degrading conceptions of the rule and reign of the Almighty are now held almost everywhere. To countless thousands, even among those professing to be Christians, the God of the Scriptures is quite unknown.

Of old, God complained to an apostate Israel, "Thou thoughtest that I was altogether as thyself" (Psa. 50:21). Such must now be His indictment against an apostate Christendom. Men imagine that the Most High is moved by sentiment, rather than actuated by principle. They suppose that His omnipotency is such an idle fiction that Satan is thwarting His designs on every side. They think that if He has formed any plan or purpose at all, then it must be like theirs, constantly subject to change. They openly declare that whatever power He possesses must be restricted, lest He invade the citadel of man's "free will" and reduce him to a "machine." They lower the all-efficacious Atonement, which has actually redeemed everyone for whom it was made, to a mere "remedy," which sin-sick souls may use if they feel disposed to; and they enervate the invincible work of the Holy Spirit to an "offer" of the Gospel which sinners may accept or reject as they please.

The "god" of this twentieth century no more resembles the Supreme Sovereign of Holy Writ than does the dim flickering of a candle the glory of the midday sun. The "god" who is now talked about in the average pulpit, spoken of in the ordinary Sunday School, mentioned in much of the religious literature of the day, and preached in most of the so-called Bible Conferences is the figment of human imagination, an invention of maudlin sentimentality. The heathen outside of the pale of Christendom form "gods" out of wood and stone, while the millions of heathen inside Christendom manufacture a "god" out of their own carnal mind. In reality, they are but atheists, for there is no other possible alternative between an absolutely supreme God, and no God at all. A "god" whose will is resisted, whose designs are frustrated, whose purpose is checkmated, possesses no title to Deity, and so far from being a fit object of worship, merits nought but contempt.

The supremacy of the true and living God might well be argued from the infinite distance which separates the mightiest creatures from the almighty Creator. He is the Potter,

they are but the clay in His hands, to be molded into vessels of honor, or to be dashed into pieces (Psa. 2:9) as He pleases. Were all the denizens of heaven and all the inhabitants of the earth to combine in revolt against Him, it would occasion Him no uneasiness, and would have less effect upon His eternal and unassailable Throne than has the spray of Mediterranean's waves upon the towering rocks of Gibraltar. So puerile and powerless is the creature to affect the Most High, Scripture itself tells us that when the Gentile heads unite with apostate Israel to defy Jehovah and His Christ, "He that sitteth in the heavens shall *laugh*" (Psa. 2:4).

The absolute and universal supremacy of God is plainly and positively affirmed in many scriptures. "Thine, O Lord, is the greatness, and the power, and the glory, and the victory, and the majesty: for all in the heaven and all in the earth is Thine; Thine is the Kingdom, O Lord, and Thou art exalted as Head above all. . . . And Thou reignest over all" (I Chron. 29:11, 12) —note, "reignest" now, not "will do so in the Millennium." "O Lord God of our fathers, art not Thou God in heaven? and rulest not Thou over all the kingdoms of the heathen? and in Thine hand is there not power and might, so that none (not even the Devil himself) is able to withstand Thee?" (II Chron. 20:6). Before Him presidents and popes, kings and emperors, are less than grasshoppers.

"But He is in one mind, and who can turn Him? and what His soul desireth, *even that* He doeth" (Job 23:13). Ah, my reader, the God of Scripture is no make-believe monarch, no mere imaginary sovereign, but King of kings, and Lord of lords. "I know that Thou canst do everything, and that *no* thought of Thine can be hindered" (Job 42:2, margin), or, as another translator renders it, "no purpose of Thine can be frustrated." All that He has designed He does. All that He has decreed He performs. "But our God is in the heavens: He hath done *whatsoever* He hath pleased" (Psa. 115:3); and why has He? Because "there is no wisdom, nor understanding, nor counsel against the Lord" (Prov. 21:30).

