

Psalm 29 – The Omnipotent God

Introduction -- The doctrine of the sovereignty of God is often seen as perplexing and therefore has resulted in a number of erroneous views. One of the first is that if God is sovereign, then man cannot be considered guilty of sin and be sent to hell. God controls all and no man can do anything without His permission. The second view is that God's sovereignty is only in terms of the life of a believer. He is not sovereign over evil and evil men. That domain belongs to Satan who is the prince of this world. The third view is that God's sovereignty is not absolute in that man is still held accountable for his own actions. Therefore when man sins, God is just and right to send man to hell.

The doctrine of the sovereignty of God is definitely one of the best and most comforting doctrines in the whole Bible. This doctrine means that God is totally and absolutely sovereign over all things. Nothing on earth happens without God's permission. Every raindrop, beam of sunshine and every wave of the ocean cannot fall, shine and move without God's permission. Every bacteria and virus is in God's sovereign control. Satan and his demons cannot do one thing that is not within the permission and will of God. This includes every fish, bird and beast and human being! The child of God has nothing to fear on this earth as he serves His heavenly Father. If he has to die for the faith, it is his heavenly Father who has allowed it to take place. If he has to be called home to glory via a disease, he has to continue to trust because his heavenly Father who has allowed it. The enemies of God cannot hurt one hair on the head of every child of God without His permission.

This sovereignty of God does not at all mean that man is not accountable for his actions. Every creature of cognitive will, such as angelic beings (fallen or not) and human beings, is accountable for every deed he does. God is sovereign but it does not mean that man or angels are like robots, not able to exercise self will. They will be held accountable for every motive, thought and action on this earth. The longer they live on this earth, the more they will have to answer to the Lord.

This doctrinal truth is very aptly summarized in **Acts 4:23-31** (KJV), "*And being let go, they went to their own company, and reported all that the chief priests and elders had said unto them. 24 And when they heard that, they lifted up their voice to God with one accord, and said, Lord, thou art God, which hast made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all that in them is: 25 Who by the mouth of thy servant David hast said, Why did the heathen rage, and the people imagine vain things? 26 The kings of the earth stood up, and the rulers were gathered together against the Lord, and against his Christ. 27 For of a truth against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod, and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together, 28 For to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done. 29 And now, Lord, behold their threatenings: and grant unto thy servants, that with all boldness they may speak thy word, 30 By stretching forth thine hand to heal; and that signs and wonders may be done by the name of thy holy*

child Jesus. 31 And when they had prayed, the place was shaken where they were assembled together; and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and they spake the word of God with boldness."

This was David's understanding of God's sovereignty when he penned this psalm.

I. **Omnipotence of God in Believers' Praises -- 29:1-2** – Of all the human beings on earth, only God's children can see and understand God's sovereignty. Sinful man is blind and dead in his own sins. He cannot see even if he wanted too. He will not praise God for His sovereignty. He denies the presence of God. He replaces God with idols and with all forms of evil, including the evil of atheism which is the root cause of the theory of evolution. These evils are propounded by so-called great men of science and what-not who are nothing but fools. God says that only a fool will say that there is no God! David was no fool! He praised God. He called all believers throughout the ages and continents to praise God and to praise the sovereignty of God! He began by using the imperative in the first word, "Give." He called all believers to give unto the LORD. He deliberately identified the person of focus by mentioning Him first. It is unto the LORD and not to anyone else. It is not to the king or to the high priest of Israel. It is to the LORD alone. The use of the name "the LORD" is to emphasize the covenantal relationship the people of God had with their God. This implies an intimate and personal relationship that the believer has with the LORD and vice versa. He knows his LORD! Then David identified the ones he commanded as "O ye mighty." Literally, the phrase means "sons of great ones." They were the ones who had lived successfully and conquered their enemies. They were victorious in their life experiences as they lived for God. To emphasize the command, David used the verb "give" with the same imperatival strength the second time. The verb has the idea of "to ascribe." The name of "the LORD" is also repeated for emphasis, like the verb, "give."

All believers were commanded by David to ascribe to the LORD glory and strength. Glory means praise, splendour and honour. This is followed by the word "strength" which has the idea of boldness and power. The LORD alone deserves every believer's praises. The believer's ability to live rightly is not from his own strength but the LORD. The LORD gives him life and strength to generate wealth. He alone gives to man the ability to serve, think and to speak. Everything that God's people do is because of the LORD's enabling. His ability to understand God's truth is because of the salvation God gave to him in Christ. His spiritual life is a gift from God. His hope in Christ and all that his mind is able to understand, that impacts all his relationships on earth, are gifts from God. The protection and victory over the evil one in the face of temptations are from the LORD. His strength to fight the good fight of faith originates from and is sustained by the LORD. It is therefore only logical that the believer ascribes to God, i.e. gives back to God, all that God has given to him. His very existence is a gift from the LORD!

Verse 2 (synonymous parallelism) -- To further drive home his point, David used the verb "give" for the third time (same tense and voice). Ascribe to the LORD the glory that is due to His name. What is in a name? A name is everything to God. It might not be so for many people, but to God the name means the person's entire being. Who the person really is in God's eyes is in his name alone. Take the name "Judas". It immediately brings to mind someone who is a traitor. The name "Jonah" infers all that is bad and is associated with calamities. The Name "Jesus Christ" is the Name above every other Name. It is at the Name that every knee will bow and every mouth will confess that He is Lord. This is the Name that saves man from his sin, death and hell! Names are always very important, more so when it comes to God's Name. Praise and honour is due to the Name of God. All the names of God are to be honoured. Each and every one of them has great significance. The name "God Almighty" points to His omnipotence. The Name, "I am that I am", points to His eternity. To praise God and His Name must mean something to the believer such that it is not merely head knowledge but a genuine expression of his heartfelt acknowledgement of what God has done in his life because of that Name. When God said that He is almighty for the first time in Genesis 17:1, God caused the womb of Sarah that was once dead, to be brought back to life so that she could have a son named Isaac. God's Name must be meaningful to every believer who has tasted His goodness and mercy through Christ Jesus. The hymns sung must portray the names of God in the right way for believers to praise.

