Welcome to

Who is God and Why Does it Matter to Us?

The Sovereign God

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God's Sovereignty

- God is the most important
- God has all authority
- God sustains all things
- God has the right to command, establish laws and standards, exact obedience, and be final judge
- God can freely delegate authority as He so pleases

Romans 13:1b, "For there is no authority except from God, and those which exist are established by God."

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

This statement has no conditions, no limitations, no qualifying statements.

Through prayer we may move God to do something that would not otherwise happen, but if God determines something then nothing can or will ever change its completion.

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, ¹⁰Declaring 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

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.

Names of God related to His sovereignty

- Adonai (Master or Lord)
- The Lord of Hosts
- King
- King Eternal
- King of Kings
- King of the Ages
- Lord
- Lord God Almighty
- Lord Jesus Christ
- Lord of All
- Lord of Glory
- Lord of Lords
- Lord of our Righteousness

- Highest
- The Most High God
- Shepherd
- Chief Shepherd
- Great Shepherd
- Shepherd of our Souls
- Commander
- God over All
- Head of the Body
- Head of the Church
- Leader
- Lion of the Tribe of Judah
- Ruler of God's Creation
- Ruler over Kings of the Earth
- Ruler over Israel

Satan is called:

- "the ruler of this world" (John 16:11)
- "the god of this world" (2 Corinthians 4:4)
- "the prince of the power of the air" (Eph. 2:2)

But is it God who is the "great King over all the earth" (Psalm 47:2)

Isaiah 40:15

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.

God's sovereignty should not be equated with that of earthly kings

An Earthly King	God
From an isolated castle	Is among and in His people
Decrees are best guesses	Decrees are based on omniscience
Enforced by his soldiers and minions	Enforced directly by Himself to each person
May decree laws that benefit only himself	All of His decrees will benefit us
May be corrupt	Is never corrupt
May be overthrown by enemies, by revolutions, or by his own inner circle	Can never be overthrown
Authority is probably shared	Authority is absolute
Spends much of his time maintaining his power	Spends much of His time guiding and perfecting us
Average reign of a medieval king was just over 20 years	Average reign of God is just over an eternity

Daniel 2:21

It is He who changes the times and the epochs; He removes kings and establishes kings; He gives wisdom to wise men and knowledge to men of understanding.

The wicked scorn God's sovereignty

"How could a loving God let that person suffer and die like that?"

"That guy killed some many people and now he is going to spend the rest of his life in jail with free medical care, a warm bed, and three meals a day. Then he'll probably die in his sleep. If there is a God then He is certainly unjust."

"Look at all of the wars, famine, and disasters. Where is God and why doesn't He do something?"

Lamentations 3:39

Why should any living mortal, or any man, Offer complaint in view of his sins?

Romans 14:11

For it is written,

AS I LIVE, SAYS THE LORD, EVERY KNEE SHALL BOW TO ME, AND EVERY TONGUE SHALL GIVE PRAISE TO GOD.

Philippians 2:10-11

¹⁰so that at the name of Jesus EVERY KNEE WILL BOW, of those who are in heaven and on earth and under the earth,

¹¹and that every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

God's perfect will vs. God's permissive will

Genesis 19

¹⁷When they had brought them outside, one said, "Escape for your life! Do not look behind you, and do not stay anywhere in the valley; <u>escape to the mountains</u>, or you will be swept away."

¹⁸But Lot said to them, "Oh no, my lords!

¹⁹"Now behold, your servant has found favor in your sight, and you have magnified your lovingkindness, which you have shown me by saving my life; but <u>I cannot escape to the mountains</u>, for the disaster will overtake me and I will die;

²⁰now behold, this town is near enough to flee to, and it is small. Please, <u>let me</u> escape there (is it not small?) that my life may be saved."

²¹He said to him, "Behold, I grant you this request also, not to overthrow the town of which you have spoken.

²²"Hurry, escape there, for I cannot do anything until you arrive there." Therefore the name of the town was called Zoar.

End-time prophecy is assured

Daniel 4:34-35

For His dominion is an everlasting dominion, And His kingdom endures from generation to generation.

"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?'

All Messianic OT prophecies were completely fulfilled in Jesus Christ

- His place of birth (Micah 5:2)
- ▶ The time of birth (Daniel 9:25)
- The manner of birth (Isaiah 7:14)
- ▶ How He was betrayed (Zechariah 11:11-13)
- ▶ The manner of His Death (Psalm 22:16)
- The piercing of His hands, feet and side (Psalm 22, Zechariah 12:10)
- The fact that people mocked Him (Isaiah 53, Psalm 22)
- How He was buried (Isaiah 53:9)

He found the odds to be 1 in 10¹⁷. To put this in perspective, this many silver dollars would cover the state of Texas two feet deep. Mark only one of these silver dollars. Now blindfold someone and let him parachute and pick only one coin. That this would be the one and only marked coin is the same odds as 1 in 10¹⁷.

George Heron, a French mathematician, calculated that the odds of one man fulfilling only 40 of those prophecies to be 1 in 10^{157} . The estimated number of electrons in the entire universe is only around 10^{79} .

God's sovereignty means that He can use anyone

- 2 Corinthians 12:9-10
- Pand He has said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for power is perfected in weakness " Most gladly, therefore, I will rather boast about my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may dwell in me.
- 10 Therefore I am well content with weaknesses, with insults, with distresses, with persecutions, with difficulties, for Christ's sake; for when I am weak, then I am strong.

Satan rejected God's supremacy

Isaiah 14:13-14

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    13"But you said in your heart,

            I will ascend to heaven;
            I will raise my throne above the stars of God,
            And I will sit on the mount of assembly
            In the recesses of the north.

    14'I will ascend above the heights of the clouds;

            I will make myself like the Most High.'
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Genesis 3:5

For God knows that in the day you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.

Romans 1:25

For they exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever.

Amen.

We cannot serve two masters

Matthew 6:24

No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to one and despise the other you cannot serve God and wealth.

What does God's sovereignty mean to us?

He is not merely a distant observer.

Jeremiah 23:23 declares

'Am I a God who is near,' declares the LORD, 'And not a God far off?'

God can direct and control whatever He wants

Romans 8:28 states

And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose.

We never have to be overcome by Satan or by any other evil or sin.

Psalm 97:1

The Lord reigns; let the earth rejoice.

Discussion Questions

1) In addition to the ones discussed above, what are some other assurances that God's sovereignty means to us?

2) If God is sovereign then why do bad things still happen? Does not this mean that He has relinquished at least a little of His power or authority?

3) How does knowing that God is in control help us in our struggles?

- 4) If God is sovereign then why did He allow sin into the world?
- 5) If God is in control then why does not He just come back now and set everything straight?

6) What are some ways that we can give God greater control of our lives?

7) Can you think of any examples of God's sovereignty being demonstrated in any of the people in the Bible?

Situation

George is not a Christian and every time that you try to bring up the Gospel his response is that he would never want to serve a God that allows such horrors as genocide, torture, and war. So if God really is in control, he will say, then He must not care what happens to people and so is not worthy of our worship. The only other option, he will continue, is that God really is not in control and so then how could He guarantee our eternal future? After giving it careful thought, how would you answer George's contention?