

King James Bible Study Correspondence Course
An Outreach of Highway Evangelistic Ministries
5311 Windridge lane ~ Lockhart, Florida 32810 ~ USA

THE POWER OF GOD

Lesson 5

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In this lesson we want to discuss the manner in which God exercises His power. No one who believes in God would doubt He has power, but how does God exercise that power?

Many a fool has argued himself right into hell with silly questions like "Can God make a rock so big He can't lift it?" Or, "If God is so powerful, why doesn't He stop all the wars?"

These and hundreds of other similar questions show an ignorance of the truth of how God exercises His power. God uses His unlimited power always and only as His wisdom directs. The exercise of His power must always be in harmony with His goodness and holiness.

In His wisdom and goodness, God saw fit to create man in His own image. He made man an immortal soul with a mortal body. He has also given man a certain freedom of will.

God's holiness forbids His allowing man to enter heaven in a sinful state. God's power is sufficient to redeem man from this fallen condition, yet this power over sin operates only by man's voluntary acceptance of God's salvation.

Now, I realize there are many schools of theological thought that may differ with the premise that we have just stated, but our position is very simple. In Romans 3:4 the Bible says: *God forbid: yea, let God be true, but every man a liar; as it is written. That thou mightest be justified in thy sayings, and mightest overcome when thou art judged*

1. God's power is subject to His promises. For example, in Revelation 22:17 we read: *And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.* God invites all men to come and take the water of life. It is absolutely free. It is a gift of God. Who may have it? Whosoever will! You see God has life. He has the water of life. He offers an invitation but He will not force any man to drink of the water of life. It is up to the individual man to accept or to reject this offer. God's power is subject to His promises.

However, while God has the power to supply our every need He has chosen to limit His power. He has unlimited power, but He has chosen to exercise His power in harmony with His goodness and holiness. I do not know what you need, but I know a God who knows what you need. I know also that the God who knows what you need is able and willing to supply your every need.

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You say, "Then why doesn't He do so?" Because you have never come to Him, trusted Him, believed on Him and allowed Him to be your God. Only when you believe on Him will He exercise His power on your behalf.

Here is the best example: do you need to be saved? Yes. Can God save you? Yes. Is He willing to save you? Yes. Will He save you if you do not trust His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ? No. *For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour; Who will (God's will) have all men (without exception) to be saved (the forgiveness of sins), and to come unto the knowledge of the truth (1 Timothy 2:3-4).*

Are all men saved? Of course not! Do all men come to the knowledge of the truth, By no stretch of the imagination! So, if we leave the Bible as it is written, we find that God's will to save men is overridden by a man's will to reject the Lord Jesus Christ.

2. God uses agencies through which His power is exercised. God will use the forces of nature. God will use chosen men in spiritual and governmental positions. God will use angels. We also find God the Holy Spirit and God the Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, exercising all the power of the Father.

Let us check for Biblical proof for the points made above. The early pages of the Old Testament show that God uses the forces of nature to exercise His power. In Numbers 11, the children of Israel are journeying through the wilderness. The Bible says: *And there went forth a wind from the LORD, and brought quails from the sea, and let them fall by the camp,.....* (Numbers 11:31-32).

In this passage, God has been feeding His people in the wilderness with manna. Now He has determined to give them quail to eat. There was a great company of quail around the sea and God the Lord sent forth a wind to carry the quail to the place where the children of Israel were camping. God's power fed them. God's power brought the quail to them. God's power was exercised through the force of the wind.

Look at Exodus 9:22-24 *And the LORD said unto Moses, Stretch forth thine hand toward heaven, that there may be hail in all the land of Egypt, upon man, and upon beast, and upon every herb of the field, throughout the land of Egypt..... and the LORD rained hail upon the land of Egypt. So there was hail, and fire mingled with the hail, very grievous, such as there was none like it in all the land of Egypt since it became a nation.*

When God desired to exercise His power upon Pharaoh and the Egyptians, how did He do it? He sent judgments via the thunder, and the lightning. God's power is exercised through nature.