This brings us to the parallel line which describes how the believer is to worship the LORD in the beauty of His holiness. To give glory and honour to the LORD's Name is the same as worshipping Him in the beauty of His holiness. When the children of God praise Him by stating God's many Names as revealed in the Bible, God is honoured and worshipped. This is worshipping the LORD in the beauty of His holiness. The LORD alone is exalted and no one else! His name alone is magnified, no other name. The omnipotence of God is proclaimed through the praises of every believer.

II. Omnipotence of God in Creation – 29:3-10 – Man is surrounded by the evidence of God's sovereignty, if only he would see. The omnipotence of God is seen in creation. Verses 3 to 10 describe the power and glory of God in His creation. This power is seen in the voice of God. He speaks and all things are done according to what He says. By His spoken voice, the heavens and the earth came into being and all that in them is. "**3** *The voice of the LORD is upon the waters: the God of glory thundereth: the LORD is upon many waters.*" (synthetic parallelism) – By looking at the oceans, believers hear the voice of God. How the waves and the oceans are contained! There are times when God demonstrates His power and what uncontrolled waters can do! Man can only watch helplessly and tremble and hide. Tsunamis are a case in point. God controls the limit of every wave. When God commands and the storms appear, the oceans dance, and anything that is in these oceans is tossed about like a cork in an ocean. It helplessly bobs up and down!

"4 The voice of the LORD is powerful; the voice of the LORD is full of majesty. 5 The voice of the LORD breaketh the cedars; yea, the LORD breaketh the cedars of Lebanon. 6 He maketh them also to skip like a calf; Lebanon and Sirion like a young unicorn." – The power of the LORD is seen up in the mountains of Lebanon. By His voice the cedars were broken. The thunders sent by the LORD and the lightning and great wind can split the great and tall cedars. When they are broken they fall to the ground and roll down the mountains. Earthquakes can cause these cedars to tremble and shake violently. When they shake and tumble down the mountainside, it appears as if they are "skipping." Sirion is a peak of Lebanon. A young unicorn, like the calf, will prance around. The unicorn is probably extinct today. It is a strong animal but exactly what it looks like no one knows today. These tall and majestic cedars so high up in the mountains are regarded by the LORD as nothing when His voice speaks, and they can break and tumble down!

"7 The voice of the LORD divideth the flames of fire. 8 The voice of the LORD shaketh the wilderness; the LORD shaketh the wilderness of Kadesh. 9 The voice of the LORD maketh the hinds to calve, and discovereth the forests: and in his temple doth every one speak of his glory. 10 The LORD sitteth upon the flood; yea, the LORD sitteth King for ever." – The LORD divideth the flames of fire means that the LORD uses the flames of fire to divide things. This would include the lightning from the heavens that He uses to destroy great forests. The wilderness of Kadesh is a terrible desert-like wilderness. The LORD shakes it using an earthquake and it trembles. When forests are destroyed by the LORD through forest fires that can be caused by lightning, even the hinds are so fearful that they calve, i.e. their babies are born prematurely. All those who are in God's place of worship speak of God's power and glory. There was no temple in David's time. This could very well refer to the Temple that is in heaven where the saints in heaven and the angelic beings will tell of His glory. The LORD sits in total and absolute control over the flood that is upon the earth. Every wave that brings any flood to any area is in God's control as the picture of being seated depicts. The one in authority is God almighty!

He is the LORD who sits as King forever. There will be no one who can unseat God. He will be in total control forever.

III. Omnipotence of God in Believers' Life – 29:11 – The life of the believer has to be a life of total and complete trust. When the LORD demonstrates His power and might in all of His creation, the world would explain it away as "natural disasters" from "mother earth". They fail to see the power of the almighty God. This must not be so for God's children. The LORD will give them the strength to do His will and work so that they will not be weary in well doing. He will lift up their tired arms and put strength into their tired bodies. The strength and power that He demonstrates in the destruction of the earth, to show mankind how great and powerful He is, will now become the strength and power that helps His children to serve Him faithfully to the very end of their days. Just as His children give glory

and honour to the LORD, the LORD in turn gives strength to His children to do His work. Children of God who see and know the LORD experientially through the strength they receive from Him, will be able to sincerely fulfil what David commanded in verses 1 and 2 of this psalm. They will do so wholeheartedly and with great joy.

Conclusion – Praise is always comely to every believer's soul. It is a reflection of his walk with the LORD. The one who fails to praise with his whole heart is the one who fails to live a life with his whole heart unto the LORD. The almighty power of God comforts and strengthens the believer's heart and life to resolve to serve God faithfully no matter what evil men may do. His LORD is sovereign. He knows that. This truth keeps him faithful and true to his LORD and he has much to praise the LORD for, with all his might. The almighty LORD is always there for His children. Look up and continue to trust in Him no matter what you are going through in life. Your heavenly Father is always in absolute control. Do not fret, only praise Him. Amen.