God's supremacy over the works of His hands is vividly depicted in Scripture. Inanimate matter, irrational creatures, all perform their Maker's bidding. At His pleasure the Red Sea divided and its waters stood up as walls (Ex. 14); and the earth opened her mouth, and guilty rebels went down alive into the pit (Num. 16). When He so ordered, the sun stood still (Josh. 10); and on another occasion went *backward* ten degrees on the dial of Ahaz (Isa. 38:8). To exemplify His supremacy, He made ravens carry food to Elijah (I Kings 17), iron to swim on top of the waters (II Kings 6:5), lions to be tame when Daniel was cast into their den, fire to burn not when the three Hebrews were flung into its flames. Thus "Whatsoever the Lord pleased, that did He in heaven, and in earth, in the seas, and all deep places" (Psa. 135:6).

God's supremacy is also demonstrated in His perfect rule over the *wills* of men. Let the reader ponder carefully Ex. 34:24. Three times in the year all the males of Israel were required to leave their homes and go up to Jerusalem. They

lived in the midst of hostile people, who hated them for having appropriated their lands. What, then, was to hinder the Canaanites from seizing their opportunity, and, during the absence of the men, slaying the women and children and taking possession of their farms? If the hand of the Almighty was not upon the wills even of wicked men, how could He make this promise beforehand, that none *should* so much as “desire” their lands? Ah, “The king’s heart is in the hand of the Lord, as the rivers of water: He turneth it whithersoever He will” (Prov. 21:1).

But, it may be objected, do we not read again and again in Scripture how that men defied God, resisted His will, broke His commandments, disregarded His warnings, and turned a deaf ear to all His exhortations? Certainly we do. And does this nullify all that we have said above? If it does, then the Bible plainly contradicts itself. But that cannot be. What the objector refers to is simply the wickedness of man against the *external* word of God, whereas what we have mentioned above is what God has *purposed in Himself*. The rule of conduct He has given us to walk by, is perfectly fulfilled by none of us; His own eternal “counsels” are accomplished to their minutest details.

The absolute and universal supremacy of God is affirmed with equal plainness and positiveness in the New Testament. There we are told that God “worketh *all* things after the counsel of His own will” (Eph. 1:11)—the Greek for “worketh” means “to work effectually.” For this reason we read, “For of Him, and through Him, and to Him, are all things: to whom be glory forever. Amen” (Rom. 11:36). Men may boast that they are free agents, with a will of their own, and are at liberty to do as they please, but Scripture says to those who boast “we will go into such a city, and continue there a year, and buy and sell. . . . Ye ought to say, *If the Lord will*” (James 4:13, 15)!

Here then is a sure resting-place for the heart. Our lives are neither the product of blind fate nor the result of capricious chance, but every detail of them was ordained from all eternity, and is now ordered by the living and reigning God. Not a hair of our heads can be touched without His permission. “A man’s heart deviseth his way: *but the Lord* directeth his steps” (Prov. 16:9). What assurance, what strength, what comfort this should give the real Christian! “My times are in *Thy hand*” (Psa. 31:15). Then let me “*Rest in the Lord*, and wait patiently for Him” (Psa. 37:7).

From The Attributes of God by Arthur W. Pink

The Sovereignty of God

The sovereignty of God may be defined as the *exercise* of His supremacy—see preceding chapter. Being infinitely elevated above the highest creature, He is the Most High, Lord of heaven and earth. Subject to none, influenced by none, absolutely independent; God does as He pleases, only as He pleases, always as He pleases. None can thwart Him, none can hinder Him. So His own Word expressly declares: “My counsel shall stand, and *I will do* all My pleasure” (Isa. 46:10); “He doeth according to *His* will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay His hand” (Dan. 4:35). Divine sovereignty means that God is God in fact, as well as in name, that He is on the Throne of the universe, directing all things, working all things “after the counsel of His own will” (Eph. 1:11).

