

**THE SUFFICIENCY OF GOD**

*Scripture Reading: 11 Corinthians 3:5*

"The Lord is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer; my God, my strength, in whom I will trust; my buckler, and the horn of my salvation, and my high tower" (Psalms 18:2). Our day-to-day existence consistently demonstrates to us how fragile and vulnerable we are by virtue of our own weakness—both physical and emotional. Cries of desperation fill the air constantly, suicides abound, self destruction is a constant ingredient of today's social experience. How sad it is that so few victims of life's discouragements are responsive and/or receptive to the only escape from the bonds of their ineptitude—the source of all strength. Having once accepted by grace through faith the gift of salvation by the shed blood of the Lord Jesus Christ, we can confidently declare with the Apostle, "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me" (Philippians 4:13).

The Apostle Paul pled with the Lord three times that he might be free of his 'thorn in the flesh'. "For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me. And He said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee" (II Corinthians 12:8, 9a). Paul's resulting testimony: "When I am weak, then am I strong" (II Corinthians 12:10b). We need the sufficiency of God because we are not sufficient in and of ourselves. "Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men; and the weakness of God is stronger than men" (I Corinthians 1:25).

"And such trust have we through Christ to God-ward: not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think any thing as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God" (II Corinthians 3:4, 5).

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## THE ALMIGHTY GOD

*Scripture Reading: Revelation 11:17*

When the Lord appeared to Abram to establish His covenant, His self-identification left no possible doubt as to the incontestability of His omnipotence: "I am the Almighty God" (Genesis 17:1). Admonishing Israel, God said, "The Lord your God is God of gods, and Lord of Lords, a great God, a mighty, and a terrible, which regardeth not persons, nor taketh reward" (Deuteronomy 10:17). The psalmist declared, "The mighty God, even the Lord, hath spoken, and called the earth from the rising of the sun unto the going down thereof" (Psalms 50:1).

The limitlessness of His power and authority are beyond our comprehension. But the fact of its verity is established by the conviction of faith. Just as we cannot understand even the visible miracles of His creation, neither can our mortal minds absorb the components of His invisible Person. "God is a Spirit: and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth" (John 4:24). "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen" (Hebrews 11:1). Thus the only way in which we can recognize and honor God's infinite power, is by faith.

The complexity of the character of God need not baffle our minds. If we believe that He is what He claims to be, then we know that there is none other in whom we can place our trust. Those who would submit God to laboratory analysis in order to determine whether to become recipients of His grace, such skeptics would be well advised to abandon their self-righteous quest, lest they find themselves eternally doomed. "...Hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world?" (I Corinthians 1:20) "...Who art thou that replies against God?" (Romans 9:20).

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## THE FOREKNOWLEDGE OF GOD

*Scripture Reading: Isaiah 42:9*

"Behold, the former things have come to pass, and new things do I declare: before they spring forth I tell you of them." As history has unfolded over the centuries, the certainty of God's foreknowledge becomes more and more evident. Prophecy is declared, and it then will, in God's own time, be fulfilled. "Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure" (Isaiah 46:9, 10). If God wills, it shall be done!

Christ came according to prophecy, and offered Himself a sacrifice for sin. Peter, speaking on the day of Pentecost, confronted his listeners with the following words of condemnation: "Ye men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by Him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know: Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain" (Acts 2:22, 23).

Comprehension of God's foreknowledge is, of course, beyond our intellectual powers. There is nothing that He has not foreknown; how can we conceive of this! But we know it is so because He tells us in His Word that it is so. All is in accordance with His perfect plan and purpose. And well may we rejoice in our portion therein, who have received by grace through faith the righteousness of Him who loved us. "For whom He did foreknow, He also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son..." (Romans 8:29a).

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**THE UNCHANGEABLE GOD***Scripture Reading: Malachi 3:6*

God made the very clear and concise affirmation of His immutability: "For I am the Lord, I change not..." That He never changes is undeniable. His manner of dealing with His people, however, does change. Of greatest interest and importance to us today in this regard is the temporary setting aside of God's chosen people Israel because of their disobedience—important to us because "through their fall salvation is come unto the Gentiles... Blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in" (Romans 11:11, 25b).

"Wherefore remember, that ye being in time past Gentiles in the flesh, who are called Uncircumcision by that which is called the Circumcision in the flesh made by hands, that at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world: but now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ" (Ephesians 2:11-13).

Such is our position, we who are saved by God's grace through faith in the shed blood of His Son under the dispensation of the grace of God. "For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus. And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise." (Galatians 3:26-29). "For through Him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father" (Ephesians 2:18).

