

The Sovereignty of God In Salvation Our Response: Part 5 – Lesson 1

The Sovereign King

God, who created the Universe out of nothing and is even now sustaining all things by the power of His word, reigns as sovereign King above all earthly and heavenly powers and authorities.

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

God possesses *absolute dominion* over all things. He is said to sit on a *throne in heavens!* God did not simply create the Universe and leave it to run on its own. He exercises full control over all He has created. ***God not only controls nature and history, He sustains the entire universe by his power, and orders all things to accomplish His purpose and plans.*** Everything that happens in the world happens by God's design and under His control.

Psalms 47:7-8: ⁷For God is the King of all the earth; Sing praises with a skillful psalm.

⁸**God reigns over the nations,** God sits on His holy throne.

Job 42:1-2: Then Job answered the LORD, and said, **"I know that Thou canst do all things, And that no purpose of Thine can be thwarted."**

Acts 17:24-25: ²⁴The **God who made the world and all things in it,** since He is **Lord of heaven and earth,** does not dwell in temples made with hands; ²⁵neither is He served by human hands, as though He needed anything, since He Himself gives to all life and breath and all things;

He is *the Lord of heaven and earth* and has decreed whatsoever comes to pass (**The Decrees of God**). Even the evil in the world, which God hates, He decrees to achieve His eternal purposes.

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.

God not only permits the events of human history, but has ordained them from eternity past (**Foreordination**), and is furthermore *actively involved* in seeing that they all come to pass (**Providence**), fulfilling 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.

Romans 9:21-22: ²¹Or **does not the potter have a right over the clay, to make from the same lump one vessel for honorable use, and another for common use?** ²²What 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 very idea that God's divine purpose could be frustrated is *unthinkable*. If it could, it would not be *the divine purpose!* Failure of God's purpose negates His sovereignty. God cannot be God and be less than fully sovereign. Scripture is very clear about this!

Ephesians 1:11-12: In Him ¹¹also we have obtained an inheritance, having been **predestined according to His purpose who works all things after the counsel of His will,** ¹²to the end that we who were the first to hope in Christ should be to the praise of His glory.

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

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

God's sovereignty and providence permeates the entire plan of redemption, bringing great blessing to His church, the faithful in Christ Jesus. God's chosen people are freed from slavery

and bondage to sin. Satan, the evil world ruler who has persistently tormented God's saints will be dashed under their feet. God's saints rejoice because He has chosen them out of the world to be brought into an eternal world without sin or sorrow! There in God's kingdom, they will be united to their husband and king, lie down in peace, and rest forever!

Romans 6:17-18: ¹⁷But thanks be to God that though you were slaves of sin, you became obedient from the heart to that form of teaching to which you were committed, ¹⁸and **having been freed from sin, you became slaves of righteousness.**

Romans 16:20: And **the God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet.** The grace of our Lord Jesus be with you.

1 Peter 1:3-5: ³Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His great mercy has caused us to be born again **to a living hope** through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, ⁴**to obtain an inheritance which is imperishable and undefiled and will not fade away, reserved in heaven for you,** ⁵who are protected by the power of God through faith **for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.**

God's sovereign control over the events of life is plainly evident in Scripture. In fact **this theme runs through the whole Bible!** Everywhere we look in Scripture, we see God providentially working in all things to accomplish His purposes for the display of His glory, name, and power! God is bringing His world to **the specific end** that He purposed from all eternity. At the appointed time, all rebellion against His sovereign authority will cease. His purposes for sin and evil will be fully accomplished. Everything will be at rest forever in the Kingdom of God.

Isaiah 46:9-11: ⁹“Remember the former things long past, For I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is no one like Me, 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**’; ¹¹Calling a bird of prey from the east, The man of My purpose from a far country. **Truly I have spoken; truly I will bring it to pass. I have planned it, surely I will do it.”**

Isaiah 14:27: For **the Lord of hosts has planned, and who can frustrate it? And as for His stretched-out hand, who can turn it back?**

Question #211: Drawing from the Scripture passages cited in this section, explain in your own words why the very idea that God's divine purpose could be frustrated is unthinkable. _____

A Worthy Response

How shall we respond to these things? If God is indeed who He claims to be, **the sovereign living Lord of heaven and earth**, then our response to His great plans and purposes must be worthy of Him. Included in such a response would be **godly fear, worship, and adoration:**

Godly Fear

Since God is the creator and sustainer of all, it is appropriate to fear His great power and majesty!

