

Monday, July 13, 2009

When the storms of life rage, do you look around longing for something strong and secure to “anchor” your soul? This week let’s consider this: God is SOVEREIGN in, over, through, before and after all events, all circumstances. The Sovereignty of God forms the rock solid foundation upon which all things exist and function: the universe, all natural laws, humanity, all human related events, etc.

We’re reading the Exodus account of God’s Sovereign rescue of the Hebrew people from Egyptian slavery. Today is Exodus 16...the remarkable account of God’s Sovereign PROVISION of daily bread for 2 million people in the desert. Read this chapter carefully friends. Do you notice the distorted complaints of the people in 16:3? Slaves don’t sit around eating “all the food we wanted”! Yet after many weeks in the desert...ah, there it is. Have you found your circumstances often shape your perspective on life? When life hurts...honestly now, do you find yourself doubting that God loves you, or God is interested in you, or maybe even that God exists? When life is going great, do you find yourself throwing a quick “thanks” to God and rushing off to enjoy the moment...giving little consideration to God’s involvement in your delight?

Link Exodus 3 with Exodus 16. “I AM” is the name God gave in answer to Moses’ legitimate question. While God had spoken repeatedly to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob...more than 400 years had passed. In the silence, the comfort of Egypt...the good times, had turned to bondage, and while the slaves were crying out to God, in truth many probably doubted God even existed. “I AM” is a name which simply means... “I exist eternally...no beginning or end, I simply AM”. “I AM more than all you will ever need, since I know your every need”! “I AM the origination of all...all truth, all that exists, all life.” Sovereignty begins with I AM! Do you know this ‘I AM God’? He created you!!

Tuesday, July 14, 2009

God’s Sovereignty is our “anchor for the soul” this week. Yesterday we considered God’s provision for His people as part of His Sovereign “watch care” over them. Today, Exodus 17 is our summer Scripture, one of my favorite chapters! In response to their desperate need for food, God provided a daily bread delivery (Manna, Ex. 16) which continued for 40 years! But you and I both know water is the greatest need in the desert! In Ex. 17, God demonstrated His Sovereign power by bringing water out of hard rock, for 2 million people and their animals!

That miracle evidently attracted the attention of a nomadic tribe, the Amalekites, who wanted that water spewing rock! The battle which ensued helps us recognize the PROTECTING aspect of God’s Sovereignty. Read Exodus 3 again carefully and watch for God’s explanation about His awareness of the slaves’ bondage misery and His plan to rescue them and provide for them. Note God assured Moses that Pharaoh would not be open to releasing the slaves, thus God would have to convince him through the power of the plagues. Do you see it? God’s Sovereign power is used to create our universe and life / to provide all that is needed daily for life / to protect from danger and even rescue in times of peril, etc.

Sovereignty means AUTHORITY! Authority, as we know, must be backed by power in order to be viewed as legitimate. God’s power is supreme...nothing compares, for His is All powerful. Sovereignty also requires complete understanding/knowledge, and God is “omniscient”. Sovereignty requires freedom to exercise unlimited power in any circumstance at any time. God has these attributes and rights as Creator and Sustainer of all! You will never be in a situation God doesn’t understand or is unchangeable by God. Exodus 16 & 17 provide us hope that God takes seriously our total dependence upon His Sovereignty in all aspects of life!

Wednesday, July 15, 2009

By my calculation, today is the midpoint of summer 2009! Take a moment and reflect back...what are the top two or three highlights of your summer thus far? What have you learned, how have you grown, how have you helped someone else? *What difference have you made in our world in the past 52 days?* This week we’re considering God’s Sovereignty as a great Anchor for Your Soul. Have you considered God is very purposeful, and thus His Sovereignty (Supreme Authority) is exercised in our world in line with His overall Purpose and Plan, not haphazardly or ‘randomly’. What is God’s purpose? As we track with the story of Exodus, have you considered WHY God rescued the slaves? No, it wasn’t just because He felt sorry for their pain, nor was it because everyone deserves to live life in abundance and freedom (there is no such guarantee in life). Consider these statements God made:

- Ex. 6:2-7 “I will take you as My own people, and I will be your God. Then you will know that I am the LORD your God.”

Do you see God’s sovereign purpose for the Israelites?

- Ex. 7:5 “And the Egyptians will know that I am the LORD when I stretch out My hand against Egypt and bring the Israelites out of it.”

Do you see God’s sovereign purpose that Egypt would know Him as the one true God? Now add these others... what do you see? Ex. 8:10, 22,23 / Ex. 9:13-16, 29 / 10:1,2 etc. Notice, the Hebrews were to explain to their children, the miracles of God’s deliverance of His people (Ex. 12:24-27 / 13:8). Also notice God alone deserves the praise and “glory”: Exodus 14:4, 17, 18,31! If you’ve read John Piper’s book “Dangerous Duty of Delight”, our summer reading book, these Exodus statements of God form the core of John’s concept...“God is most glorified when we are most satisfied in Him”. You will find great delight standing in awe of God! Now remember that tonight, begins our Summer Summit for all ages...an exciting learning journey through Romans. Don’t miss it friends...6:30pm. It will be well worth your time!