Rightly did the late Charles Haddon Spurgeon say in his sermon on Matt. 20:15,

There is no attribute more comforting to His children than that of God’s Sovereignty. Under the most adverse circumstances, in the most severe trials, they believe that Sovereignty has ordained their afflictions, that Sovereignty overrules them, and that Sovereignty will sanctify them all. There is nothing for which the children ought more earnestly, to contend than the doctrine of their Master over all creation—the Kingship of God over all the works of His own hands—the Throne of God and His right to sit upon that Throne. On the other hand, there is no doctrine more hated by worldings, no truth of which they have made such a football, as the great, stupendous, but yet most certain doctrine of the Sovereignty of the infinite Jehovah. Men will allow God to be everywhere except on His throne. They will allow Him to be in His workshop to fashion worlds and make stars. They will allow Him to be in His almonry to dispense His alms and bestow His bounties. They will allow Him to sustain the earth and bear up the pillars thereof, or light the lamps of heaven, or rule the waves of the ever-moving ocean; but when God ascends His throne, His creatures then gnash their teeth. And we proclaim an *enthroned* God, and His right to do as He wills with His own, to dispose of His creatures as *He* thinks well, without consulting them in the matter; then it is that we are hissed and execrated, and then it is that men turn a deaf ear to us, for God on His throne is not the God they love. But it is God upon the throne that we love to preach. It is God upon His throne whom we trust.

“Whatsoever the Lord pleased, that did He in heaven, and in earth, in the seas, and all deep places” (Psa. 135:6). Yes, dear reader, such is the imperial Potentate revealed in Holy Writ. Unrivalled in majesty, unlimited in power, unaffected by anything outside Himself. But we are living in a day when even the most “orthodox” seem afraid to admit the proper Godhood of God. They say that to press the sovereignty of God excludes human responsibility; whereas human responsibility is based upon Divine sovereignty, and is the product of it.

"But our God is in the heavens: He hath done whatsoever *He* hath pleased" (Psa. 115:3). He *sovereignly* chose to place each of His creatures on that particular footing which seemed good in His sight. He created angels: some He placed on a conditional footing, others He gave an immutable standing before Him (I Tim. 5:21), making Christ their head (Col. 2:10). Let it not be overlooked that the angels which sinned (II Peter 2:5), were as much His creatures as the angels that sinned not. Yet God foresaw they *would* fall, nevertheless He placed them on a mutable, creature, conditional footing, and suffered them to fall, though He was not the Author of their sin.

So too, God *sovereignly* placed Adam in the garden of Eden upon a *conditional* footing. Had He so pleased, He could have placed him upon an unconditional footing; He could have placed him on a footing as firm as that occupied by the unfallen angels, He could have placed him upon a footing as sure and as immutable as that which His saints have in Christ. But, instead, He chose to set him in Eden on the basis of creature responsibility, so that he stood or fell according as he measured up or failed to measure up to his responsibility—obedience to his Maker. Adam stood accountable to God by the law which his Creator had given him. Here was responsibility, unimpaired responsibility, tested out under the most favorable conditions.

Now God did not place Adam upon a footing of conditional, creature responsibility, because it was right He *should* so place him. No, it was right because God did it. God did not even give creatures being because it was right for Him to do so, i. e., because He was under any obligations *to* create; but it was right because He did so. God is sovereign. His will is supreme. So far from God being under any law of "right," He is a law unto Himself, so that whatsoever *He* does is right. And woe be to the rebel that calls His sovereignty into question: "Woe unto him that striveth with his Maker. Let the potsherd strive with the potsherds of the earth. Shall the clay say to Him that fashioned it, What makest Thou?" (Isa. 45:9).

Again; the Lord God *sovereignly* placed Israel upon a *conditional* footing. The 19th, 20th and 24th chapters of Exodus afford a clear and full proof of this. They were placed under a covenant of works. God gave to them certain laws, and made national blessing for them depend upon their observance of His statutes. But Israel were stiffnecked and uncircumcised in heart. They rebelled against Jehovah, forsook His law, turned unto false gods, apostatized. In consequence, Divine judgment fell upon them, they were delivered into the hands of their enemies, dispersed abroad throughout the earth, and remain under the heavy frown of God's displeasure to this day.