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.”

When the saints of old happened upon a vision of God, they were greatly humbled. Job, for example, upon seeing a vision of God, exclaimed in reverence and awe:

Job 42:5-6: ⁵“I have heard of Thee by the hearing of the ear; But now my eye sees Thee; ⁶**Therefore I retract, And I repent in dust and ashes.**”

Isaiah, upon seeing a vision of the thrice Holy God, humbly acknowledged his sins and the sins of his people:

Isaiah 6:5: Then I said, **“Woe is me, for I am ruined! Because I am a man of unclean lips, And I live among a people of unclean lips; For my eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts.”**

The prophet **Daniel** was overcome by a vision from God and described his experience:

Daniel 8:27: **Then I, Daniel, was exhausted and sick for days.** Then I got up again and carried on the king's business; but I was astounded at the vision, and there was none to explain it.

Later, he saw a heavenly messenger and records the encounter:

Daniel 10:7-12: ⁷Now I, Daniel, alone saw the vision, while the men who were with me did not see the vision; **nevertheless, a great dread fell on them, and they ran away to hide themselves.** ⁸So I was left alone and saw this great vision; **yet no strength was left in me, for my natural color turned to a deathly pallor, and I retained no strength.** ⁹But I heard the sound of his words; and as soon as I heard the sound of his words, **I fell into a deep sleep on my face, with my face to the ground.** ¹⁰**Then behold, a hand touched me and set me trembling on my hands and knees.** ¹¹And he said to me, “O Daniel, man of high esteem, understand the words that I am about to tell you and stand upright, for I have now been sent to you.” And when he had spoken this word to me, **I stood up trembling.** ¹²Then he said to me, “Do not be afraid, Daniel, for from the first day that you set your heart on understanding this and on humbling yourself before your God, your words were heard, and I have come in response to your words.”

Daniel was afraid in God's presence, and rightly so. A mere glimpse of Him can kill a man (Exodus 33:20)! When the Apostle John had a vision of the glorified Christ he responded in terror.

Revelation 1:17-18: ¹⁷**And when I saw Him, I fell at His feet as a dead man.** And He laid His right hand upon me, saying, **“Do not be afraid; I am the first and the last,** ¹⁸**and the living One; and I was dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore, and I have the keys of death and of Hades.”**

All these who encountered God responded in fear. We can therefore conclude that anyone who sees himself in the light of God's holiness will react the same way. This fear does not spur a desire to run away, however. It inspires deep respect and reverence, a worshipful trembling before the power, purity and holiness of God. This happens as we contemplate our sinfulness and the many ways we have sinned against His purity and power. Were it not for His great mercy toward sinners, we would be consumed by the fire of His wrath! Knowing this, in deep reverence we express our thankfulness for His great mercy and our respect for His purity, holiness, and power. Scripture comforts us with its assurance that God *delights* in these manifestations of genuine humility!

Isaiah 66:1-2: ¹Thus says the LORD, “Heaven is My throne, and the earth is My footstool. Where then is a house you could build for Me? And where is a place that I may rest? ²For My hand made all these things, Thus all these things came into being,” declares the LORD. **“But to this one I will look, To him who is humble and contrite of spirit, and who trembles at My word.”**

Psalm 34:15-19: ¹⁵The eyes of the LORD are toward the righteous, And **His ears are open to their cry.** ¹⁶The face of the LORD is against evildoers, To cut off the memory of them from the earth. ¹⁷**The righteous cry and the LORD hears,** And delivers them out of all their troubles. ¹⁸**The LORD is near to the broken-hearted, And saves those who are crushed in spirit.** ¹⁹Many are the afflictions of the righteous; But the LORD delivers him out of them all.

Psalm 51:15-17: ¹⁵O Lord, open my lips, That my mouth may declare Thy praise. ¹⁶For Thou dost not delight in sacrifice, otherwise I would give it; Thou art not pleased with burnt offering. ¹⁷**The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; A broken and a contrite heart, O God, Thou wilt not despise.**

Question #212: Drawing on the Scripture passages related to “godly fear” cited above, describe this fear in your own words. _____

Question #213: Why is *godly fear* something we should not be afraid of, but actually seek after?

Worship and Adoration

Worship entails ascribing value to something. When we worship something, we treasure it, adore it, and value it; our feelings and attitudes toward it inspire our behavior toward it. Worship generates action. When we worship God, we view Him as supremely valuable and worthy of our adoration and service. In reality, however, to declare God *most valuable* to us is an understatement. That’s because He is the ultimate standard defining value. When we rightly value God, we do not compare Him to any higher standard. Rather, *we esteem Him to be most worthy* of our adoration, praise, and worship.