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Second, we said God exercises His power through chosen men in spiritual positions. For example, in the 9th chapter of Acts and reading in verse 15 we find: *But the Lord said unto him. Go thy way: for he is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel.*

Now God is certainly quite capable of bearing testimony on behalf of His own name. He is perfectly able to make Himself known to the Gentiles, the kings, and the children of Israel. But God chooses to exercise His power through men filled with His Holy Spirit. In this case God had chosen the apostle Paul and had entrusted him with the power of the gospel and with the power to preach that message.

This principle is not only true in the spiritual realm, but it also holds true in the realm of temporal human government. In Romans 13:1-6 the Bible says: *Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God. Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation.....But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil.....*

These verses say that God wishes to exercise power over the governments of this world, but that He does this through human instruments. He uses men whom He has placed in governmental positions. I realize there have been many wicked dictators, and that many evil and corrupt rulers have had dominion over the children of men. This would lead the skeptic and the scoffer to question whether or not God was a kind and loving God. Yet, history has shown, and eternity will prove that in almost every case, God gives a nation the rulers that nation deserves. A nation that has forsaken God, is worshipping idols, and is living in sin, wickedness and immorality certainly does not deserve a godly, God-fearing, gracious and kind ruler and seldom will God give such a ruler to such a people.

These are things that need to be considered prayerfully rather than simply by applying human logic and reasoning.

We said also that God exercises His power through angels. Let us look at one such case. In Matthew 26:52-53 (speaking to Peter) the Lord says: *Put up again thy sword into his place: for all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword. Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels?*

On another occasion there was an army encamped round about Jerusalem, intent on its destruction. Just one of God's angels came down and slew that company of 185,000 soldiers before breakfast. You can read that account in 2 Kings 19:35. In many places throughout the Bible we see God's power entrusted to angels for the outworking of His purposes.

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We see God the Holy Spirit working in great power in John 14:26: *But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.*

Also in John 16:7-8 we see: *Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you. And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment.*

Now, can any man comfort? Can any mortal lead and guide into all truth? Can any of Adam's race call all things to someone's remembrance? Can you or I convince the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment? No, my friend, that is the mighty power of God exercised through the person of the Holy Spirit.

We also find the Lord Jesus Christ Himself, though in a body of human flesh, still exercising the power of deity. In John 6:38, Jesus says: *For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me.*

So in this Lesson we have learned:

1. God's power is subject to His promises;
2. God has promised that He will do certain things and He has the power to keep these promises;
3. God uses agencies through which His power is exercised, such as the forces of nature, chosen men in spiritual and governmental positions, angels, the Holy Spirit, and His Son Jesus.

Next, let us consider that God releases His power in harmony with His laws. In other words, God is not making knee-jerk decisions up in heaven. God is not running this universe on a whim or a fancy. The Lord has laid down certain set principles, rules, and patterns whereby His universe will operate.

It functions in an orderly and decent fashion because God, though He has the power to do all things, chooses to exercise His power in harmony with His laws. Let me give you four examples of this.

1. The first of these laws is the law of time. It takes time for God to work out His purposes. Certainly God could work out His plans without taking any time at all, but He has chosen to release His power according to the law of time. In John 5:17 we read: *But Jesus answered them. My Father worketh hitherto, and I work.* Jesus Christ came. He toiled. He labored. He suffered in the flesh, He laid down His life, He died, He rose again, and He ascended into heaven. He has been seated there at the right hand of the Father for nearly 2,000 years.

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All of what He accomplished could have been simply spoken and it would have been done. But He has chosen to release His power in harmony with the law of time.

Again, in Exodus 20:11, the word of the Lord says, *For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the LORD blessed the sabbath day, and hallowed it.*

Now, people want to argue against a literal six-day creation. I believe God could have created everything in one one-millionth of a second if He had chosen to. You say, "Why did God create in days and hours and minutes, etc.?" Because He has chosen to release His power in harmony with His laws. The first of these is the law of time.

2. The second law is the law of growth, of seedtime and harvest. God could send bread down out of heaven to cover the ground each morning. He did this for the children of Israel during their wandering in the wilderness. The Lord could plant a fully furnished garden, complete with everything a man or woman could desire to eat, as He did for Adam and his wife. Yet, the Lord has chosen to work through certain principles that He established to govern what we call "nature."

