

For Private Circulation Only

VOL. 19 No. 10 | October 2024

GRACE & PEACE

An E-periodical for spiritual enlightenment, edification and encouragement

PAGE 2 The **SOVEREIGNTY**
of **GOD**



PAGE 9 'Reconcile Friends'

GRACE & PEACE

VOL. 19 No. 10 | OCTOBER 2024

IN THIS ISSUE

EDITORIAL



**Our Sovereign Lord:
The King and the Judge**

1

PERSPECTIVE



The Sovereignty of God

2

DOCTRINE



Sovereignty and Responsibility

4

STUDY



The Sovereign Grace of God

6

ANECDOTE-1



Surface Winds and Ocean Currents

8

ANECDOTE-2



'Reconcile Friends'

9

OUTLINE- 1



Sovereignty of God in Human history

9

OUTLINE- 2



In the Lord's Hands

10

PRACTICAL



"Your God Reigns!"

11

GOSPEL



Christ the Judge of All

14

REFLECTIONS



Regeneration or Restoration!

15

Our SOVEREIGN Lord: The King and the Judge

“God is still on the throne, And He will remember His own;
Though trials may press us and burdens distress us,
He never will leave us alone; God is still on the throne,
He never forsaketh His own;
His promise is true; He will not forget you,
God is still on the throne.”

This is one of the choruses that still echoes in my ears used to be sung by the late Dr. M. A. Thomas, of Emmanuel Bible Institute, North India. When faced with innumerable hardships from every corner, against the ministry, he found solace and strength in God's sovereignty: His ability and provision. So, almost in every spiritual gathering he used to sing this and similar hymns that challenged us also to trust and wait for divine intervention, irrespective of the issue. Witnessing such extraordinary working of God in those days taught this writer to trust in the Lord ‘who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think’ (Eph. 3:20).

Few take up this topic of God's sovereignty only to debate, but a sincere student of God's Word finds it very inspiring and strengthening. Our Lord is still on the throne. He alone is the King, the righteous Judge who knows every secret, never makes a mistake, and does everything well. Nothing is impossible to Him, nor can anything or anyone stop Him. Let us meditate upon this most enabling yet humbling truth of God's Word. We begin with basic concepts like the things involved in ‘The Sovereignty of God’ and His expectation in the context of this truth. Then **Bro. Thomson B. Thomas** briefly discusses ‘the sovereignty vs. Human responsibility’ which is contentious to many but dear brother presents it in a very balanced manner. **Bro. Aby Kuruvilla** focuses on the sovereign grace of God displayed in the work of salvation accomplished by the sufferings of the Lord Jesus Christ. **Bro. Dennie Matthews’** study on the ‘Three aspects of God's sovereignty’ - in creation, salvation and in our daily life is brief but profitable. **Bro. David Manchala** as usual outlines the ‘Sovereignty of God in Human history’ – from Eden to Eternity in seven steps. Finally, there is a meditation on the practical aspect of divine sovereignty from the experience of Israel entitled, “Your God Reigns!”

Through all these writings, the writers call upon the readers, not only to take hold of this vital biblical doctrine but be submissive to this sovereign God. Of course, there is much more included in this issue like anecdotes, gospel outlines, and worthy quotes. Please take time to read and if profitable share with others as well. Also, we welcome your feedback. Thanks to all who took the pain to respond in the past; this inspires us to continue this work.

With love and prayers,

NTK

THE SOVEREIGNTY OF GOD

We are going through one of the most difficult and uncertain periods of recent times. Apart from common challenges like climate change and global periodic pandemics, the conflict in many lands presents a grim scenario. Political conditions in many countries are shaking due to various reasons. Human rights violations by authoritarian regimes are on the rise. Added to these domestic and international issues, all of us have our troubles from different corners. How do you find solace and strength in such a melancholic condition?

One of the fundamental biblical truths that lift us up in these circumstances is the sovereignty of God. It is one of the basic truths about God that the scripture repeatedly refers to. His people should never forget this truth and its practical implications.



