

# MARANATHA MESSENGER

Weekly Newsletter of

**MARANATHA BIBLE-PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**

Private Circulation Only

8 September 2013

*"Present every man perfect in Christ Jesus" (Colossians 1:28)*

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Sunday School: 9.45 am

Sunday English / Chinese Worship Service: 10.45 am Sunday Chinese Worship Service: 7 pm

Wednesday Prayer Meeting: 8.00 pm

Pastor: Rev. Dr. Jack Sin (HP: 9116 0948)

## What Is the Doctrine of the Sovereignty of God?

We often use to say "God is sovereign." However, only few may know what that term really means. What does the term "the sovereignty of God" mean? The term means the supremacy of God, the kingship of God, the Godhood of God. David acknowledges the sovereignty of God in his thanksgiving prayer, *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. Both riches and honour come of thee, and thou reignest over all; and in thine hand is power and might; and in thine hand it is to make great, and to give strength unto all* (1 Chronicles 29:11-12).

Arthur Pink defines the sovereignty of God in the following way, "To say that God is sovereign is to declare that God is God. To say that God is sovereign is to declare that He is the Most High, doing according to His will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth, so that none can stay His hand or say unto Him, What doest Thou? (Dan 4:35). To say that God is sovereign is to declare that He is the Almighty, the Possessor of all power in heaven and earth, so that none can defeat His counsels, thwart His purposes, or resist His will (Ps 115:3). To say that God is sovereign is to declare that He is 'The Governor among the nations' (Ps 22:28), setting up kingdoms, overthrowing empires, and determining the course of dynasties as pleaseth His best. To say that God is sovereign is to declare that He is the 'Only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords' (1 Tim 6:15). Such is the God of the Bible" (*The Sovereignty of God*, 20-21). The Lord declares this great truth of Himself in Isaiah 46:9-10, *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.*

### God is the Ruler of the Earth

Who is the governor of the material world? Can we say that this world is controlled and run by itself? This is a concept worthy of gross Materialism and blank Atheism. The truth of the matter is that God is not only the Creator, but He upholds all things with His mighty power. He is the One who governs this world. He is clothed with absolute authority over the hosts of heaven and the inhabitants of the earth. We are told, *The Lord hath prepared his throne in the heavens; and his kingdom ruleth over all* (Psalm 103:19). The king of Babylon, while walking through his palace, boasted of his kingdom, that he had built it by his power and for the honour of his majesty. While the word was still in his mouth, a voice announced that his kingdom had departed from him, and he was driven into the fields to eat grass as oxen. When he was restored, he blessed the most High, and extoled His kingdom, saying, *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?* (Daniel 4:28-35). These were the words of one of few absolute rulers on the earth, and offers clear evident that God is sovereign over the greatest of earthly kings.

The Psalm sounds this note succinctly, *The earth is the Lord's, and the fullness thereof* (Psalm 24:1). The prophets do the same when they affirm that He is *the God of the whole earth* and as the *Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will* (Isaiah 54:5; Daniel 4:17, 25). In the formula of Melchizedek and of Abraham, He is the *possessor of heaven and earth* (Genesis 14:19, 22), and in the words of Paul, *in him we live, and move, and have our being* (Acts 17:28). The Apostle Paul explains it in Colossians 1:16-17, *For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: And he is before all things, and by him all things consist.*

God not only created the world, designed and fixed certain laws (which men term "the laws of Nature") to run this world. The psalmist writes, *Sing unto the LORD with thanksgiving; sing praise upon the harp unto our God: Who covereth the heaven with clouds, who prepareth rain for the earth, who maketh grass to grow upon the mountains. He giveth to the beast his food, and to the young ravens which cry. He sendeth forth his commandment upon earth: his word runneth very swiftly. He giveth snow like wool: he scattereth the hoarfrost like ashes. He casteth forth his ice like morsels: who can stand before his cold? He sendeth out his word, and melteth them: he causeth his wind to blow, and the waters flow* (Psalms 147:7-9, 15-18).

### **God is the Ruler of the Affairs of Man**

God is the ruler of the affairs of every man, not only the godly, but even the ungodly. King Solomon understood this great truth and wrote, *Man's goings are of the LORD; how can a man then understand his own way?* (Proverbs 20:24). Read also the following verses: *The LORD hath made all things for himself: yea, even the wicked for the day of evil* (Proverbs 16:4). *A man's heart deviseth his way: but the LORD directeth his steps* (Proverbs 16:9). *There are many devices in a man's heart; nevertheless the counsel of the LORD, that shall stand* (Proverbs 19:21). *The king's heart is in the hand of the LORD, as the rivers of water: he turneth it whithersoever he will* (Proverbs 21:1). If the Lord directs the steps of a man, then it is the proof that he is being controlled or governed by God. These verses teach that men, governors and rulers, and yea even the ungodly, are completely beneath the governmental control of the Almighty God.

There will not be anyone to stand against the purposes of God. Solomon adds, *There is no wisdom nor understanding nor counsel against the LORD* (Proverbs 21:30). The prophet Isaiah says, *This is the purpose that is purposed upon the whole earth: and this is the hand that is stretched out upon all the nations. For the LORD of hosts hath purposed, and who shall disannul it? and his hand is stretched out, and who shall turn it back?* (Isaiah 14:26-27). The Apostle Paul states this truth in the following way, *In him we live, and move, and have our being* (Acts 17:28). Paul addresses these words to a heathen audience, to those who worshipped *the unknown God*, the men of Athens on Mars' Hill.

