

“The Sovereignty of God”

Isaiah 40:12-31

Introduction:

My dad has cancer from smoking for years and years. A year ago when he was diagnosed he stopped smoking but the consequences of that long lived choice will play out in his remaining days.

Another part of dad’s life that I should tell you about is that he hasn’t been a faithful Christian for most of my life until a couple of years ago, before knowledge of the cancer, when he came to God. Now that he is a Christian and with a dreadful disease.

How will he accept his consequences of the choices he made earlier in life? Will he hold strong to his faith in God or will he lash out at Him in bitterness and anger?

We all find ourselves in life changing events. What will our response be? Will we pull away from God and His people, allowing ourselves to wither away slowly as a person with cancer might or will we with the depth of our soul trust in the living God.

How do you view your position in life? Is your glass half full or half empty. The way we see and understand the things that happen around us really determines the path we will take. For example, if we feel the world hates us then we will live withdrawn lives with very little hope. If we hold our hope in a faithful God and lean not on our own understanding surely God will be more able to work through us.

Isaiah is a wonderful book. The first 39 chapters or so is God crying out to his people to repent and the pronouncement of judgments to come. Israel had time and time again turned away from God to basically worship their own desires and the consequences of that will bring them into Babylonian captivity for seventy years.

But, how will they respond under God’s discipline? Will they throw their hands up and quit or recognize that God is in control and that He still loves them and is willing to help them. Basically they, like us today, have a choice about how they will view God.

TS. This morning we are going to be talking about the fact that God is sovereign and sovereign means that his is stand alone above all powers and authorities, He answers to no-one and is only accountable to Himself. How we see and understand God really provides the platform for how we live

Lesson:

I. God is larger than our understanding -Read Isaiah 40:12

“Who has measured the waters in the hollow of His hand,
And marked off the heavens by the span,
And calculated the dust of the earth by the measure,
And weighed the mountains in a balance
And the hills in a pair of scales?”

-What laboratory is big enough? Who could possibly do such incredible things?

- Who among us has a big enough measuring cup to measure the oceans?
- Who could mark off the heavens by the span
- Who could know the exact amount of dust on our planet

-The answer is clear, no-one in the human sense.

-Only God in all his might could peel the mountains up and weigh them.
Do you know, can you wrap your mind around that fact that God knows
How much the Rocky Mountains weigh. Right down to the gram.

-He knows how many quarts of water fill the ocean and He knows how
many bags of sand are on the earth.

-Like a view of earth from outer space, He sees the big picture.

-And He knows you too. Your not part of some herd he checks on once in
a while between golf games. God intimately knows your heart. He
knows your strength and your weakness and He has a plan for you.

*Will you trust the Sovereign God?

II. God doesn't need instructions from anyone -Read Isaiah 40:13-14

“Who has directed the Spirit of the LORD,
Or as His counselor has informed Him?
With whom did He consult and who gave Him understanding?
And who taught Him in the path of justice and taught Him knowledge
And informed Him of the way of understanding?”

-When we are trying to get the facts about something we usually want to bypass
the middle man and go right to the source, right?

-These questions are really statements, saying that God is the source of truth. He doesn't get advice or counsel from anyone or anywhere at any time, because He is all knowing and perceiving, and All Mighty.

-Paul writes in Romans 11:33-36

“Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and unfathomable His ways! 34 For WHO HAS KNOWN THE MIND OF THE LORD, OR WHO BECAME HIS COUNSELOR? 35 Or WHO HAS FIRST GIVEN TO HIM THAT IT MIGHT BE PAID BACK TO HIM AGAIN? 36 For from Him and through Him and to Him are all things. To Him be the glory forever. Amen.”

-Is it true that sometimes we want to instruct God. Give Him a little direction somehow inform Him so He will have all the facts. If God only knew type thinking.

-Well God does knowand everything at that!

-Isaiah 55:8-9

"For My thoughts are not your thoughts,
Nor are your ways My ways," declares 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.”

*Will you trust the Sovereign God?

III. God is greater than the nations -Read Isaiah 40:15-17

“Behold, the nations are like a drop from a bucket,
And are regarded as a speck of dust on the scales;
Behold, He lifts up the islands like fine dust.
Even Lebanon is not enough to burn,
Nor its beasts enough for a burnt offering.
All the nations are as nothing before Him,
They are regarded by Him as less than nothing and meaningless.”

-During the 1970's when I was a young boy the cold war with Russia was really hot and we as a nation was scared. Scared of what they might do. Scared of a mushroom cloud.

-But Church, God is over Russia and all the other nations of the world including us. Nothing will come to pass except that which God grants approval for his will.

-The nations are nothing before the living God except instruments to use at His disposal.

*Will you trust the Sovereign God?

IV. God is above any comparison-Read Isaiah 40:18-20

“To whom then will you liken God?
Or what likeness will you compare with Him?
As for the idol, a craftsman casts it,
A goldsmith plates it with gold,
And a silversmith fashions chains of silver.
He who is too impoverished for such an offering
Selects a tree that does not rot;
He seeks out for himself a skillful craftsman
To prepare an idol that will not totter.”

