

THE OMNIPOTENCE OF GOD

THE MEANING OF GOD'S OMNIPOTENCE

- The term “omnipotence” signifies that God is all powerful and able to whatever He wills
- He has the ability and power to do anything as total power belongs to God
- There is no area of the universe where God does not exert his power
- He himself is the great source and originator of all power...it belongs to him inherently
- From the smallest insect to the stars of the sky, everything and everyone is dependent upon His immeasurable power for its existence

Psalm 62:11 ~ Once God has spoken; Twice I have heard this: That power belongs to God;

Psalm 96:7 ~ Ascribe to the LORD, O families of the peoples, Ascribe to the LORD glory and strength.

Revelation 4:11 ~ Worthy are You, our Lord and our God, to receive glory and honor and power; for You created all things, and because of Your will they existed, and were created.

Revelation 5:12 ~ saying with a loud voice, “Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power and riches and wisdom and might and honor and glory and blessing.”

- God’s many names and titles speak of his power, strength, and might:
 - *El Shaddai* (“God Almighty”)
 - “the Mighty One of Israel”
 - “King of kings and Lord of lords”
 - “the Lord Almighty”
 - “the blessed and only Sovereign”

Isaiah 1:24 ~ Therefore the Lord GOD of hosts, The Mighty One of Israel, declares, “Ah, I will be relieved of My adversaries And avenge Myself on My foes.

2 Corinthians 6:18 ~ And I will be a father to you, And you shall be sons and daughters to Me,” Says the Lord Almighty.

1 Timothy 6:15 ~ which He will bring about at the proper time—He who is the blessed and only Sovereign, the King of kings and Lord of lords,

Revelation 1:8 ~ “I am the Alpha and the Omega,” says the Lord God, “who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty.”

Revelation 4:8 ~ And the four living creatures, each one of them having six wings, are full of eyes around and within; and day and night they do not cease to say, “HOLY, HOLY, HOLY is THE LORD GOD, THE ALMIGHTY, WHO WAS AND WHO IS AND WHO IS TO COME.”

Revelation 19:16 ~ And on His robe and on His thigh He has a name written, “KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS.”

- In order to do what he wills, God must have the power to do so...to not be all-powerful is to not be God
- “How vain would be the eternal counsels, if power did not step into execute them.”¹
- “But however strong may be the purposes either of angels or of men, whether of good or bad, whether these purposes fall in with the will of God or run counter to it, the will of the Omnipotent is never defeated.”²

¹ Stephen Charnock

² Augustine of Hippo

- “We can do very little. God can do whatever He wills. We, beyond very narrow limits, must use means to accomplish our ends. With God means are unnecessary. He wills, and it is done. He said, Let there be light; and there was light. He, by a volition created the heavens and the earth. At the volition of Christ, the winds ceased, and there was a great calm. By an act of the will He healed the sick, opened the eyes of the blind, and raised the dead. This simple idea of the omnipotence of God, that He can do without effort, and by a volition, whatever He wills, is the highest conceivable idea of power, and is that which is clearly presented in the Scriptures.”³
- Although such power might seem frightful, we need to remember that God is also good

THE “LIMITATIONS” OF GOD’S OMNIPOTENCE

- To say that God is omnipotent means that he is able to do anything consistent with his nature
- However, it does not suggest that because God is all-powerful he can and does do anything or everything at random...he cannot do “anything”...he cannot act inconsistently with his nature
- God’s will is limited by his nature; therefore, he is able to perform anything consistent with His nature and he cannot do those things which are contrary to his nature as God
- God can do all things that are in harmony with his nature and Person...because everything he does is an expression of His nature and will
- God is only limited by the absurd and the self-contradictory
- Thus, there are certain questions that are unnecessary to even ask:
 - Can God create a stone so heavy that he could not lift it?
 - Does he have enough power to create another God?
 - Could he commit suicide? Can God sin?
 - Could he change the past? Can he change himself into a stone or animal?
 - Can he make round squares? Or married bachelors? Can he make the true false or the false true?
- He can do anything according to his infinite ability, but will do only those things that are consistent with himself
- This means that there are things that God cannot do since they would contradict his character or revealed will

A Question:

Is there anything God cannot do?

1. God cannot lie (Titus 1:2; Heb. 6:18).
2. God cannot be tempted by evil (James 1:13).
3. God cannot change (Mal. 3:6; James 1:7; Numbers 23:19).
4. He cannot deny Himself or go against His Word (2 Tim. 2:13).
5. God cannot look upon sin (Hab. 1:13).

