

Introduction

It is most likely that all of us have felt powerless during some period in our lives. Whether that means we felt weak, helpless, intimidated, overtaken, defeated, speechless, or frozen in indecision, we are acutely aware that our difficult circumstances can leave us with a preponderance of negative emotions - from debilitating worry and fear to hopeless despair. These feelings may reveal some of the most common reasons why some people seek power or control over their own lives as well as over the lives of others. Despising any form of powerlessness and refusing to believe in the one living and true God, who is good and almighty, they clamor for personal power and influence in order to gain control over the world in which they live.



Introduction

But what if there really is a *God Who Is There*, the title of a compelling book by Francis Schaeffer? How would a relationship with Him protect us from the vicissitudes of a broken and capricious world? If He is truly all-powerful and loves us with an everlasting love, would we not want to turn away from our vain pursuit of personal power and look to Him as our refuge and strength? These are real questions we need to ask.

I would like to suggest to you this morning that the more we are able to understand *The Immeasurable Greatness of God's Majesty & Power*, the more we will be able to trust Him with every area of our lives. To know that Yahweh is the Sovereign Lord of heaven and earth is a great comfort and frees us from all of our futile attempts at control.

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I would like to repeat that last sentence: To know that Yahweh is the Sovereign Lord of heaven and earth is a great comfort and frees us from all of our futile attempts at control.

When we openly acknowledge we are terrified that life will not deliver on our dreams and begin to look elsewhere for a viable alternative to our deceptive beliefs about personal power, we are on the path to the narrow gate which, though small, leads to life. To finally realize how much energy we have been expending to control our finite lives and how frantically we have been engaged in self-protection is the first step toward personal freedom and peace. Only God possesses unlimited, immeasurable power, and He invites us to rest in Him alone.

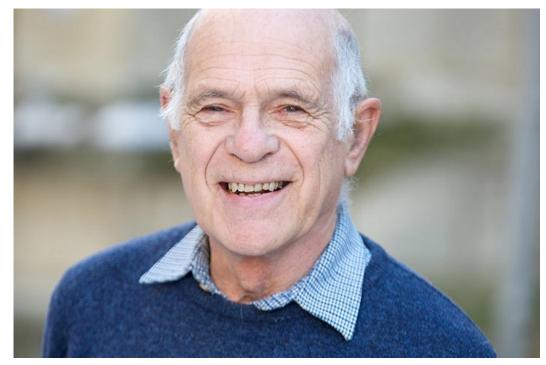
What We Know About God

We know He is powerful. In fact, He is **ALMIGHTY**. Our previous study in Part 4 focused on one of God's names in the Old Testament: *El Shaddai*. As we learned, these two Hebrew words are best translated *God*, *the Almighty* or *God*, *the Strong One*.

According to O.T. scholar C.F. Keil, *El Shaddai* "describes Jehovah, the covenant God, as possessing the power to realize His promises, even when the order of nature presented no prospect of their fulfillment, and the powers of nature were insufficient to secure it." In other words, God is able to overpower nature by the exercise of His free and supernatural grace. Nothing is impossible for Him.

The Truth of God Incarnate

In 1977, Canon Michael Green published a book entitled The Truth of God Incarnate in response to the "damaging and misleading arguments" of a book entitled The Myth of God Incarnate. Five prominent scholars came together to defend the doctrine of Christ's divinity, which lies at the very heart of Christianity. In short, this book examines Jesus' claim that He was and is God.



Canon Michael Green 1930-2019 British theologian, apologist, author

If Jesus was and is the Incarnate Son of God,

what should we expect to discover

about Him in the pages of Scripture?

Would He, too, be Almighty?



What the Prophet Isaiah Reveals

- The coming Messiah, as revealed by Isaiah the prophet, "will be known, designated, and addressed by his names. The Son actually possesses the qualities, abilities, and identity expressed by the names" (van Groningen).
- "For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, **Mighty God**, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace" (Is. 9:6-7).
- "The words in their strict meaning point to the Messiah...The name Jesus is the combination of all the Old Testament titles used to designate the Coming One according to His nature and His works" (Keil & Delitzsch).



The Divine Messiah Is Mighty

- In the Hebrew, one of the names of the Messiah is *El gibbor* (God of might or mighty God) and "attributes divinity to Him" (Keil). Van Groningen agrees: "The only acceptable interpretation is that the child or son is divine; he is called this because he is such."
- El gibbor was a traditional name of God, which occurs as early as Deuteronomy 10:17. "For the Lord your God is God of gods and Lord of lords, the great, **the mighty**, and the awesome God..."
- The person and character of the Messiah is also seen in Isaiah 10:21. "A remnant will return, the remnant of Jacob, to the **mighty God**."
- This Messiah is a gift of God "a son is given."