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*Notes:***THE INDWELLING GOD***Scripture Reading: II Corinthians 6:15, 16*

"What concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? For ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people." When God indwells the believer, He does not share the domain of His temple. He will not enter until we have become His very own by virtue of our having received by faith His righteousness. By the same token, Satan cannot enter, once we have become the temple of God.

How totally we are in the constant watchcare of God is clearly seen as we recognize that His complete personality is present within us. Our Apostle tells of his willingness to suffer "...for His Body's sake, which is the Church: whereof I am made a minister, according to the dispensation of God which is given to me for you, to fulfil the Word of God; even the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to His saints: to whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory" (Colossians 1:24b-27).

"Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's" (I Corinthians 6:19, 20). Paul is well advised to deliver the plea of Romans 12:1—"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service."

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## OUR SOVEREIGN GOD

*Scripture Reading: Daniel 4:35*

“And all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing: and He doeth according to His will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay His hand, or say unto Him, What doest thou?”

To say that God is sovereign is to say that no more can be said of Him but to amplify the fact of His supremacy over all. “Thine, O Lord, is the greatness, and the power, and the glory, and the victory, and the majesty: for all that is in the heaven and in the earth is thine; thine is the kingdom, O Lord, and thou art exalted as head above all” (I Chronicles 29:11). We poor mortals in our inadequate scope of understanding have a problem with accepting many of God’s actions without qualification. We reason that He would surely have preserved the original perfection of His flawless creation if He is truly sovereign.

In view of the above we are well advised to consider the words of our Apostle Paul. “O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out! For who hath known the mind of the Lord? Or who hath been His counsellor” (Romans 11:33, 34)? Shall we protest the declaration of God Himself as He affirmed to Moses, “I will have mercy upon whom I will have mercy” (Romans 9:15)? Throughout Scripture God reminds us of our inability to examine His judgments and determinations—our incapability to discern the purposes provoking His decisions. “For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts” (Isaiah 55:8, 9).

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## THE GOD OF WRATH

*Scripture Reading: Nahum 1:2-6*

“Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord” (Romans 12:19). And so He shall! “...When the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of His power” (II Thessalonians 1:7b-9). When that great day of His wrath finally comes, there will be no doubt as to the intensity of its execution. In the book of the Revelation of Jesus Christ, the vision of John is clear. He writes, “And I saw another sign in heaven, great and marvelous, seven angels having the seven last plagues; for in them is filled up the wrath of God” (Revelation 15:1).

John describes the final great preparation for the dispensing of God’s terrible vengeance. “And the temple was filled with smoke from the glory of God, and from His power; and no man was able to enter into the temple, till the seven plagues of the seven angels were fulfilled. And I heard a great voice out of the temple saying to the seven angels, Go your ways, and pour out the wrath of God upon the earth” (Revelation 15:8 - 16:1). Note the ‘grand finale’: “And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire” (Revelation 20:15). The Lord then speaks these words of finality: “Behold, I make all things new... IT IS DONE. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end” (Revelation 21:5, 6).

Having dispensed His love, mercy and grace to those who believed, and having poured out His wrath on those who denied Him, His perfect purpose was fulfilled.

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**THE GOD OF TRUTH**

*Scripture Reading: Deuteronomy 32:4*

The Apostle Paul wrote to his understudy Titus regarding "...the acknowledging of the truth which is after godliness; in hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began" (Titus 1:1a, 2). "...Yea, let God be found true, but every man a liar..." (Romans 3:4). Reliance upon the pure truthfulness of God must be without equivocation. "...Thou art inexcusable, O man, whosoever thou art that judges": for wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thyself; for thou that judgest doest the same things. But we are sure that the judgment of God is according to truth against them which commit such things" (Romans 2:1, 2).

"These six things doth the Lord hate: yea, seven are an abomination unto Him: A proud look, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood, an heart that deviseth wicked imaginations, feet that be swift in running to mischief, a false witness that speaketh lies, and he that soweth discord among brethren" (Proverbs 6:16-19). In the garden, Satan defied God with a lie (Genesis 3:1-5), and God sentenced him to destruction. Ananias and Sapphira lied to the Holy Spirit, and God struck them dead before all the church [Acts 5:1-10].

"The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld His glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth... And of His fulness have all we received, and grace for grace. For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ" (John 1:14, 16, 17). God's grace is inseparable from truth. Jesus declared to those who believed in faith, "Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" (John 8:32). His truth is marching on!

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