

God is the Ruler Yet

"I can't wait for this year to be over!" Remember? That was the collective cry when we neared the end of 2020. People were stressed out. We'd been hit by a pandemic, an associated economic crisis, a very contentious election season, social unrest, and rioting in the streets. Our expectation at the time was that 2021 *had* to be better. But here we are, well into 2022, and we're still dealing with a lot of the same old issues plus a few new ones. Recently, when I was stressing about something particularly worrisome in the news, the words of an old hymn came to mind:

This is my Father's world; O let me ne'er forget, that though the wrong seems oft so strong, God is the ruler yet... This is my Father's world; why should my heart be sad? The Lord is King, let the heavens ring. God reigns, let the earth be glad.

We shouldn't be surprised that bad stuff happens. In John 16:33, Jesus warned his disciples (which now includes us), *"In this world you will have trouble. But take heart; I have overcome the world."* This is a familiar verse, but what caught my attention this time, was that Jesus said this before He went to the cross, dying for our sins and rising again. He saw his all-important work here on earth as already accomplished – evil, sin, and death overcome, beaten.

Unfortunately, we don't usually view things through that eternal perspective. We tend to see only the current problems and pain, and not how they will be resolved God's way in God's timing. To our human eyes, "the wrong" may even appear to be winning, but only because we cannot yet fully grasp what was determined long ago: the ultimate victory belongs to God!

Even now, God reigns over the world and everything in it. That means that, ultimately, no earthly power controls your fate. Your health and family are not simply left subject to random chance or "luck." God is the one who can move mountains and hold back the tide. He is the only one strong enough to be your refuge and strength in every kind of trouble (Psalm 46:1).

None of the events of 2020 (or any other year) took our heavenly Father by surprise. He knew that the pandemic was coming and how the election would turn out. He knows your personal struggles too – past, present, and future. Through every minute of every one of those days, God is with you, and He is in control. If Jesus is your Lord and Savior, your eternity is safe in God's hands. *The Lord is King, let the heavens ring. God reigns, let the earth be glad!*

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