

Subject: Who Is Really in Charge?

Scripture: Daniel 4:34-37

King Nebuchadnezzar learned one of the most important lessons in life. He learned that there is a King much higher than he was and this King was really in charge of things. He learned that God is supreme and sovereign over all. He learned that God is in control and able to do whatever He pleases, whenever He pleases, however He pleases, and with whomever He pleases. He is absolutely free to think and do what He wants and no one can stop Him or question Him. He can't be controlled by anyone or anything else. He can't be manipulated or managed. He's not going to retire or resign. He can't be impeached. He can't be voted out because He wasn't voted in. God is on His throne. This is a message to remind us that God is supreme and sovereign. He is the supreme ruler of heaven and earth and He is in control of all things. If that's true, how do we reconcile that with other things in the world?

- If God is in control, why does He allow sin and suffering?
- If God is in control, are we responsible for our actions?
- If God is in control, why do we need to pray about things?
- If God is in control, why do we witness and share the Gospel?

1. Extent of God's control

***Psalms 115:1-3**¹ Not unto us, O LORD, not unto us, but unto thy name give glory, for thy mercy, and for thy truth's sake. ² Wherefore should the heathen say, Where is now their God? ³ But our God is in the heavens: he hath done whatsoever he hath pleased.*

- a. God is in control at all times (past, present, and future)
- b. God is in control in all places (heaven and earth and everywhere in His universe)
The false gods of the world were often thought to be local gods with local control.
- c. God is in control of all things (big things and little things)
***Proverbs 21:1** The king's heart is in the hand of the LORD, as the rivers of water: he turneth it whithersoever he will.* In Bible times kings were typically absolute tyrants. Their word was law. But God was able to change the hearts of the most powerful people on earth. ***Proverbs 16:33** The lot is cast into the lap; but the whole disposing thereof is of the LORD.* There is no such thing as luck or chance. Jesus said, "Ye shall know the truth and the truth will make you free." You need to be free from fear and silly superstitions.
- d. God is in control of all circumstances (good and bad) – ***Romans 8:28** And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.* All things work out for good because God is working them for our good.

The sovereignty of God is a soft pillow to lay our troubled head. We can lie down at night and sleep because we know God is in control. ***Psalms 121:1-4** I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help. My help cometh from the LORD, which made heaven and earth. He will not suffer thy foot to be moved: he that keepeth thee will not slumber. Behold, he that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep.*

2. Examples of God's control

- a. **God is in control of the physical world** – God spoke and everything was made. He controls the seas and the stars. *Job 38:11 And said, Hitherto shalt thou come, but no further: and here shall thy proud waves be stayed? Psalms 135:5-6⁵ For I know that the LORD is great, and that our Lord is above all gods. ⁶ Whatsoever the LORD pleased, that did he in heaven, and in earth, in the seas, and all deep places.* God is sovereign over the laws of nature. He made these laws and maintains them. Sometimes God works outside the normal course of these laws to perform miracles. In working miracles God shows that He is not limited by the laws He ordained.
- b. **God is in control of the political world** – God controls the events of human history. It has been said that “History is His story.” *Acts 17:24-27 God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands; Neither is worshipped with men's hands, as though he needed any thing, seeing he giveth to all life, and breath, and all things; And hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation; That they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him, and find him, though he be not far from every one of us:* He determines the boundaries of nations and empires and the rise and fall of leaders. Nebuchadnezzar understood this.
- c. **God is in control of the spiritual world** – God is in control of the angels. Even Satan and his demons are subject to His limits and restraints. In the book of Job, God told Satan what he could and could not do to Job and his family. God is in control of the plan of redemption. From beginning to end, God has everything planned and works out all the details. God the Father planned our redemption. Christ came to earth to live and die for us; He purchased our redemption. The Holy Spirit applies redemption to those who are saved. Have you thought about all the details of how Christ came to save us?

Christ was born at God's chosen time. *Galatians 4:4 But when the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law.*

Christ was born at God's chosen place. *Micah 5:2 But thou Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting.*

Christ was crucified in God's chosen time and place. *Acts 2:23 Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain.*

Christ rose from the dead in God's chosen time, just as He said He would. Then He ascended back to heaven, and He is coming back in God's chosen way. *Acts 2:11 Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven.*

3. Expectation of God's control

If God is in control of all things as the Bible teaches, then we can expect whatever happens in our world and in our lives is under His control. The sovereignty of God is a soft pillow to lay your head on. God is in control and He never makes a mistake. We can rest in that.

If we are going to expect that God is in control of everything we have to learn that and be reminded of that. The world won't teach you that or remind you of that. We have to learn that be reminded over and over as we read and study God's Word, and we see it on every page.

We also remember this as we pray the way Jesus taught us: "Thy kingdom come, thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven."

The real issue is this, are you willing for God to be in control of your life?

It means you are willing to obey Christ's command: Take up your cross and follow me.

It means you are willing to say, "Here is my life, take it and use it for your glory today and always."

This is why we worship. We come to present ourselves as a living sacrifice in obedience and love.

This is why we have our morning devotional time. We come to acknowledge God's control over us and submit ourselves to live by His guidance and for His glory.