Let us consider a few of those references: Deu. 4:39:- *“Therefore know this day, and consider it in your heart, that the LORD Himself is God in heaven above and on the earth beneath; there is no other.”*

Job 9:12:- *“If He takes away, who can hinder Him? Who can say to Him, ‘What are You doing?’”*

Psa. 29:10:- *“The LORD sat enthroned at the Flood, And the LORD sits as King forever.”*

Isa. 40:22-23:- *“It is He who sits above the circle of the earth, And its inhabitants are like grasshoppers, Who stretches out the heavens like a curtain, And spreads them out like a tent to dwell in. He brings the princes to nothing; He makes the judges of the earth useless.”*

Notice how forcefully the Lord reminds the people of Israel of His superiority and sovereignty to the people of Israel.

Our Lord’s model prayer concludes with this assertion, “Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever.” (Matt. 6:13b). When Pilate asked the Lord Jesus, “Are You a king then?” Jesus answered, “You say rightly that I am a king.” (John 18: 37). In His parting promise too, our Lord categorically declares His absolute authority in heaven and on earth (Matt. 28:18).

There are many more such passages that explicitly reveal the complete power our Lord has over the whole universe (Rom. 11:33-36; Colo. 1:16-18).

Four things involved:

1. **His dominion.** He rules over all His creation.
2. **His control.** There is nothing outside His jurisdiction whether man, animal or nature (Dan. 4:35; Rom. 13:1; Matt. 8:27; Psa. 104).
3. **His choice.** God does whatever He chooses; nobody can stop nor question Him (Job 9:12; 42: 2; Psa. 135: 6; Rom. 9:19).
4. **His permission.** Yet, scripture also reveals that God may allow man's way, but even then, ultimately His eternal purposes alone are fulfilled.

As with any other truth about God, we are unable to comprehend fully this divine authority over all. For example, consider the way God makes use of human failures to accomplish His intentions. In Judges Chapter 1, the writer says that the Israelites could not remove the entire Canaanites, Ammonites, etc., from Canaan, but later we read it was the Lord who left them (2:23: 3:1)! That shows how the Lord holds us accountable for our actions, at the same time, wonderfully turns around our foolishness unto our own good and even for His glory.

Five Things expected:

- a. **Rejoice.** The tired and traumatized people of Judah were instructed to get up from their slumber and rejoice because of the good news of His reign. Their slavery under foreign nations is going to end. They will enjoy peace, salvation, and justice under His rule (Isa. 52:7; Psa. 97:1, 2).

Of course, as a nation, Israel will experience this joy and peace only in the future, but all who acknowledge and yield to the Lordship of Christ today experience happiness and peace spiritually.

- b. **Humble.** The proud and haughty Nebuchadnezzar had to humbly acknowledge the sovereignty of God (Dan. 4:34, 35). The more we contemplate the glory and majesty of our Lord we can't but humble ourselves confessing our nothingness before Him.
- c. **Tremble.** Another response God expects from man has been expressed by the Psalmist. "The LORD reigns; Let the peoples tremble! He dwells between the cherubim; Let the earth be moved!" (Psa. 99:1).
- d. **Worship.** In Isaiah's response to the vision of the enthroned Lord, we see all these responses and more. With fear and trembling he confessed his unworthiness and consecrated himself to Him (Isa 6:1ff). Apostle John too fell at the feet of the Lord with a sense of wonder and awe (Rev. 1: 17).
- e. **Witness.** God wanted the people of Judah not only to get up but speak the truth from every mountain-top in Jerusalem, "Your God reigns!" (Isa 52:7ff). For it's good news of peace, happiness and salvation to His people. Apostle Paul quotes this verse and applies it to the preaching of the gospel today (Rom. 10:15). It is the

declaration of who our Lord Jesus is and what He has accomplished for sinful man. It is high time to make known afresh that He is the King of kings and the Lord of lords who alone is the hope of the world for its salvation and survival (Rev. 17:14; 19:16).

Conclusion:

In times of suffering, uncertainty and chaos, let us meditate upon the sovereignty of our God. The present circumstances may be unfavourable; unexpected situations are being unfolded, and even the future looks grim and gloomy.

The enemy may be working overtime to defeat us by hook or crook. The dear ones from whom we expected support and sympathy might be staying away. In all such situations, let us ponder upon this truth that our Lord is still on the throne.

