

The Sovereignty of God

Part 1: God's Nature

God's Sovereignty Defined

God is Sovereign. But what does this mean? The word "*sovereignty*" means *SUPREME AUTHORITY*. In the earthly realm, it speaks of one who holds the *highest* place of authority such as a monarch, president, or ruler of a province or territory. However when this term is applied to God, the Creator of the heavens and the earth, it takes on a much fuller meaning. God rules from heaven over the world He created out of nothing by His own power; He also sustains everything in the world by His powerful Word. Scripture describes God as **THE SOVEREIGN KING** above all earthly and heavenly powers and authorities.

Psalm 103:19: The LORD has established His throne in the heavens; And **His sovereignty rules over all.**

God possesses **absolute dominion** and authority over all things. So He is said to sit on a "throne" in heaven! Just think how ridiculous it would be to say that God created the universe but is not in control of what takes place in it. ***Scripture teaches that God not only controls nature and history, but literally sustains the entire universe by His power, and orders the events of His entire creation to accomplish His own purposes and plans.*** Friends, we must understand that all world events happen at the express purpose and will of God, who rules the world and all who are in it. ***He is "Lord of Heaven and Earth"*** (Acts 17:24). Everything that happens in the world happens because God has permitted, indeed has ***decreed***, it to happen (**THE DECREES OF GOD**). Even the evil in the world, which God hates, exists because it is necessary to achieve His eternal purposes, which will certainly come to pass. God not only permits the events of human history, but has ordained them from eternity past (**FOREORDINATION**). Furthermore, He is *actively involved* in seeing that they all come to pass (**PROVIDENCE**) so as to fulfill all of His plans and purposes.

Proverbs 16:4: **The LORD has made everything for its own purpose,** Even the wicked for the day of evil.

It is ***unthinkable*** that God's divine purpose could meet with frustration, for then it could not be God's divine purpose! Failure of God's purpose would be failure of His sovereignty. God cannot be God and be less than sovereign. Scripture is very clear that a less-than-sovereign God would NOT be God.

Ephesians 1:11: also we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined **according to His purpose who works all things after the counsel of His will,**

Even Satan was created by God to achieve the very purpose for which God made him.

Isaiah 10:15: **Is the axe to boast itself over the one who chops with it? Is the saw to exalt itself over the one who wields it?** That would be like a club wielding those who lift it, Or like a rod lifting him who is not wood.

Isaiah 54:16: Behold, I Myself have created the smith who blows the fire of coals, And brings out a weapon for its work; **And I have created the destroyer to ruin.**

Question #1: What does the word "sovereignty" mean in a worldly sense? _____

Question #2: How does the Bible use the word "sovereignty" in relation to God? _____

Question #3: How does God's sovereignty relate to the accomplishment of His divine purpose?

Question #4: How does a good understanding of God's sovereignty help us explain the existence of Satan and evil? _____

Question #5: Why is sovereignty a necessary attribute of God? _____

Exposition of 1 Chronicles 29:11-13

Let us closely examine how this Scripture passage describes the Sovereignty of God.

1 Chronicles 29:11-13: ¹¹**Thine, O LORD, is the greatness and the power and the glory and the victory and the majesty, indeed everything that is in the heavens and the earth; Thine is the dominion, O LORD, and Thou dost exalt Thyself as head over all.** ¹²Both riches and honor come from Thee, and Thou dost rule over all, and in Thy hand is power and might; and it lies in Thy hand to make great, and to strengthen everyone. ¹³Now therefore, our God, we thank Thee, and praise Thy glorious name.

→ Thine, O LORD, is the greatness and the power and the glory and the victory and the majesty:
What words can describe the greatness of God and His power? We cannot fully understand or describe the greatness of God because He is infinite and we are finite. Listen as Scripture speaks of His greatness: His is the **power** and **glory** and **victory** AND **majesty**.

God is the source of all **power**.

Jeremiah 32:17: Ah Lord GOD! Behold, **Thou hast made the heavens and the earth by Thy great power and by Thine outstretched arm! Nothing is too difficult for Thee,**

God's is the **glory**.

Revelation 15:3-4: ³And they sang the song of Moses the bond-servant of God and the song of the Lamb, saying, "Great and marvelous are Thy works, O Lord God, the Almighty; Righteous and true are Thy ways, Thou King of the nations. ⁴**"Who will not fear, O Lord, and glorify Thy name?** For Thou alone art holy; For all the nations will come and worship before Thee, For Thy righteous acts have been revealed."

God will always prevail in **victory** against His enemies.

Isaiah 42:13: The LORD will go forth like a warrior, He will arouse His zeal like a man of war. He will utter a shout, yes, He will raise a war cry. **He will prevail against His enemies.**

God's authoritative **MAJESTY** is the most regal and beautiful, stately and splendid, awesome and magnificent grandeur of all.

