

- I. Session 81: The Omnipotence of God Part 1: Old Testament
- a. Purpose: In this session we shall look at what the Old Testament has to say about the omnipotence of God so that we would draw implications for our lives.
 - b. Definitions of the omnipotence of God:
 - i. Looking at the root of the word omnipotence: “The word omnipotence is derived from two Latin words, *omni*, “all,” and *potens*, “powerful,” and means “all-powerful.”¹
 - ii. Wayne Grudem: “God’s omnipotence means that God is able to do all his holy will.”²
 - iii. John Frame: “The term omnipotence is not in Scripture, but the term is appropriate to refer to two biblical ideas, closely related to one another: God can do anything He pleases...Nothing is too hard for God.”³
 - iv. John Feinberg: “God is able to do everything Scripture shows him doing.”⁴
 - c. What does the Old Testament have to say about the omnipotence of God?
 - i. Any Hebrew words for God’s omnipotence? “Though no word in the OT is exactly equivalent to that English word, the OT does refer to God as ‘*el sadday*, ‘God Almighty’ ...”⁵
 - ii. Twenty five times in the Old Testament the title “God Almighty” appears
 1. For example: “*Now when Abram was ninety-nine years old, the Lord appeared to Abram and said to him, “I am God Almighty; Walk before Me, and be blameless.” (Genesis 17:1)*
 - a. Here in the context God tells Abraham amazing things He will do that is humanly impossible for Abraham at the age he and his wife was at:
 - i. “*And I will multiply you exceedingly.” (Genesis 17:2b)*
 - ii. “*And you will be the father of a multitude of nations.” (Genesis 17:4b)*
 - iii. “*For I have made you the father of a multitude of nations.” (Genesis 17:5c)*
 - b. Yet before God telling Abraham the humanly impossible thing that would happen, God proclaim to Abraham: “*I am God Almighty.*”
 2. Another example: “*May God Almighty bless you and make you fruitful and multiply you, that you may become a company of peoples.” (Genesis 28:3)*
 - a. In the context this is Isaac speaking to his son Jacob right before sending him off to Jacob’s mother’s father’s place.

¹ Wayne Grudem, *Systematic Theology* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan), 216.

² Wayne Grudem, *Systematic Theology* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan), 216.

³ John Frame, *The Doctrine of God* (Phillipsburg, NJ: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing, 2002), 515-16.

⁴ John Feinberg, *No One Like Him* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 2001), 289.

⁵ John Feinberg, *No One Like Him* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 2001), 277.

- b. Here we see God is called Almighty and God is almighty in his power of being able to make Jacob be fruitful and multiply.
- iii. God can do anything He pleases⁶
 - 1. *“But He is unique and who can turn Him? And what His soul desires, that He does.” (Job 23:13)*
 - a. Job is speaking here.
 - b. Job confesses that God is unique.
 - c. One of the ways God is unique is that what He wants He does.
 - 2. *“But our God is in the heavens; He does whatever He pleases.” (Psalm 115:3)*
 - a. First line of the Psalm proclaim God’s transcendence above us.
 - b. Second line shows what that means is that God *“does whatever He pleases.”*
 - 3. *“Whatever the Lord pleases, He does, In heaven and in earth, in the seas and in all deeps.” (Psalm 135:6)*
 - a. This verse also proclaim *“Whatever the Lord pleases, He does.”*
 - b. The second line of this verse shows us the extent this is true: *“In heaven and in earth, in the seas and in all deeps”*
 - c. From the second line we see that this truth of God’s ability to do whatever He pleases extends everywhere. Truly, God is omnipotent in the sense He is powerful everywhere.
- iv. What God does cannot be thwarted
 - 1. Note: It is one thing to know God can do anything but God being all powerful also means that what He ultimately does He will be accomplished.
 - 2. *“I know that You can do all things, And that no purpose of Yours can be thwarted.” (Job 42:2)*
 - a. This is Job speaking to God after God has spoken to Him concerning His suffering.
 - b. First line professes God is able to do anything: *“I know that You can do all things”*
 - c. Second explain that this means God’s purpose cannot be stopped: *“And that no purpose of Yours can be thwarted.”*
 - 3. *“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?’ ” (Daniel 4:35)*
 - a. God can do what He wants: *“But He does according to His will in the host of heaven And among the inhabitants of earth”*

⁶ Verses are from John Frame, *The Doctrine of God* (Phillipsburg, NJ: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing, 2002), 515-16.

- b. No one can stop God doing what He wants: “*And no one can ward off His hand Or say to Him, ‘What have You done?’*”
 - c. This confession is even more astounding when we realize that in the context this is the Babylonian king Nebuchadnezzar speaking after God has humbled him.
 - 4. “*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.*” (Isaiah 55:11)
 - a. Here is God speaking through the Prophet Isaiah.
 - b. From this verse we see God’s Word since it comes from God also cannot be thwarted from God’s purpose.
- v. Nothing is too hard for God⁷
 - 1. “*Is anything too difficult for the Lord? At the appointed time I will return to you, at this time next year, and Sarah will have a son.*” (Genesis 18:14)
 - a. Context is God speaking to Abraham after hearing Sarah laugh at God’s promise of a child being born to Sarah.
 - b. The question is asked rhetorically: “*Is anything too difficult for the Lord?*”
 - c. The answer of course is no, nothing is too difficult for the Lord.
 - d. We know this because God declares yet once again what is humanly impossible will happen and exactly with the timing as well.
 - 2. “*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 32:17)
 - a. This is Jeremiah’s prayer to God.
 - b. First part of this verse confesses what God in His power has done, specifically with His work of creation: “*You have made the heavens and the earth by Your great power and by Your outstretched arm!*”
 - c. The second part of the verse Jeremiah admit “*Nothing is too difficult for You*”
 - d. This profession of faith concerning God’s omnipotence is even more incredible given that Jeremiah at this time was imprisoned when he uttered these words.
 - e. Jeremiah’s profession that nothing is difficult for God is affirmed by God Himself with the first few words in response to Jeremiah: “*Behold, I am the Lord, the God of all flesh; is anything too difficult for Me?*” (Jeremiah 32:27)

⁷ Verses are from John Frame, *The Doctrine of God* (Phillipsburg, NJ: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing, 2002), 516-17.

- f. Given that Jeremiah's first sentence in his prayer and God's first sentence in His response to Job states nothing is too difficult for God we see this as a given truth that is not disputed.
 3. God is also mighty to save: *"Who is this who comes from Edom, With garments of glowing colors from Bozrah, This One who is majestic in His apparel, marching in the greatness of His strength? "It is I who speak in righteousness, mighty to save."* (Isaiah 63:1)
- d. Implications
 - i. Knowing that God is all powerful, does that causes you to trust in Him?
 - ii. Knowing that God is all powerful means He will accomplish His purposes, do you willingly abide in His will or attempt to foolishly oppose it?
 - iii. Knowing that God is all powerful should motivate you to pray and to continue to pray?
 - iv. Have you worshipped God and bow to Him, Him who is almighty?