

Talk Part 1 *HOW DO WE KNOW SOMEONE IS A QUEEN/KING ?*

Include children to think of a crown, a fine robe, a throne,  
a sceptre (the monarch's power)  
an orb (the monarch's power comes from God)  
a flag, a guard  
their 'subjects'

Anyone met the late Queen Elizabeth?

Thinking today about worshipping our God who is Sovereign - that's a more complicated word for King. Worshipping God as our King..

What does it mean for God to be King?

Can I ask this good king/queen some questions before we move on...

Can you name all, yes ALL, the stars in the sky?

Could you provide a nation of people with wafer bread every morning for 40 years in a desert?

Can you walk across a sea of water?

Could you change about 750 litres (3 large wheelie bins) of water into wine?

Can you bring someone back to life after they've been dead for 4 days?

Disappointing...might have to have a word with God....!

Reading: Matthew 8:23-27

Talk Part 2 *THE GOD WHO IS SOVEREIGN*

Last in our sermon series on the character of God & how we can worshipfully respond to him. We've thought on other weeks about how God is a God who GIVES,

who CARES,

who CALLS

who ENCOURAGES

Today Andy has given me the task of exploring our God who is SOVEREIGN - a God who is King. It's a massive topic and we will only scratch the surface this morning. Anyone wanting more... delve into a book from a trusted theologian or go along to home group to discuss...

A dictionary definition of sovereignty goes something like supreme power and authority or superior ruler so...it's something that is above everything else.

All through the Bible, we read of the many things that show us God as Sovereign. Here are but a few examples:-

The book of Revelation speaks of God as *the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End*.

Paul writes in Colossians *by him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible,... He is before all things and in him all things hold together*.

The Psalm writer knew God is present everywhere - in Psalm 139 he asks *Where can I flee from your presence?* and the answer is evidently - nowhere. He also writes *Before a word is on my tongue you know it completely* and *All the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to be*. God knows all things past, present and future. There is no limit to his knowledge.

For those of us who like big words to explain ideas, God's sovereignty is a consequence of his OMNISCIENCE, his OMNIPOTENCE and his OMNIPRESENCE. OMNI = Latin for all. In clearer language, God is All Knowing, All Powerful and Present Everywhere in All of Time.

To put all these ideas into one simple thought as Christians we believe that God is in control. God is in control. Really? As we look at the world around us - countries at war, climate change, our own government and litter in the park - the world looks much more like it's in a mess. It's hard to work out as a Christian how God can be 'in control'. Many many people outside the church and in our streets would think it lunacy to believe such a thing.

How can we get our minds round this (I did say it was a massive topic!)? It might help us to think about the big story of the world as the Bible tells it...

In the beginning there was God and out of nothing he made the world....GLOBE....

We know God has a plan for the end - a new heaven and a new earth, a fine city, a rich feast, a flowing river and everywhere God present with his people. We're given pictures of eternity but actually what it will be like we can't know till we arrive....GLOBE WITH A HALO...

Inbetween these two we have history:

creation etc Abraham to Jesus is roughly 2000 years

Jesus's birth to events written about in the New Testament is about                      years and from then till today roughly                      years have passed.

Standing here & looking at the world around we see 'chaos' and ask can God really be in control?

Let's go back to the time in history when the disciples were with Jesus during his last week in Jerusalem - intrigue, betrayal, bereavement before restoration and joyous renewal. All they could see was 'chaos' and yet this was when God was seeing his cosmic plan of salvation come to pass through Jesus' crucifixion and resurrection.

Even if we can't completely explain how God can be in control does that mean that we can't believe it?

A few examples of things we can't explain absolutely and yet doesn't stop us believing they do...

Aeroplanes...very heavy lumps of metal full of people and cargo...engineers design them with amazing maths...ask a pilot to explain the aerodynamics that lift them into the air most likely they can't..... but doesn't stop them flying their aircraft!

Andy was very keen to bring something that he can't explain how it works but that doesn't stop him believing it does...

Finally let's turn to the Bible reading we've read this morning - Jesus in a boat with the disciples crossing the Sea of Galilee. A wild storm comes as if from nowhere and the waves are filling the boat up with water. The terrified disciples wake the sleeping Jesus and Jesus stills the waves and quietens the wind. The disciples are mildly told off for their lack of faith and left wondering *What kind of man is this?*

We're gathered here we might say amidst the chaotic storms in the world today. We know far more than the disciples did at that point about the extraordinary person Jesus was and is and always will be - power over the natural world and power over death. He is our King who shared our life on earth wearing a crown of thorns, weeping and dying. He is our King who rose from the grave and ascended to his throne in heaven. He is our King, worthy of our worship and our trust that He is in control, no matter what we see around us. He is our King who loves us and is within us. He promised to return again and while we wait, we serve our King using our gifts, caring for creation and our neighbour and encouraging each other to keep going.

## Questions

'God is in control' is different to 'God controls everything'. What do you think?

God has given humankind freedom to choose. How does this affect God's sovereign control of the universe? Is there a point at which God chooses to allow things that he does not directly cause?

If God is all powerful and nothing happens apart from his purpose, why is there evil?

What difference does knowing God is Sovereign of your life make?