What a comfort and consolation it brings to our hearts that He alone is the King who controls everything, everyone and every circumstance! He does all things well for the good of His people (Mark 7:37; Rom. 8:28). Let us continue to trust and follow Him, “for this is God, Our God forever and ever; He will be our guide Even to death.” (Psalm 48:14). **G&P**

DOCTRINE

Bro. Thomson B Thomas, Mumbai

SOVEREIGNTY AND RESPONSIBILITY

The sovereignty of God and human responsibility, in human affairs, have resulted in much contention among theologians from early times. A W Pink calls it ‘the Gordian knot of theology.’¹ We do not intend to add anything to the tension or reduce it. We only aim to state the impossibility of a conclusion with our limited understanding of things. At the same time, it should stir us up to, positively, respond to this important truth in the scripture. This we attempt with the realization and the acknowledgment that these are beyond human grasp. However, the imperceptibility of matters about God should not make us give up any earnest inquiries.

GOD IS SOVEREIGN

The title ‘Sovereign’ means the one who is in complete authority, a king, a lord, or the supreme. Applied to God, it means God is in full authority over all His creation. Thus, He controls all things, and as He is present everywhere, there is no area where this authority is not exercised. The truths about God’s sovereignty are associated with the facts of His omnipresence, authority, and control.

God's sovereign actions are seen throughout the scripture. He made all things for His glory and regulated them with recompenses and rewards. In Abraham, He chose Israel and kept them alive as a nation, in adverse situations. He promised them the land of Canaan. In due time, they were brought into the land and He planted them there. Their existence, despite all the attempts of their enemies to wipe them out, is a testimony to His sovereign control. His control is over, all nature and nations. As it is often said, "History is His story." As the psalmist says, "Our God is in the heaven; He does whatever He pleases" (Psalms 115:3). Testimonies to these in the scripture are numerous. Human life, attitudes, and decisions come under this sovereign control. The scripture attests that even human sin and salvation are determined by Him. The sovereign control of God on all things is efficacious, eternal, universal, and total.

FREEDOM OF HUMANS

Juxtaposed to the sovereignty of God is the freedom or free will of man. When God created man, He was not creating robots or machines, but men and women with the freedom to decide and choose freely. Though Adam and Eve were forbidden from eating from the tree of the fruit of the knowledge of good and evil, they had the freedom to do whatever they wanted. John M Frame mentions two types of freedoms, freedom in the compatibilist sense and with the sense of libertarianism, the former being "the freedom to do what you want to do" and the latter being "the freedom to do the opposite of everything you choose to do."² In the light of the sovereign control of God over everything, he asserts that human freedom is compatibilist.



Throughout the scripture, we see God's call to man to exercise his will and obey the commands of the Lord. The words of the Lord, while He called people to follow Him, "If any man will come," "whosoever believes" and other similar phrases indicate the freedom of man to accept or go contrary to the word of the Lord. Further, for human failures, paradoxically, God holds man morally responsible also.

SOVEREIGNTY VERSUS FREEDOM

Humanly speaking, these two ideas, of divine sovereignty and human responsibility, cannot coexist. If God is in control of all things, how can anyone say that man is free and vice versa? These look like an apparent contradiction, a paradox. But the contradiction is in the limited human understanding. The scripture presents both these equally. According to it, God is sovereign while man is free. Any attempt to reconcile both these truths seen in the scripture has only been futile.

J I Packer, in his book 'Evangelism and God's Sovereignty,' calls them an 'antinomy.'³ Antinomy is defined as "a contradiction between two beliefs or conclusions that are in themselves reasonable, a paradox." In the human body and nature around, there are many antinomies in existence. They are contradictory. But they, whether elements or principles exist without destroying each other, which humans are not able to explain. Packer asks why cannot we accept these two contradictory truths in the Scripture, just as it is. Yes, God is sovereign and at the same time, humans are free also.

HUMAN RESPONSE

The truths about divine sovereignty and human responsibility are seen evidently in the scripture, as explained above. They are active in every area of our lives, whether salvation, prayer, daily life, future, or any other area. As God's revelation demands a response, in what ways must we respond to these truths? Firstly, these truths call us to a worshipful life. Just think about God in control of all things, even our thoughts and decisions! Thoughts of these should lead us to awe and respect for God who is sovereign. Secondly, it demands an attitude of submission. If God controls all things, it demands that He should be preeminent in all things of our lives.