For example, in Mark 4:26-29, Jesus says; *And he said, So is the kingdom of God, as if a man should cast seed into the ground; And should sleep, and rise night and day, and the seed should spring and grow up, he knoweth not how. For the earth bringeth forth fruit of herself; first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear. But when the fruit is brought forth, immediately he putteth in the sickle, because the harvest is come.*

The Lord speaks of harvest-time throughout the Bible. He speaks of sowing and reaping. He speaks of seedtime and the growth of plants. God has all power. He can raise the dead anytime He sees fit, but He has chosen to establish a harvest-time for the resurrection of His saints. God can meet our needs and lift our burdens as quickly as He will, and yet, many times. He would have us wait for His help and deliverance as the husbandman waits for the full ripening of the fruit and the grain (James 5).

He speaks of His kingdom in terms of tares and wheat and seed being sown by a sower. He likens believers to plants springing forth and bearing fruit. This is God's great power, working in harmony with His law of seedtime and harvest.

3. Next is the law of prayer. There is a time element often present in answered prayer. For example, in Matthew 7:7-8 the Bible says: *Ask, and it*

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shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you: For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened,

Now the very fact that there is a knocking and a waiting for something to be opened implies the passing of time. The very fact that there is a seeking before there is a finding implies a passage of time. God knows our needs before we even ask. God knows a thought while it is yet in our heart, before it even forms words on our lips. Yet, He chooses to work according to the law of prayer, which often involves waiting.

4. There is then the law of justice and mercy. Grace is extended to those who violate the law of God, but only through Christ dying as the sinner's substitute.

In Psalms 89:14, the Bible makes this statement: *Justice and judgment are the habitation of thy throne: mercy and truth shall go before thy face.* Now keep that thought in mind while you read these words from Romans 3:21-24: *But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference: For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.*

God has the power to forgive your sins. God has the power to bestow His grace upon you and to wash all your sins away. But God releases His power through the law of justice and mercy. He is just, and demands that sin be paid for. How can God exercise His gracious power without violating the law of His justice? He does it by virtue of having taken upon Himself the form of a man, and in the person of the Lord Jesus Christ, He suffered, bled, died, and paid the full penalty for your sins.

Therefore, the law of justice has been satisfied, and God is now free to release the power of His grace to forgive your every sin.

Notes

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Name _____

1. What was the purpose of this Lesson?

2. Explain four ways God releases His power in harmony with His laws.
 - a.
 - b.
 - c.
 - d.

3. Give some examples how God exercises His power through chosen men in spiritual positions.

4. Who has the water of life? explain!

5. God has made man an _____ with a _____.

6. Explain how God uses agencies through which His power is exercised.

7. How is God's power is subject to His promises?

8. When God desired to exercise His power upon Pharaoh and the Egyptians, how did He do it?

9. Explain Matthew 7:7-8 in reference to this lesson.

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10. What seven agencies does God use to exercise His Power?
- a.
 - b.
 - c.
 - d.
 - e.
 - f.
 - g.

True/False

- God exercises His power through chosen men in spiritual positions.
- God's power is subject to His promises.
- God exercises His power through angels.



Scripture memorization Psalms 89:14; Romans 13:1-6 (write out these verses on the back of this page) must be in KJV

Oh, dear one, have you come to God and received His gracious salvation by trusting in the finished blood atonement of His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ? Only through the death that He died to pay for your sins can you receive God's salvation. When God works a miracle, what does He do with the natural laws governing matter? He chooses, for a time, to override them. What would happen if God ceased dealing with the world in grace? Should He exercise His power to destroy, to cast into hell, or to execute eternal judgment and damnation, who could resist Him?

My friend, one day God will do those very things. One day God will release the awesome power of His wrath and condemn to a lake of fire all who have refused His grace. God is working in this day and time according to the law of justice. Sin must be paid for. It was paid for at Calvary's cross, but you must receive that payment in order to escape the wrath to come. If you do not, you will have to make your own payment. Such a payment will be your soul burning for eternity.

A gracious God loves you. A merciful God wants to forgive you. He is waiting to hear your sincere, heartfelt prayer of repentance. He is longing to hear your sincere request that He be your Lord and Saviour. He desires to forgive your every sin.

Will you trust Him today?