Key Thoughts From Hebrew Scholars

- "Who else should lead Israel to victory over the hostile world, than God the mighty? The Messiah is the corporeal presence of this mighty God; for He is with Him, He is in Him, and in Him He is with Israel. The expression did not preclude the fact that the Messiah would be God and man in one person..." (Keil & Delitzsch).
- This "is unsuitable in referring to a human king...It indicates an extraordinary quality connected with the new kingdom to be created by God, a kingdom that had never existed before..." El Gibbor "is a special title which will be given to the incomparable coming king" (Botterweck & Ringgren, Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament).



Another Messianic Passage

"There shall come forth a shoot from the stump of Jesse, and a branch from his roots shall bear fruit. And the Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and *might*, the Spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord" (ls. 11:1-2).



What We Find in the New Testament

- "Concerning his Son, who was...declared to be the **Son of God in power** according to the Spirit of holiness by his resurrection from the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord" (Rom. 1:3-4).
- "To those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God" (I Cor. 1:24).
- "...and what is the immeasurable greatness of his power toward us who believe, according to the working of his great might that he worked in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly places, far above all rule and authority and power and dominion..." (Eph. 1:19-20).

What We Find in the New Testament

- "You know of Jesus of Nazareth, how God anointed Him with the Holy Spirit and with power, and how He went about doing good, and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with Him" (Acts 10:38).
- "And Jesus returned to Galilee in the **power** of the Spirit" (Lk. 4:14).
- "For we did not follow cleverly devised tales when we made known to you **the power** and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we were eyewitnesses of His majesty" (II Pet. 1:16).

Jesus' Works of Power

- "Then He began to reproach the cities in which most of His **miracles** (literally, **works of power**) were done, because they did not repent" (Mt. 11:20; see also vss. 21 & 23; Lk. 10:13).
- "And coming into His home town He began teaching them in their synagogue, so that they became astonished, and said, 'Where did this man get this wisdom, and these **miraculous powers**?'" (Mt. 13:54).
- Herod Antipas said to his servants, "This is John the Baptist; he has risen from the dead; and that is why **miraculous powers** are at work in him" (Mt. 14:2).
- "The **power of the Lord** was present for Him to perform healing" (Lk. 5:17).

Jesus' Works of Power

- "But Jesus said, 'Someone did touch Me, for I was aware that **power** had gone out of Me'" (Lk. 8:46).
- "And as He was now approaching, near the descent of the Mount of Olives, the whole multitude of the disciples began to praise God joyfully with a loud voice for all the **miracles** which they had seen" (Lk. 19:37).
- "Jesus the Nazarene, a man attested to you by God with **miracles** and wonders and signs which God performed through Him in your midst, just as you yourselves know..." (Acts 2:22).
- "With authority and power He commands the unclean spirits, and they come out" (Lk. 4:36).



The Gospel Is the Power of God

- "For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek" (Rom. 1:16).
- "For the word of the cross is folly to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God" (I Cor. 1:18).



Jesus Will Return With Great Power

- "And then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of the sky with **great power** and great glory" (Mt. 24:30; cf. Mk. 13:25; Lk. 21:27).
- "Jesus said to him (the high priest), 'You have said it yourself; nevertheless I tell you, hereafter you shall see the Son of Man sitting at **the right hand of power**, and coming on the clouds of heaven'" (Mt. 26:64; cf. Mk. 13:26; 14:62; Lk. 22:69).



A Final Thought From Lewis' Book, Miracles



C.S. Lewis 1898-1963

"The central miracle asserted by Christians is the Incarnation. They say that God became Man. Every other miracle prepares for this, or exhibits this, or results from this. Just as every natural event is the manifestation at a particular place and moment of Nature's total character, so every particular Christian miracle manifests at a particular place and moment the character and significance of the Incarnation.



A Final Thought From Lewis' Book, Miracles

"There is no question in Christianity of arbitrary interferences just scattered about. It relates not a series of disconnected raids on Nature but the various steps of a strategically coherent invasion an invasion which intends complete conquest and 'occupation.' The fitness, and therefore credibility, of the particular miracles depends on their relation to the Grand Miracle; all discussion of them in isolation from it is futile."

- C.S. Lewis, *Miracles*