Psalms 96:4-9: ⁴For great is the LORD, and greatly to be praised; He is to be feared above all gods. ⁵For all the gods of the peoples are idols, But the LORD made the heavens. **⁶Splendor and majesty are before Him, Strength and beauty are in His sanctuary.** ⁷Ascribe to the LORD, O families of the peoples, Ascribe to the LORD glory and strength. **⁸Ascribe to the LORD the glory of His name;** Bring an offering, and come into His courts. ⁹Worship the LORD in holy attire; Tremble before Him, all the earth.

Question #6: According to the above Scripture passages, how is the greatness of God reflected in the demonstration of His power, glory, victory, and majesty? _____

→ indeed everything that is in the heavens and the earth; Thine is the dominion, O LORD: The Scripture plainly declares that ***GOD CREATED all things and is the Possessor of everything.*** Since God is the creator of all things, He also is the rightful owner and proprietor of all things. He, therefore, has the sovereign right or prerogative to do as He pleases.

Exodus 9:29: And Moses said to him, “As soon as I go out of the city, I will spread out my hands to the LORD; the thunder will cease, and there will be hail no longer, **that you may know that the earth is the LORD’S.**

Exodus 19:5: Now then, if you will indeed obey My voice and keep My covenant, then you shall be My own possession among all the peoples, **for all the earth is Mine;**

Deuteronomy 10:14: Behold, **to the LORD your God belong heaven and the highest heavens, the earth and all that is in it.**

Job 41:11: Who has given to Me that I should repay him? **Whatever is under the whole heaven is Mine.**

Psalms 24:1: **The earth is the LORD’S, and all it contains,** The world, and those who dwell in it.

Psalms 89:11: The heavens are Thine, the earth also is Thine; **The world and all it contains,** Thou hast founded them.

The Scripture plainly declares that ***GOD RULES and does as He pleases*** with everything He has made. God is **TOTALLY FREE** of external constraint.

Daniel 4:34-35: ³⁴But at the end of that period I, Nebuchadnezzar, raised my eyes toward heaven, and my reason returned to me, and I blessed the Most High and praised and honored Him who lives forever: For **His dominion is an everlasting dominion,** And His kingdom endures from generation to generation. ³⁵And 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 hast Thou done?”

Psalms 135:5-6: ⁵For I know that **the LORD is great, And that our Lord is above all gods.** ⁶**Whatever the LORD pleases, He does,** In heaven and in earth, in the seas and in all deeps.

Question #7: How do the above Scripture passages justify God’s freedom to do as He pleases? _____

→and Thou dost exalt Thyself as head over all: The **Scripture plainly declares** that **God is the highest authority** and that He is the One who **establishes all other authority** in heaven and earth.

Romans 13:1: Let every person be in subjection to the governing authorities. For **there is no authority except from God, and those which exist are established by God.**

God is highly exalted above everything. Therefore, God exalts Himself above us and commands that we worship Him. It is right and proper for Him to do so. Let's consider the appropriateness of God's action. Would it be right for some other being to occupy God's great seat of authority? Would it be proper for a creature to somehow be exalted above the One who created it? Indeed these questions must be answered, "No." If they could be answered "Yes," God would not be God. This is why idolatry is the great sin of mankind. Idolatry gives God's proper place to something other than God when God alone must be exalted as King and Sovereign over us. This is high treason against the greatest majesty that exists. Who can fully express how great a sin unbelief truly is? Who can describe the folly and shame of idolatry? Dare we slap the hand that feeds us? Dare we raise clinched fists against the One who holds our life's breath in His hands? God rightly exalts Himself above us and commands that we worship Him, because it is right and proper. It is, in reality, the highest good of the creature to worship and praise the Creator.

Psalms 97:9: For Thou art **the LORD Most High over all the earth; Thou art exalted far above all gods.**

Exodus 20:2-3: ²I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery. ³**You shall have no other gods before Me.**

Isaiah 2:11-12: ¹¹The proud look of man will be abased, And the loftiness of man will be humbled, And **the LORD alone will be exalted in that day.** ¹²For the LORD of hosts will have a day of reckoning Against everyone who is proud and lofty, And against everyone who is lifted up, That he may be abased.

Question #8: On what basis should Christians submit to human governing authorities? _____

Question #9: What is idolatry? _____

Question #10: Why is idolatry the most terrible of sins? _____

→Both riches and honor come from Thee, and Thou dost rule over all, and in Thy hand is power and might; and it lies in Thy hand to make great, and to strengthen everyone: God in His Sovereignty dispenses what He pleases to all the peoples of the earth. Here the Scripture says that God, the Ruler of all, gives riches to the rich and honor to the honorable. Here the Scripture explicitly states that God has the power and the might to raise up or exalt people and give them strength. Obviously the inverse is also true. If God decides to abase people and make them weak, that is His prerogative. This fact resounds throughout Scripture. God rules His creation, including the earth and men and angels, by His mighty Providence. God is Sovereign over the prosperity and poverty of everyone.