International Training for Elders and Responsible Ones, October 2024

WEEK 5

DAY 1

Morning Nourishment

Daniel 4 34 to 35

I blessed the Most High, and I praised and honored the ever living One; for His dominion is an eternal dominion. He does according to His will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth; and there is no one who can say to Him, What are You doing?

Isaiah 64 8

But now, Jehovah, You are our Father; we are the clay; and You, our Potter; and all of us are the work of Your hand.

Sovereignty is one of God’s attributes. He is sovereign. Sovereignty indicates God’s unlimited authority and power. God’s position is also unlimited. We are not able to say how high is God’s position. Likewise, we cannot measure God’s glory and majesty. As the sovereign One, there is no limit to His authority, power, and position.

Today’s Reading

In Romans 9 Paul appealed to God’s sovereignty and asked, But rather, O man, who are you who answer back to God? Shall the thing molded say to him who molded it, Why did you make me thus?. In the next verse Paul goes on to say, Or does not the potter have authority over the clay to make out of the same lump one vessel unto honor and another unto dishonor? Here Paul says that as the Creator, God has the sovereign authority to do whatever He likes. Who are we to argue with Him? We need to recognize that we are clay and that God is the Potter. He has the authority to make out of the same lump one vessel unto honor and another unto dishonor. He has the right to make vessels of wrath as well as vessels of mercy.

In Romans 9 16 Paul says, So then it is not of him who wills, nor of him who runs, but of God who shows mercy. To be a vessel of mercy and of honor unto glory does not depend on our willing or our running but on God’s mercy to us. It is of God’s sovereign mercy that we are vessels of mercy. We were not the ones who decided to become vessels of mercy.

God made this decision before we were born. Only because of God’s sovereignty are we able to say that we are vessels of mercy. In ourselves and of ourselves we have no right to say this. As the One with authority over the clay, the Potter has chosen to make us vessels of mercy. However, our confession that we are vessels of mercy is a proof that God has made us so.

God’s mercy is according to His will. In verse 18 Paul concludes, He has mercy on whom He wills, and He hardens whom He wills. We cannot explain why God has willed to show mercy to us. The only thing we can say is that, according to God’s will, the mercy of God has been extended to us. Furthermore, God’s mercy is in His sovereignty. The only thing we can say to explain God’s mercy to us is that in His sovereignty He has chosen to be merciful to us. Consider the case of Esau and Jacob. Who can say why God willed to choose Jacob and not Esau? All we can say is that in His sovereignty God chose the one and not the other. God’s selection is absolutely according to His sovereignty.

As those favored by God, we should not only thank Him for His mercy but also worship Him for His sovereignty. There are hymns on God’s mercy, but it is very difficult to find a hymn on God’s sovereignty. Along with Paul, we need to be brought to God’s sovereignty. Instead of reasoning with Him, we should say, O Father God, I worship You for Your sovereignty.

Although I am not worthy, in Your sovereignty You have willed to show me Your mercy. Never presume to touch the sovereignty of God. Heed Paul’s warning when he asks, Who are you who answer back to God?. If we realize that we are nothing more than clay, we shall not argue with God. Rather, we shall simply worship Him for His sovereignty.

This is the end of Today’s Morning Revival