Thursday, July 16, 2009

Today in our summer Scripture reading, Exodus 19 and 20 stand out in the Bible as one of the most significant passages of all time! Moses had led the 2 million rescued Hebrew slaves, plus many other 'tag alongs' (Ex. 12:38), to the same mountain where he first encountered God at the burning bush (Exodus 3). Remember God had promised that a sign of His Sovereignty over their entire escape process would be that "when you have brought the people out of Egypt, you will worship God on THIS mountain." (Ex. 3:12) So, here they are, all camped around the mountain...now what?

"then Moses went up to God, and the LORD called to him from the mountain..." (Ex. 19:3). I love that! Moses new the leadership role he had was way too big for him...leading 2 million grumbling slaves through the desert...oh my! Moses knew he could only survive in a daily dependence upon God's Sovereignty, so he scrambled up that mountain to meet with God and gain a fresh perspective. Grab that friends...how often do you do that, and where is your mountain to meet with God?

Note carefully what God told Moses to tell the people, Ex. 19:3-6. These words form a major pillar in the covenant relationship between God and Israel! It is paraphrased by God through Peter in speaking to Christians, 1 Peter 2:9,10. It's important to understand God's Sovereign declaration is: first the Hebrews and then ALL Christians are declared to be His "Treasured Possession". Why are we so valued by God? Consider 1 John 4:9,10; John 3:16-18; Romans 8:34-39. Now carefully consider the "God Culture" described for His covenant people in the rest of Exodus 19 & 20. See it as an invitation to live life as God designed life to be lived...not as a set of rules! Do you get it?

Friday, July 17, 2009

This week we've been considering the Sovereignty of God as seen in the Exodus story of God's deliverance of the Hebrew slaves. Our confidence in God's Authority over all things, at all times, in all places...should assure us of great confidence in any storm. Notice please, God's invitation to the Hebrews for a "covenant relationship" in Exodus 19:1-6 & chapter 20. What a wonderful way to live life, do you agree?

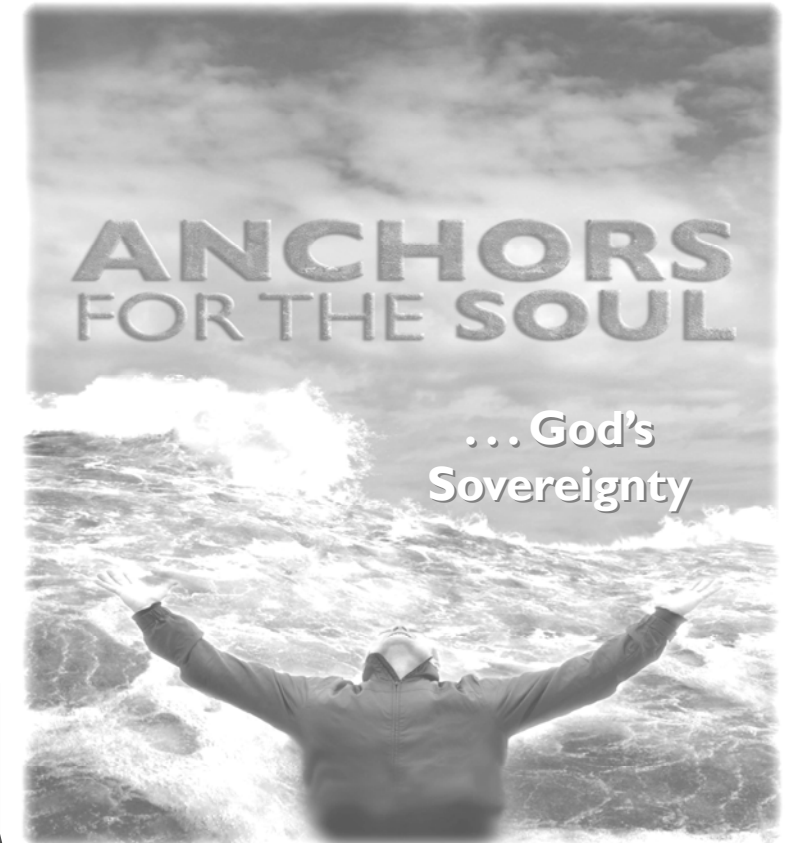
It's important to notice God ALWAYS invites people to relationship with Him, or to accept His truth, or to follow His guidance...God NEVER imposes Himself upon us! Therefore, please note Exodus 20:18-21, it is a very critical moment in human history. Never before had a people been invited to such a relationship with GOD! They had actually heard His voice (Deut. 5:1-5, 22-24)! Please note Moses' explanation regarding God's desire for a relationship with the people (Exodus 20:18-21) and the people's response! Their decision in this moment was the beginning of the ongoing struggle between God and Israel.

Remember, Israel was a miracle nation, all descendants of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and his sons. Their very existence was God's Sovereign desire to have a human people group who would live to honor Him. He promised His Sovereign provision, protection and power for His treasured possession, if they would live as His people...and they declined the offer! While they wanted God's blessing, they refused to live as His people...wanting instead, the freedom to live as you and I and all other humans do...independent of responsibility or accountability to God! "the people remained at a distance while Moses approached...God." It's the sad story of the rejected covenant offer. And the continual downward spiral of humanity is the result. However, take hope with Exodus 20:24 "wherever I cause My name to be honored, I will come to you and bless you." That's our objective at Calvary!!



Pastor Doug Anderson

July 13 - 17, 2009



Verse of the Week

"In your unfailing love you will lead the people you have redeemed." (Exodus 15:13)



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