### **God is the Ruler of the Children of God**

The doctrine of the sovereignty of God gives God's children great comfort as they know that God is the absolute Ruler of their lives.

First of all, they are able to understand that their salvation is from the Lord. Salvation is not of our choice, but by the sovereign will of the Almighty God in election. The Bible says of those who are saved, *as many as were ordained to eternal life believed* (Acts 13:48). The Apostle Paul explains this in Romans, *So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy* (9:16). And again, Paul explains very clearly in Ephesians, *According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: Having predestinated us unto the adoption of*

children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will (1:4-5).

Secondly, it gives God's children a sense of absolute security. First, they have the security of their salvation. They are kept by the power of God unto the final salvation that is to be revealed when the Lord returns (1 Peter 1:5; read also Jude 1, John 10:27-29; Romans 8:33-39). Second, they are secured during their earthly sojourn. Moses wrote in Deuteronomy, *There is none like unto the God of Jeshurun, who rideth upon the heaven in thy help, and in his excellency on the sky. The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms (33:26-27).* The psalmist wrote, *Thou hast put gladness in my heart, more than in the time that their corn and their wine increased. I will both lay me down in peace, and sleep: for thou, LORD, only makest me dwell in safety (Psalm 4:7-8; read also Psalm 91).*

Thirdly, it gives comfort in sorrow. The comfort comes from the fact that God, the sovereign ruler of our lives, watches over us always. The psalmist says, *Whither shall I go from thy spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; Even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me. . . . My substance was not hid from thee, when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth. Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being unperfect; and in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them. How precious also are thy thoughts unto me, O God! how great is the sum of them! (Psalms 139:7-17).* There is nothing that happens in our lives without God's knowledge; the Lord says, *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).*

## Conclusion

Our response to the sovereignty of God must be that of the Apostle Paul, *For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: to whom be glory for ever. Amen (Romans 11:33-36).* We should humble ourselves before the Almighty God, fear Him, obey Him, and worship Him. He is *the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honor and glory for ever and ever, Amen (1 Timothy 1:17).*

Rev Dr George Skariah  
Covenant BP Church  
Bangalore, India

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## Chipo's Testimony

My name is Chipo Zuze (Mrs). I come from Harare, Zimbabwe, Africa. I came to do some training at the Singapore Aviation Academy. I thank the Lord Almighty for bringing me to Singapore and for allowing me the opportunity to have fellowship with MBPC.

I saw the church as I drove past it while on a bus and I decided to come. I was not sure of what to expect coming from a Baptist Church. But I was reminded that God is faithful the moment I walked into MBPC. I experienced much love and warmth so much that I felt like I already belonged.

My first visit was on 21 July 2013 and my second visit was on 25 August 2013. On both visits, God has spoke to me through the pulpit ministry.

In July, I was encouraged to support the missions work in obedience to the Great Commission "Go Ye therefore ....". When I went back home, I looked at one ministry that I will support in its effort to preach the gospel of our Lord. Luke 12:21 (the memory verse) serves as a reminder for me.

In the August visit, the ministry of the word at MBPC has touched me and its as if I came to Singapore for a spiritual refresher course. The catechism class and service challenged me to worship the Only One and True God in spirit and truth.

I spend time reading the word so that when I am at my lowest or vulnerable point, God may help me to overcome it by His word because a time of testing of my faith will surely come.

As I go back to Zimbabwe, I sense God is wanting me to be a living sacrifice and to be different by not conforming to this world but be transformed in order to prove what is the good, acceptable and perfect will of God in my life.

Pray that I may be a good steward who will :

1. worship God in spirit and truth
2. obey God's commands
3. trust God no matter what happens to me and
4. depend on God's strength



My desire is to partner with MBPC in prayer as we serve the Lord.

Hebrews 4:16 says, *'Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.'*

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## Email from Myanmar

I am now translating your book "*How to study the Bible Profitably and Read Edifying Christian Books*" into Falam Chin. And hopefully, I will finish within this week, and I will forward it to you in PDF format when I finish it.

In fact, I want to translate it into Myanmar as well if you do not mind, because the book is very good, and we do not have such a book in Myanmar. This small book will help many people to read and interpret the Bible correctly. In Myanmar, due to having no good guidelines for interpreting the Bible correctly, many Christians share different and meaningless interpretations of the Bible even from the Pulpit. This book can be really a guiding star for us.

Moreover, your visit with us has moved our churches in Myanmar according to the feedback

from pastors and missionaries. I regret that the two missionaries could not have fellowship with you after the two days seminar. They are strengthened by your teaching from the book of Acts, both of them are serving in Magwe division next to Rakhine State.

I will give you more of a work report of the EPCM in the month of October.

*Rev Salai*  
Immanuel Evangelical Presbyterian Churches  
Myanmar

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Praise God for almost 100 people who came for the Chinese 6th Anniversary Thanksgiving Service with the Chinese Choir led by Andrew Lai.



Elder Daniel Tau,  
Elder Su Ching Chun of  
Calvary Jurong BPC,  
Pastor and all at the  
cutting of the  
anniversary cake.



These 4 workers  
asked for Bibles to  
read and were  
given as requested  
from the MRM.

These workers are  
from the new Punggol  
construction sites and  
they came to the church  
for the first time and  
heard the gospel.



Theme for the Quarter :  
Life Changing Moments with the Master  
Rev Dr Jack Sin  
*A Confessional Moment (John 20:19-31)*

[End of MM]