Exodus 15:11: Who is like Thee among the gods, O LORD? **Who is like Thee, majestic in holiness, Awesome in praises, working wonders?**

Psalm 71:19: For Thy righteousness, O God, reaches to the heavens, **Thou hast done great things; O God, who is like Thee?**

Psalm 86:8: **There is no one like Thee among the gods, O Lord; Nor are there any works like Thine.**

We rightly esteem God above everything else because *everything else derives value in relation to Him*. All the things God has created derive their value from fulfilling His divine purpose for them.

Revelation 4:11: **Worthy art Thou, our Lord and our God,** to receive glory and honor and power; **for Thou didst create all things,** and because of Thy will they existed, and were created.

Psalm 104:5-9: ⁵**He established the earth upon its foundations,** So that it will not totter forever and ever. ⁶Thou didst cover it with the deep as with a garment; The waters were standing above the mountains. ⁷**At Thy rebuke they fled;** At the sound of Thy thunder they hurried away. ⁸The mountains rose; the valleys sank down **To the place which Thou didst establish for them.** ⁹**Thou didst set a boundary that they may not pass over;** That they may not return to cover the earth.

Job 37:9-13: ⁹Out of the south comes the storm, And out of the north the cold. ¹⁰From the breath of God ice is made, And the expanse of the waters is frozen. ¹¹Also with moisture He loads the thick cloud; He disperses the cloud of His lightning. ¹²And it changes direction, turning around by His guidance, **That it may do whatever He commands it** On the face of the inhabited earth. ¹³**Whether for correction or for His world, Or for lovingkindness, He causes it to happen.**

Why is God worthy to receive glory and honor? Because He created and controls all things. Nothing exists outside the will of God. Everything exists by His design and sustaining providence. How can we do anything less than pay Him homage as the high and lofty One? Indeed, *anything less is wretchedly sinful*, and is, in fact, idolatry—a violation of the first commandment.

Exodus 20:3: You shall have no other gods before Me.

Such sin fails to glorify and esteem God properly. In fact, *the very nature of sin is pride (self-exaltation)*. It declares that our willful desires are more important than God's righteous intent for us. When we sin, we do not esteem Him as Lord and Master (who He truly is). Rather, we usurp God's authority by refusing to esteem Him for who He truly is, Lord and Master of all. This is, indeed, the very definition of sin: to transgress the law, character, and will of God.

Romans 1:18-21: ¹⁸For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven **against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men**, who suppress the truth in unrighteousness, ¹⁹because that which is known about God is evident within them; for God made it evident to them. ²⁰For 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. ²¹For even **though they knew God, they did not honor Him as God, or give thanks**; but they became futile in their speculations, and their foolish heart was darkened.

It is clearly of great importance to value God for who He is by honoring Him and giving thanks for the gracious gift of life He has given us. This theme must be stressed, given the way it emphasized in the Scripture.

1 Chronicles 29:11-13: ¹¹Thine, 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. ¹³**Now therefore, our God, we thank Thee, and praise Thy glorious name.**

Rightly *valuing God* moves us to worship. That is, to *ascribe* value to Him and proclaim His worth. We proclaim the glory of His great power with the words of our mouths and the thoughts and meditations of our hearts. His majestic authority is the most regal and beautiful, stately and splendid, magnificent and amazing grandeur of all. Therefore, we delight in our praises of Him!

Psalms 96:4-9: For 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. ⁶**Splendor 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. ⁸**Ascribe 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.

We are to praise Him and **give Him thanks!** We are to treasure Him and adore for His goodness and power! This is what is appropriate for the creature, to give glory and honor and thanksgiving to the Great Creator!

Psalms 106:1: Praise the LORD! Oh give thanks to the LORD, for He is good; For His lovingkindness is everlasting.

Hebrews 13:15 - ¹⁵Through Him then, let us continually offer up a sacrifice of praise to God, that is, **the fruit of lips that give thanks to His name.**

1 Thessalonians 5:16-18 - ¹⁶Rejoice always; ¹⁷pray without ceasing; ¹⁸**in everything give thanks**; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.

Question #214: Describe “worship and adoration.” _____

Question #215: Which of the above passages seem most helpful to you personally as you seek to worship and adore God most appropriately? _____