-What shall we compare God to? How shall we describe him? People for many thousands of years refuse to believe in what they can't see. They fashion for themselves idols of stone and wood. But not us Americans, we are not that vain...are we? We wouldn't try to find our happiness and our meaning in temporal things like money and possessions, would we?

-What a sad reality that many times we try to shape God from our understanding. Our God is an awesome God and His fullness can only be imagined to some small extent. His glory is so great that we can't even look on it and live.

*Will you trust the Sovereign God?

V. God understands the big picture-Read Isaiah 40:21-22

“Do you not know? Have you not heard?
Has it not been declared to you from the beginning?
Have you not understood from the foundations of the earth?
It is He who sits above the circle of the earth,
And its inhabitants are like grasshoppers,
Who stretches out the heavens like a curtain
And spreads them out like a tent to dwell in.”

- Have you ever seen a picture on TV of the earth from outer space?
- Sometimes I think the world evolves around me but there is a much larger picture.
- God sees this big picture and knows how all the pieces fit together. But, many times we live our lives trying to make the pieces work out to our advantage and forget to let the master place us as he desires.

*Will you trust the Sovereign God?

VI. God appoints the rulers of the earth-Read Isaiah 40:23-25

“He it is who reduces rulers to nothing,
 Who makes the judges of the earth meaningless.
 Scarcely have they been planted,
 Scarcely have they been sown,
 Scarcely has their stock taken root in the earth,
 But He merely blows on them, and they wither,
 And the storm carries them away like stubble.
 To whom then will you liken Me
 that I would be his equal?" says the Holy One.”

-Israel in captivity may have wondered who was really in control.
 Nebuchadnezzar seemed to be running the show, but he wasn't really.

-Romans 13:1-2

“Every person is to be in subjection to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those which exist are established by God. 2 Therefore whoever resists authority has opposed the ordinance of God; and they who have opposed will receive condemnation upon themselves.”

-If in the future our country is captured by another nation will we resign ourselves to the idea that somehow God has lost his foothold, or will we look to and put our trust in a Sovereign God.

*Will you trust the Sovereign God?

VII. God authority seen in the heavens-Read Isaiah 40:26

“Lift up your eyes on high
And see who has created these stars,
The One who leads forth their host by number,
He calls them all by name;
Because of the greatness of His might and the strength of His power,
Not one of them is missing.”

-My boys and I went on a camping trip to Colorado and there miles from the nearest town, out in the middle of no-where (cell phone had no bars) we could see so many stars it was incredible.

-Often times our eyes are looking downward. Maybe in some way we should remember that God is reaching to our chins to pull our eyes up to him.

-God knows each of these stars by name and He is the one that assigned these names. This is simply put authority. The name giver represents authority.

-How many times do we try to operate under the worlds authority or even our own.

*Will you trust the Sovereign God?

VIII. God doesn't become weary-Read Isaiah 40:27-30

“Why do you say, O Jacob, and assert, O Israel,
"My way is hidden from the LORD,
And the justice due me escapes the notice of my God"?
Do you not know? Have you not heard?
The Everlasting God, the LORD, the Creator of the ends of the earth
Does not become weary or tired.
His understanding is inscrutable.
He gives strength to the weary,
And to him who lacks might He increases power.
Though youths grow weary and tired,
And vigorous young men stumble badly,”

-At different times in life we have all probably felt alone. It is so easy to look around with the physical eyes and forget that God in the Spirit is there, much like the story of Elisha's Servant in 2 Kings 6

-Shall we be tempted to think that God is somehow behind a lead wall and forgot to bring his X-RAY vision?

-Let me tell you brethren that we cannot be hidden from our God. You can't run far enough away to escape his notice. He is intimately aware of your every move and sees everything in your life.

-He doesn't become weary and need a break

-He doesn't go off to take a nap and leave us unattended.

-Brethren you can take this to the bank....

-He is aware of your circumstance and is there for you.

*Will you trust the Sovereign God?

IX. **We must wait for Him**-Read Isaiah 40:31

“Yet those who wait for the LORD
Will gain new strength;
They will mount up with wings like eagles,
They will run and not get tired,
They will walk and not become weary.”

-Sometimes do we try to hurry God along and put Him into our time tables? We live in a world that just doesn't want to wait right? One of my biggest blessings in this life came from giving God control and curbing my own desires and waiting on Him. For waiting He blessed the hound out of me.

-I gained new strength

-I mounted up with wings like eagles.

-I ran and didn't get tired

-I wasn't weary anymore.

*Will you trust the Sovereign God?

Conclusion:

*Who shall we trust?

Proverbs 3:5

“Trust in the LORD with all your heart
And do not lean on your own understanding.”

Jeremiah 10:23 “I know, O LORD, that a man's way is not in himself,
Nor is it in a man who walks to direct his steps.”

Isaiah 55:9

“For as the heavens are higher than the earth,
So are My ways higher than your ways
And My thoughts than your thoughts.”

*Let's put our trust in God

Romans 8:28 “And we know that God causes all things to work
together for good to those who love God, to those
who are called according to His purpose.”

*Will you trust the Sovereign God?