Thirdly, it provides confidence to the believers in all situations. Quoting Hodge, Henry Theissen writes, "This sovereignty of God is the ground of peace and confidence to all his people. They rejoice that the Lord God omnipotent reigneth; that neither necessity, nor chance, nor the folly of man, nor the malice of Satan controls the sequence of events and all their issues."⁴ These truths revealed in the scripture, are not for us to contend upon, but to appreciate and appropriate its worth and respond with our lives in obedience.

G&P

1. Arthur W Pink, The Sovereignty of God, Pg. 178
2. John, Frame M, The Doctrine of God, thegospelcoalition.org
3. Packer, JI, Evangelism and God's Sovereignty
4. Theissen, Henry, Lectures on Systematic Theology

STUDY

Bro. Aby Kuruvilla, Mumbai

The SOVEREIGN *grace* of GOD

Apostle John vividly recalls God's grace when he writes concerning God the Son, " We beheld His glory, full of grace and truth" (John 1:14). Grace and truth not only paint the

character of our Lord's life on earth but also point to God whose sovereign ways regarding our salvation are beyond our understanding. Let us consider four sovereign displays of God's grace.

1. Grace in Sovereign Intervention

God, in His perfect time and wondrous way, intervened in human history in an extraordinary display of grace. Paul would calculate this intervention as “in due time” (Rom. 5:6). The writer of the Hebrews states, “God... in these last days” (Heb. 1:1-2). But Paul will again say that this is the “fullness of time” (Gal. 4:4). All these verses show us that His intervention was not an afterthought, but sovereignly wrought out, and intertwined in grace.

The prophets of old could not distinguish between the acceptable year of the Lord and the day of vengeance (Isa. 61:2). That was not revealed to them as it is to us. Christ taught, “The Son of Man came not to destroy lives, but to save them” (Luke 9:56). This was contrary to what the Jews understood about the Son of Man who was to come as a Judge (Dan. 7:13-14). It was sovereign grace that the Son of Man instead was first revealed as bringing salvation and not as a Judge (also see, Luke 22:69).

2. Grace in Sovereign Inclusion

God’s plan for salvation is not limited to a few chosen people. The Israelites, indeed, were sovereignly chosen by God among all the families of the earth (Amos 3:2; Rom. 9:4). They had a greater revelation of God than the nations who lived in those times. But that didn’t ensure them their salvation. The Bible tells us of others like Lot, Job, Rahab and Ruth, people who are not Israelites, but who by grace were saved through faith, the scriptures further asserting that they are righteous.

Today, “the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men” (Titus 2:11). The scope of that revelation in all its richness has not been limited to a select few, but made available to all the world! The Church is a testament to the sovereign grace of God working to include those who were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world (Eph. 2:12).

It is not so much the sovereign election about this earth that makes us wonder at the grace of God, as much as the sovereign inclusion of those that are not deserving into His kingdom.

3. Grace in Sovereign Justification

Sovereign inclusion doesn’t mean that the sinner is required to enter the kingdom on the merits of his own righteousness. It would be like that man in the parable who was found without the wedding garment, fit only to be thrown out (Matt. 22:12).

The Jews sought to attain the righteousness of the law through their works. But they couldn’t. The Gentiles, which followed not after righteousness, have attained to righteousness, even the righteousness which is of faith, and thus declare, not their own, but the righteousness of Christ Jesus: that He might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus (Rom. 3:26; 9:30-32).

God has decreed that we should be “justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus” (Rom. 3:24). This is His sovereign grace that justification is freely provided and meritoriously rested in the righteousness of Christ Jesus.

4. Grace in Sovereign Provision

Some suggest that if God wanted to He could simply say a word and forgive our sins, yet He sent His Son to die for our sins. But that is suggesting something that is contrary to God's holiness and justice. Without the shedding of blood, there is no remission (Heb. 9:22). The law prescribed different animals to be killed so that the sinner could be forgiven (Lev. 4:20). But that forgiveness was to the effect that the sinner could maintain fellowship with God who dwelt in the midst of them. Those sacrifices were not effectual in saving the sinner to the uttermost (Heb. 10:4).

Now, David understood that it was the grace of God that saved sinners. He says, "Blessed is the man to whom the LORD does not impute iniquity, And in whose spirit there is no deceit. For You do not desire sacrifice, or else I would give it; You do not delight in burnt offering" (Ps. 32:2; 51:16). The sinner was forgiven not because he brought a sacrifice, but because he realised his sin and came unto God seeking forgiveness. It was by grace through faith that he was forgiven.