- “Scripture reveals that God in his power is (technically) able to do more than what actually occurs but that his power operates within the context of his will and all his other perfections...So the correct distinction in God’s power is that he has a theoretically absolute power to do more than what he actually does but not anything inconsistent with his essence. The only real divine power is God’s ‘ordinate power,’ that is, his ability to do everything that he has decreed he will do. Since God’s decree is the result of all his perfections, then he would only do what he has decreed he will do. Therefore, his ability is confined to what he eternally wills to do.”⁴

³ Charles Hodge

⁴ John MacArthur and Richard Mayhue, *Biblical Doctrine*, 177-178.

- “Even that which is displayed of His might in the visible creation is utterly beyond our powers of comprehension, still less are we able to conceive of omnipotence itself. There is infinitely more power lodged in the nature of God than is expressed in all His works.”⁵

THE SCOPE OF GOD’S OMNIPOTENCE

He Possesses Infinite Power

- God possesses all power, a power without limits or bounds
- He possesses the means to carry out his every desire as nothing is too difficult for him to accomplish
- “As there is nothing too hard for God, so there is nothing hard to God.”⁶

Genesis 18:14 ~ Is anything too difficult for the LORD? At the appointed time I will return to you, at this time next year, and Sarah shall have a son.”

Job 9:19 ~ If it is a matter of power, behold, He is the strong one! And if it is a matter of justice, who can summon Him?

Psalms 91:1 ~ He who dwells in the shelter of the Most High Will abide in the shadow of the Almighty.

Psalms 139:13-16 ~ For You formed my inward parts; You wove me in my mother’s womb. 14 I will give thanks to You, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made; Wonderful are Your works, And my soul knows it very well. 15 My frame was not hidden from You, When I was made in secret, And skillfully wrought in the depths of the earth; 16 Your eyes have seen my unformed substance; And in Your book were all written The days that were ordained for me, When as yet there was not one of them.

Isaiah 40:15-17 ~ Behold, the nations are like a drop from a bucket, And are regarded as a speck of dust on the scales; Behold, He lifts up the islands like fine dust. 16 Even Lebanon is not enough to burn, Nor its beasts enough for a burnt offering. 17 All the nations are as nothing before Him, They are regarded by Him as less than nothing and meaningless.

Jeremiah 32:17 ~ Ah Lord GOD! Behold, You have made the heavens and the earth by Your great power and by Your outstretched arm! Nothing is too difficult for You,

Jeremiah 32:27 ~ Behold, I am the LORD, the God of all flesh; is anything too difficult for Me?

Zechariah 8:6 ~ Thus says the LORD of hosts, ‘If it is too difficult in the sight of the remnant of this people in those days, will it also be too difficult in My sight?’ declares the LORD of hosts.

Luke 1:37 ~ For nothing will be impossible with God.

Luke 18:27 ~ But He said, “The things that are impossible with people are possible with God.”

Matthew 19:26 ~ And looking at them Jesus said to them, “With people this is impossible, but with God all things are possible.”

Revelation 19:6 ~ Then I heard something like the voice of a great multitude and like the sound of many waters and like the sound of mighty peals of thunder, saying, “Hallelujah! For the Lord our God, the Almighty, reigns.

- All human power and ability ultimately belong to God...even Satan’s power is granted him by God
- Not one creature in the entire universe has an atom of power except what God has delegated

He Possesses Irresistible Power

- No one can thwart, resist, or undermine God’s purposes

⁵ AW Pink, *The Attributes of God*, 48.

⁶ George Swinnock, *The Incomparableness of God in The Works of George Swinnock*, IV:439.

Job 42:2 ~ I know that You can do all things, And that no purpose of Yours can be thwarted.

Isaiah 14:24, 27 ~ The LORD of hosts has sworn saying, “Surely, just as I have intended so it has happened, and just as I have planned so it will stand...27 For the LORD of hosts has planned, and who can frustrate it? And as for His stretched-out hand, who can turn it back?”

Isaiah 43:13 ~ Even from eternity I am He, And there is none who can deliver out of My hand; I act and who can reverse it?

- God does whatever he pleases...he does not depend upon human action to achieve His goals

Psalm 115:3 ~ But our God is in the heavens; He does whatever He pleases.

Isaiah 46:10 ~ Declaring the end from the beginning, And from ancient times things which have not been done, Saying, ‘My purpose will be established, And I will accomplish all My good pleasure’;

Isaiah 55:11 ~ So will My word be which goes forth from My mouth; It will not return to Me empty, Without accomplishing what I desire, And without succeeding in the matter for which I sent it.

Daniel 4:35 ~ All the inhabitants of the earth are accounted as nothing, But He does according to His will in the host of heaven And among the inhabitants of earth; And no one can ward off His hand Or say to Him, ‘What have You done?’

He Possesses Inexhaustible Power

- God’s power does not diminish over time
- The troubles of this world will never exhaust the supply of God’s power

Psalm 121:3-4 ~ He will not allow your foot to slip; He who keeps you will not slumber. 4 Behold, He who keeps Israel Will neither slumber nor sleep.