It was God in the exercise of His high sovereignty that placed Satan and his angels, Adam, and Israel in their respective *responsible* positions. But so far from His sovereignty taking away responsibility from the creature, it was by the exercise thereof that He placed them on this conditional footing, under such responsibilities as He thought proper; by virtue of which sovereignty, He is seen to be God over all. Thus, there is perfect harmony between the sovereignty of God and the responsibility of the creature. Many have most foolishly said

that it is quite impossible to show where Divine sovereignty ends and creature accountability begins. *Here* is where creature responsibility begins: in the sovereign ordination of the Creator. As to His sovereignty, there is not and never will be any "end" to it!

Let us give further proofs that the responsibility of the creature is based upon God's sovereignty. How many things are recorded in Scripture which were right because God *commanded* them, and which would *not* have been right had He not so commanded! What right had Adam to "eat" of the trees of the Garden? The permission of his Maker (Gen. 2:16), without which he would have been a thief! What right had Israel to "borrow" of the Egyptians' jewels and raiment (Ex. 12:35)? None, unless Jehovah had authorized it (Ex. 3:22). What right had Israel to slay so many lambs for sacrifice? None, except that God commanded it. What right had Israel to kill off all the Canaanites? None, save as Jehovah had bidden them. What right has the husband to require submission from his wife? None, unless God had appointed it. And so we might go on. Human responsibility is *based upon* Divine sovereignty.

One more example of the exercise of God's absolute sovereignty. God placed His elect upon a *different* footing from Adam or Israel. He placed His elect upon an *unconditional* footing. In the Everlasting Covenant Jesus Christ was appointed their Head, took their responsibilities upon Himself, and wrought out a righteousness for them which is perfect, indefeasible, eternal. Christ was placed upon a conditional footing, for He was "made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law," only with this infinite difference: the others failed; He did not and could not. And *who* placed Christ upon that conditional footing? The Triune God. It was sovereign will that appointed Him, sovereign love that sent Him, sovereign authority that assigned Him His work.

Certain conditions were set before the Mediator. He was to be made in the likeness of sin's flesh; He was to magnify the law and make it honorable; He was to bear all the sins of all God's people in His own body on the tree; He was to make full atonement for them; He was to endure the outpoured wrath of God; He was to die and be buried. On the fulfillment of those conditions He was promised a reward: Isa. 53:10-12. He was to be the Firstborn among many brethren; He was to have a people who should share His glory. Blessed be His name forever, He fulfilled those conditions, and because He did so, the Father stands pledged, on solemn oath, to preserve through time and bless throughout eternity every one of those for whom His incarnate Son mediated. Because He took their place, they now share His. His righteousness is theirs, His standing before God is theirs, His life is theirs. There is not a single condition for them to meet, not a single responsibility for them to discharge in order to attain their eternal bliss. "By one offering He *hath perfected* forever them that are set apart" (Heb. 10:14).

Here then is the sovereignty of God openly displayed before all, displayed in the *different* ways in which He has dealt with His creatures. Part of the angels, Adam, Israel, were placed upon a conditional footing, continuance in blessing being made dependent upon *their* obedience and fidelity to God. But in sharp contrast from them, the "little flock"

(Luke 12:32), have been given an unconditional, an immutable standing in God's covenant, God's counsels, God's Son; their blessing being made dependent upon what *Christ* did for them. "The foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal: The Lord knoweth them that are His" (II Tim. 2:19). The foundation on which God's elect stand is a perfect one: nothing can be added to it, nor anything taken from it (Eccl. 3:14). Here, then, is the highest and grandest display of the absolute sovereignty of God. Verily, He *has* "mercy on whom He will have mercy, and whom He will He hardeneth" (Rom. 9:18).

From The Attributes of God by Arthur W. Pink

Personal Notes

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal blue or grey ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