The sacrifices, we know in hindsight, pointed to that perfect sacrifice of Christ. God ordained sacrifices in the past so that they would remind man the seriousness of sin, the need for the shedding of blood to approach God, and the various glories of His Son that they would typify. But for God, it is that one sacrifice of His Son that would be the atonement for the sins of all of mankind from the beginning of this world even to its end (Rom. 3:25). God in His grace has sovereignly provided Himself a perfect sacrifice in Christ Jesus.

Summary

Grace can be displayed in varying capacities. However, when we consider the grace of God, it is that which proceeds from the highest of heights, from the One who alone is Sovereign. Therefore in all measures, it surpasses all expectations of man and is in accordance to the character of the One who sits on the throne. It is unsearchable in its intervention, unexplainable in its inclusion, immeasurable in its justification and unspeakable in its provision. **G&P**

ANECDOTE -1

Surface Winds and Ocean Currents

In the cold waters around Greenland are innumerable icebergs, some little and some gigantic. If you'd observe them carefully, you'd notice that sometimes the small icecaps move in one direction while their massive counterparts flow in another. The explanation is simple. Surface winds drive the little ones, whereas the huge masses of ice are carried along by deep ocean currents. When we face trials and tragedies, it's helpful to see our lives as being subject to two forces -- surface winds and ocean currents. The winds represent everything changeable, unpredictable, and distressing. But operating simultaneously with these gusts and gales is another force that's even more powerful. It is the sure movement of God's wise and sovereign purposes, the deep flow of His unchanging love.

Source: Unknown

ANECDOTE -2

‘Reconcile Friends’

No one will deny that there are many mysteries connected with divine sovereignty and human responsibility. Nowhere does God ask us to choose between these two truths, because they both come from God and are a part of God’s plan. They do not compete; they cooperate. The fact that we cannot fully understand how they work together does not deny the fact that they do. When a man asked Charles Spurgeon how he reconciled divine sovereignty and human responsibility, Spurgeon replied: “I never try to reconcile friends!”



-Warren W. Wiersbee

OUTLINE-1

Bro. David Manchala, Hyderabad

SOVEREIGNTY OF GOD IN HUMAN HISTORY

The term ‘Sovereignty of God’ is not exactly mentioned in the Bible just like Trinity, Incarnation, Rapture etc., Yet this truth is seen throughout the Scriptures (Psalm 115:3; Daniel 4:32, Romans 11:33-36). God’s sovereignty is seen in Creation, Revelation, Redemption and Final Judgement. In this magazine, the rest of the brethren might have looked at God’s sovereignty from different perspectives. But we will study the Sovereignty of God in 7 steps concerning His dealings with mankind, from the Garden of Eden to Eternity. Notice, that Romans 9, 10, and 11 chapters throw a spotlight on ‘Sovereignty of God in His dealings with Mankind’. Thus, they are very important chapters. This particular section begins with Apostle Paul’s weeping, pain and distress, but ends with worship, praise, and doxology (Romans 9:1-2; 11:33-36).



Step 1: Creation to Confusion i.e., from Adam to Abraham (Genesis 1 to 11). It covers at least 2000 years. In this period God in His sovereignty looked at humanity as one unit.

Step 2: Call of Abraham to Calvary (Genesis 12 to Gospel of John 21). It covers a period of at least 2000 years. In His Sovereign plan, Lord God viewed humanity as two groups, Jews and Gentiles.

Step 3: God dealt mostly with Israel during this period and over-winked at Gentiles (Acts 17:30). He blessed the nation of Israel with many privileges and blessings. Yet, He has also shown His kindness towards Gentiles (Acts 14:17, 18).

Step 4: After the death, and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ and the arrival of the Holy Spirit, God in His 'sovereign will' commenced a third group 'Church', a called-out company ('Ecclesia') from both Jews and Gentiles (Romans 9:22-24)

Step 5: During this period, initially Jews were part of the Church, but after the call of Apostle Paul, more and more Gentiles became part of the Universal Church. Now in this present era, blindness happened to Israel, until the fullness of the Gentiles came in (Romans 9:25).