Isaiah 40:28 ~ Do you not know? Have you not heard? The Everlasting God, the LORD, the Creator of the ends of the earth Does not become weary or tired. His understanding is inscrutable.

- Consequently, God does not have to struggle to bring about His will
- When God exercises his power, he does so effortlessly
- In fact, it is no more difficult for him to make a universe than to make a butterfly
- “Since He has at His command all the power in the universe, the Lord God omnipotent can do anything as easily as anything else. All His acts are done without effort. He expends no energy that must be replenished. His self-sufficiency makes it unnecessary for Him to look outside of Himself for a renewal of strength. All the power required to do all that He wills to do lies in undiminished fullness in His own infinite being.”⁷

He Possesses Incomprehensible Power

- God’s power is so far beyond human capabilities that we simply cannot understand it

Ephesians 3:20-21 ~ Now to Him who is able to do far more abundantly beyond all that we ask or think, according to the power that works within us, 21 to Him be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations forever and ever. Amen.

⁷ A. W. Tozer, *The Knowledge of the Holy*, 67.

THE SCOPE OF GOD'S OMNIPOTENCE

In Creation

- God's great power is clearly demonstrated in creation which he spoke into existence with a word (*fiat*) out of nothing (*ex nihilo*)
- In fact, God's power displayed in creation actually conceals more than it reveals of his infinite might as God's power is greater than anything he has ever made

Genesis 1

Job 38:4-6 ~ Where were you when I laid the foundation of the earth? Tell Me, if you have understanding, Who set its measurements? Since you know. Or who stretched the line on it? 6 On what were its bases sunk? Or who laid its cornerstone,

Psalms 33:6, 9 ~ By the word of the LORD the heavens were made, And by the breath of His mouth all their host...9 For He spoke, and it was done; He commanded, and it stood fast.

Psalms 89:11-12 ~ The heavens are Yours, the earth also is Yours; The world and all it contains, You have founded them. 12 The north and the south, You have created them; Tabor and Hermon shout for joy at Your name.

Isaiah 42:5 ~ Thus says God the LORD, Who created the heavens and stretched them out, Who spread out the earth and its offspring, Who gives breath to the people on it And spirit to those who walk in it,

Isaiah 44:24 ~ Thus says the LORD, your Redeemer, and the one who formed you from the womb, "I, the LORD, am the maker of all things, Stretching out the heavens by Myself And spreading out the earth all alone,

Romans 1:20 ~ For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made, so that they are without excuse.

In Preservation

- In his power and might, God sovereignly upholds and sustains his creation
- He is responsible for maintaining the delicate balance necessary for life on this planet
- He holds it all together, preventing the universe and everything in it from flying apart

Psalms 36:6 ~ Your righteousness is like the mountains of God; Your judgments are like a great deep. O LORD, You preserve man and beast.

Colossians 1:17 ~ He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together.

Hebrews 1:3 ~ And He is the radiance of His glory and the exact representation of His nature, and upholds all things by the word of His power. When He had made purification of sins, He sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high,

- We base our entire lives on the constancy of laws which are kept in place by God
- Everything coheres together because he ensures that the universe runs as an ordered, reliable unit instead of an erratic, unpredictable entity
- The earth remains 93.2 million miles from the sun...the earth consistently rotates on its axis at 22.5 degrees...the moon stays at its distance from the earth...the atmosphere remains the same density
- "He holds all those quarks and leptons of the microcosm together by the mysterious coulomb electrical force he made and maintains, and he likewise sustains the fleeing galaxies of the universe."⁸

⁸ R. Kent Hughes, *Hebrews*, vol. 1, 28.

In His Works

- God's mighty works reveal his omnipotence
- The incredible works of God in the OT and the miracles of Christ in the NT demonstrate this power
- "God is able to work according to the laws of nature and contrary to the laws of nature. He is able to work through ordinary means, 'yet is free to work without, above, and against them at his pleasure.' He is able to make the sun stand still, nullify the power of fire, close the mouths of lions, make waters stand like a wall, heal diseases and raise the dead, multiply loaves, and walk on water. When he works above the laws of nature, we call it a miracle. Miracles are not a problem for Almighty God."⁹

In Salvation

- Salvation is a powerful work of God, resulting in the miracle of the new birth

Romans 1:16 ~ 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.

1 Corinthians 1:18, 24 ~ For the word of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God...but to those who are the called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God.

Ephesians 1:19-20 ~ and what is the surpassing greatness of His power toward us who believe. These are in accordance with the working of the strength of His might 20 which He brought about in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places,

- And when God begins that great work of salvation in a person, he will inevitably bring it to its conclusion as he always finishes what he starts

Romans 8:29-30 ~ For those whom He foreknew, He also predestined to become conformed to the image of His Son, so that He would be the firstborn among many brethren; 30 and these whom He predestined, He also called; and these whom He called, He also justified; and these whom He justified, He also glorified.

