

# The Sovereignty of God

## Part 3: God's Purposes

### Preface

In order to lay some groundwork for the upcoming lessons on God's Purpose and Decrees, we need to understand a few things about God's Decree, His Providence, and His Nature.

- God has many *attributes that make up His character and nature*. These attributes of God are impossible to be fully comprehended by human beings, but can be to some degree understood.
- God's *attributes all function in perfect harmony* with all His other attributes. You cannot separate one attribute of God from His person. God never does anything that denies His own character, but what God does is an expression of who He is. It is impossible for to violate His own nature.
- God made the creation, (angels, the physical universe, mankind), in order to fulfill a grand design or purpose. We call this *eternal purpose His "Decree."* The creation is like stage upon which God is working His plan for the ages.
- God's creation exists in time, and thus the outworking of all things in time or history, are *managed by God's Providence* to achieve His purpose.
- God uses different aspects of the creation as *means* to achieve certain purposes within His grand design, but they all work together for the one great goal and objective of God's eternal plan. These means of God can be categorized as; *Creation, Providence, Redemption, and Damnation.*
- *History is therefore the outworking of the eternal purpose(s) of God*, His Decree, which is carried out by Him through the means of Creation, Providence, Redemption, and Damnation.

In order to get a basic understanding necessary for understanding God's Decree, we must grasp a few basic things about God's Sovereignty, Power and Knowledge. Although God is Sovereign, All-Powerful and All-Knowing, these attributes never function independently of totality of His character. God always uses His Sovereignty, Power and Knowledge in accordance with His Holiness, Wisdom, Righteousness (Justice), and Goodness and Love.

#### Sovereignty

God is Sovereign. But what does this mean? The word "*sovereignty*" means "*SUPREME AUTHORITY*" and in earthly realms speaks of one who holds the *highest* place of authority such as a Monarch, or President or Ruler of a province or territory. But consider that when this term is applied to God, the Creator of the heavens and the earth, that the meaning takes on a much fuller sense. God is in heaven and having made the world by His own power out of nothing, and is even now sustaining everything by His powerful Word, God is **THE SOVEREIGN KING** above all earthly and heavenly powers and authorities. As the Scripture says.....

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

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 He is not in control of what takes place in it. *Well the truth is God not only controls nature and history, but He 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 what is happening in the world is happening at the express purpose and will of God, who rules the world and all who are in it. *He is "the Lord of Heaven and Earth"*(Acts 17:24) and whatsoever happens in the world, happens because God has permitted, indeed He has decreed it to happen (**THE DECREES OF GOD**). Although there is much evil in the world, which God hates, He is allowing these things to achieve His eternal purposes which will, without a doubt, come to pass. 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 - 4** **The LORD has made everything for its own purpose**, Even the wicked for the day of evil. NASB

That the divine purpose could meet with frustration is *unthinkable*, for then it could not be the divine purpose! Failure of God’s purpose is failure of His sovereignty. God cannot be God and NOT be Sovereign, for then He would NOT be God. Scripture is very clear about this!

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

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

**Isaiah 10:15 - 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. NASB

**Isaiah 54:16 - 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**. NASB

Consider all the aspects of God’s Sovereignty in 1 Chronicles 29:11-13.

**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.** 12 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. 13 Now therefore, our God, we thank Thee, and praise Thy glorious name. NASB

## **Power – Omnipotence**

Consider how God’s power is related to His Sovereignty. If God be All-Powerful, than He has the ability to do as He pleases and is therefore by default the **SUPREME AUTHORITY**.

**Job 23:13 - 13** "But He is unique and who can turn Him? And **what His soul desires, that He does**. NASB

**Isaiah 43:13 - 13** "Even from eternity I am He; And **there is none who can deliver out of My hand; I act and who can reverse it?**" NASB

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

Let us see then how the Scripture speaks of God’s mighty power, indeed it describes Him as Omnipotent or All-Powerful. The **Scripture plainly declares** that *God can do anything and nothing is too hard for Him*.

**Jeremiah 32:17 - 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**, NASB

**Matthew 19:26 - 26** And looking upon them Jesus said to them, "With men this is impossible, **but with God all things are possible.**" NASB

**Job 42:2** - 2 "I know that **Thou canst do all things**, And that no purpose of Thine can be thwarted. NASB  
In fact, God had the creative power to make the universe from nothing, and He sustains the same universe by His power. He made the world for His own pleasure and by His own will.

**Revelation 4:11** - 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.**" NAS  
His creation is just a *small example* of his mighty power. In the creation of the universe, God's resources were not depleted in any way, they are infinitely vast! Since God therefore created all things, He also transcends them, and ***His power and dominion are infinitely greater than everything He created!*** God is actively sustaining everything in creation, He exercises His power in every moment of time, being sure to bring to pass "all His good pleasure." He made all things with a very purposeful will, and He possesses the **power to execute** His divine will and bring His intentions to an expected end. He began alone, and created all things out of nothing, and by this great truth is known as "The Almighty."

**Isaiah 40:26** - 26 Lift up your eyes on high And see who has created these stars, The One who leads forth their host by number, He calls them all by name; **Because of the greatness of His might and the strength of His power Not one of them is missing.** 28 Do you not know? Have you not heard? **The Everlasting God, the LORD, the Creator of the ends of the earth** Does not become weary or tired. His understanding is inscrutable. NASB

**John 1:1-3** - :1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2 He was in the beginning with God. 3 **All things came into being by Him**, and **apart from Him nothing came into being that has come into being** NAS

**Colossians 1:16-17** - 16 For by Him all things were created, both in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities-- **all things have been created by Him and for Him.** 17 And He is before all things, and **in Him all things hold together.** NAS

Because of this truth it also follows that any power that is in the creation is granted by God. If God made everything out of nothing, than nothing has power unless it has been delegated by God. In fact the **Scripture plainly declares** that God's power is far above all earthly powers.

**Ephesians 1:19-21** - 19 and what is **the surpassing greatness of His power** toward us who believe. These are in accordance with the working of the strength of His might 20 which He brought about in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead, and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places, 21 **far above all rule and authority and power and dominion**, and every name that is named, not only in this age, but also in the one to come. NASB

Consider, if someone were more powerful than God, than they would have authority over Him, but this is in fact impossible. Therefore, because God is Omnipotent, He is also **SOVEREIGN**.

## Knowledge

God knows everything. Because God is the source of all things, making everything from nothing, He is therefore the source of all knowledge and wisdom. Let us examine a definition of Omniscience to try and understand how complete God's Knowledge is...AW Tozer writes....

*"God knows all that can be known. And this He knows instantly and with a fullness of perfection that includes every possible item of knowledge concerning everything that exists or could have existed anywhere in the universe at any time in the past or that may exist in the centuries or ages yet unborn."*

We could add to this that God knows all of the data of every possible cause and effect, feeling and desire, creature, event, and every other thing that can be named. His knowledge is complete and eternal. The **Scripture plainly declares** that God knows everything....

**1 John 3:20** - 20 in whatever our heart condemns us; for **God is greater than our heart, and knows all things.** NASB

**Isaiah 40:28** - 28 Do you not know? Have you not heard? The Everlasting God, the LORD, the Creator of the ends of the earth Does not become weary or tired. **His understanding is inscrutable.** NASB