**God Without Limits**

Talk 8: God’s Omnipotence

**Introduction**

*“The ignorance of providence is the ultimate of all miseries; the highest blessedness lies in the knowledge of it.” John Calvin, Institutes of the Christian Religion, Chapter XVI*

**1. God is our rightful Lord**

“The Lord is King”

10 “Praise be to you, LORD,

 the God of our father Israel,

 from everlasting to everlasting.

11 Yours, LORD, is the greatness and the power

 and the glory and the majesty and the splendor,

 for everything in heaven and earth is yours.

 Yours, LORD, is the kingdom;

 you are exalted as head over all. (1 Chronicles 29:10-11, NIV)

Revelation 4:11 “You are worthy, our Lord and God,

 to receive glory and honour and power,

 for you created all things,

 and by your will they were created

 and have their being.” (NIV)

Isaiah 45:9   “Woe to him who strives with him who formed him,

 a pot among earthen pots!

 Does the clay say to him who forms it, ‘What are you making?’

 or ‘Your work has no handles’? (NIV)

Psalm 115:3 Our God is in the heavens; he does all that he pleases. (ESV)

**2. God is our powerful and good Lord**

1. *God rules over creaturely things*

Psalm 104:24-29

Matthew 10:29 Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? Yet not one of them will fall to the ground apart from the will of your Father. (NIV 1984)

1. *God rules over big things*

Psalm 33:10 The LORD foils the plans of the nations;

 he thwarts the purposes of the peoples.

Proverbs 21:1    The king’s heart is a stream of water in the hand of the LORD;

 he turns it wherever he will. (ESV)

1. *God rules over unpredictable things*

Proverbs 16:33 The lot is cast into the lap,

 but its every decision is from the LORD.

1. *God rules over bad things*

‘Micro-level’ questions and ‘macro-level’ questions (John Piper)

Some ‘macro-level’ answers…

**Job**

**Joseph**

18 His brothers then came and threw themselves down before him. “We are your slaves,” they said. 19  But Joseph said to them, “Don’t be afraid. Am I in the place of God? 20 You intended to harm me, but God intended it for good to accomplish what is now being done, the saving of many lives. (Genesis 50:18-20, NIV)

**Jesus**

Acts 2:23 This man was handed over to you by God’s deliberate plan and foreknowledge; and you, with the help of wicked men, put him to death by nailing him to the cross. (NIV)

Acts 4:27   Indeed Herod and Pontius Pilate met together with the Gentiles and the people of Israel in this city to conspire against your holy servant Jesus, whom you anointed. 28 They did what your power and will had decided beforehand should happen. (NIV)

*“O what a mercy to see all power in heaven and earth exercised by him who was nailed to the cross for sinners.” John Newton, Letters (More), p80*

*“It is often thought that suffering or evil resist or challenge God’s power. The Bible’s logic is that the sinful world provides a forum in which God displays all the more clearly the reality of his omnipotence.” Peter Sanlon, Simply God, pp106-107*

*“when the world appears to be aimlessly tumbled about, the Lord is everywhere at work.” Institutes, Chapter XVII, p224*

God Moves in a Mysterious Way, William Cowper:

*1 God moves in a mysterious way*

*His wonders to perform.*

*He plants his footsteps in the sea*

*And rides upon the storm.*

*2 You fearful saints, fresh courage take;*

*The clouds you so much dread*

*Are big with mercy and shall break*

*In blessings on your head.*

*3 His purposes will ripen fast,*

*Unfolding ev'ry hour.*

*The bud may have a bitter taste,*

*But sweet will be the flow'r.*

**Question: But what about free will?**

Proverbs 16:9 In their hearts humans plan their course,

 but the LORD establishes their steps. (NIV)

*“We can know* that*, not* how*, God’s sovereignty and human responsibility are perfectly consistent.” Michael Horton*

**Conclusion**

**Further Resources**

* MYC 2018 Talks on ‘The Sovereignty of God’ (available on our website)
* *Big God,* Orlando Saer (short and helpful book aimed at university students)
* *Evangelism and the Sovereignty of God,* J I Packer (why speak the gospel if God is sovereign?)
* *Chosen by God,* R C Sproul (a more thorough explanation of the sovereignty of God)
* *Providence,* John Piper (a 700-page epic; available to download for free through the Desiring God website)