Jude 24-25 ~ Now to Him who is able to keep you from stumbling, and to make you stand in the presence of His glory blameless with great joy, 25 to the only God our Savior, through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory, majesty, dominion and authority, before all time and now and forever. Amen.

Philippians 1:6 ~ For I am confident of this very thing, that He who began a good work in you will perfect it until the day of Christ Jesus.

In the Resurrection

- God's power is also manifested in his ability to raise the dead
- Christ was raised from the dead by the power in each member of the Trinity

John 10:17-18 ~ For this reason the Father loves Me, because I lay down My life so that I may take it again. 18 No one has taken it away from Me, but I lay it down on My own initiative. I have authority to lay it down, and I have authority to take it up again. This commandment I received from My Father.

Romans 6:4 ~ Therefore we have been buried with Him through baptism into death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life.

Romans 8:11 ~ But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you.

⁹ Terry Johnson, *The Identity and Attributes of God*, 64.

- Believers will also be raised one day back to life to receive glorified bodies by the power of God

John 5:28-29 ~ Do not marvel at this; for an hour is coming, in which all who are in the tombs will hear His voice, 29 and will come forth; those who did the good deeds to a resurrection of life, those who committed the evil deeds to a resurrection of judgment.

In Judgment

- When God judges his enemies, no one can resist him
- God demonstrated his mighty power when he poured out his righteous judgment upon the wicked in the Flood, Sodom and Gomorrah, Pharaoh
- He will demonstrate his powerful judgment in the future when all the ungodly are cast into the lake of fire

Ezekiel 22:14 ~ Can your heart endure, or can your hands be strong in the days that I will deal with you? I, the LORD, have spoken and will act.

Romans 9:22 ~ What if God, although willing to demonstrate His wrath and to make His power known, endured with much patience vessels of wrath prepared for destruction?

THE IMPLICATIONS OF GOD’S OMNIPOTENCE

We Should Tremble

- The absolute power and might of the one, true and living God should fill with dread those who don’t know him and should cause those who do know him to fear
- “To treat with impudence One who can crush us more easily than we can a moth, is a suicidal policy. To openly defy Him who is clothed with omnipotence, who can rend us in pieces or cast us into Hell any moment He pleases, is the very height of insanity.”¹⁰

We Should Trust

- Since nothing is too hard for God, his unlimited power should compel us to put our confidence in him implicitly...there is nothing too great for God to handle
- No need we have is outside of his ability to meet it
- No temptation is too powerful for him to deliver from
- No misery is too deep for him to relieve
- God is eternally with us with infinite and inexhaustible resources...hence there is no need to worry

Psalm 27:1 ~ The LORD is my light and my salvation; Whom shall I fear? The LORD is the defense of my life; Whom shall I dread?

- “As omnipotence is an ocean that cannot be fathomed, so the comforts from it are streams that cannot be exhausted. How comforting to know you have a God who can do whatever He pleases: there is nothing too difficult that He can’t accomplish, nothing so strong that He can’t overrule! You need not dread men since you have One to restrain them, nor fear devils since you have One to chain them. His power was not all expended in creation; it is not weakened by His preservation of all things. For whom would the Lord display His eternal arm and the incomprehensible thunder of His power but for His own?”¹¹

¹⁰ Pink, *Attributes of God*, 51.

¹¹ Stephen Charnock, *Masterpiece* excerpt, Sept-Oct 1987, 10.

We Should Worship

- The reality of God’s power and might should cause us to adore him and fervently worship him
- Focusing more on God’s power will turn our attention away from our problems
- “If men of might and renown claim the admiration of the world, how much more should the power of the Almighty fill us with wonderment and homage.”¹²

We Should Depend

- God’s inexhaustible strength empowers us to carry out what he calls us to do
- He possesses all the necessary power we need to endure any situation we encounter in this life
- Through his inexhaustible energy, he gives strength to His people, enabling us to live confidently each day
- As we trust in him, he exchanges our weakness for his strength

Isaiah 40:29-31 ~ He gives strength to the weary, And to him who lacks might He increases power. 30 Though youths grow weary and tired, And vigorous young men stumble badly, 31 Yet those who wait for the LORD Will gain new strength; They will mount up with wings like eagles, They will run and not get tired, They will walk and not become weary.

Ephesians 6:10 ~ Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of His might.

Philippians 4:13 ~ I can do all things through Him who strengthens me.

- God’s power is the basis for our spiritual victory

We Should Pray

- The knowledge that God can overcome all obstacles should encourage us to pray to Him boldly and persistently
- No prayer is too hard for him to answer

Hebrews 4:16 ~ Therefore let us draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

¹² Pink, *Attributes of God*, 51.