Step 6: Very soon rapture is going to happen, third group Church will be caught up in mid-air (1 Thessalonians 4:13-18). Only two groups will remain (Israel and Gentiles).

Step 7: During this time Israel will be regathered, restored and revived. The Golden Era of Millenium will commence with the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Israel will be a sovereign nation. Eternity will commence after the Millennium. All these movements are the sovereign will of God and for His glory alone. Our Sovereign God is the Commencer, Controller and Concluder of Times. **G&P**

OUTLINE-2

IN THE LORD'S HANDS

"They shall perish.....Thou remains" Hebrews 1:12

1. The Place of Blessings, Deut 33:3
2. The Place of Chastisement, 2Sam 24:14
3. The Place of Creation, Job 10:8
4. The Place of Life, Job 12:10
5. The Place of Keeping, Psa 31:15
6. The Place of Supply, Psa 104:28
7. The Place of Disposal, Prov 21:1
8. The Place of Hiding and Usefulness, Isa 49:2
9. The Place of Security, John 10: 28, 29

- Source: Unknown

"If there is one single reason why good people turn evil, it is because they fail to recognize God's ownership over their kingdom....above all their lives."

Erwin W. Lutzer

“Your God Reigns!”

“How beautiful upon the mountains Are the feet of him who brings good news, Who proclaims peace, Who brings glad tidings of good things, Who proclaims salvation, Who says to Zion, “Your God reigns!”” (Isaiah 52:7)

One of the truths that inspire the people of God everywhere at any age is the Sovereignty of our God. In the midst of increasing insecurity and turmoil all over, let us ponder upon this reality and stay strong.

Prophet Isaiah, in the second part of his book (chapters 40 – 66) comforts the people of Judah (40:1). He finds them in the Babylonian captivity. Being away from their land and home, naturally, they are depressed and discouraged. They even doubted the power of their Lord Jehovah and compared Him with the gods of the Assyrians and Babylonians. Since they could easily plunder the land of Israel and Judah, the people of Judah concluded that the gods of the invaders were powerful and the Lord Jehovah was helpless.

DISTINCTIVENESS

To encourage these disheartened captives, Isaiah calls upon them to ‘behold their God’, 40:9. Then, through a series of messages the Lord Himself presents His distinctiveness, with a rebuke, “To whom then will you liken Me...” (40: 18, 25, 28).



i. The Creator and Upholder, 40: 12-14, 26.

The oceans and heaven fit into His hands. He is the omniscient One who needs no one’s counsel. 40:13, 14 cf. Rom. 11:34 1 Cor. 2.16.

ii. The sovereign One. 40: 15 – 17, 21 – 24;

The nations of the world are like drops from a bucket and dust on a scale before the LORD. He finds man-like insects. These metaphors indicate the nothingness of the world powers however strong they may appear today.

iii. The Incomparable One. 40: 18-20, 25.

It’s foolishness to compare the LORD with man-made gods. His unsearchable wisdom and unfailing power are available to all who wait upon Him (40: 28 – 31). No believer needs to be weak and helpless.

In continuation of such uplifting messages, in chapter 52 Isaiah exhorts the exhausted Judah to get up from their sleep. Their time of humiliation and bondage is over. It is time to put on strength and stay holy and beautiful again because their LORD is on the throne and their restoration is near (cf. Isa 52: 1 – 7).

SOVEREIGNTY

Isaiah also expects the messengers in Israel to proclaim from the top of the mountains in the hearing of all,

“Your God reigns!” (V.7). He describes this message of God’s sovereignty as glad tidings and a message of peace and salvation to all in Judah.

‘Your God reigns’ - What a pacifying saying for the dejected people in bondage! It is not the pagan kings on the throne but their own Lord God Almighty. It is He who controls the affairs of man. Nothing is beyond His authority. He allows the earthly kings to sit on their throne; similarly, it is He who removes them in time (Dan. 2: 20-22).

Sad to notice that many find the sovereignty of God only as a hot topic for debate and deliberation. As a result, there is a kind of apathy towards this vital truth, and many choose to avoid it altogether.

The truth about the sovereignty of God is found throughout the scripture, and the Lord repeatedly reminded His people to acknowledge it. (Deut. 4: 39; Psa. 29:10; 47:2; 96:1; 97:1; John 1:49; 18:37; Col. 1: 16 - 18, etc.) Notice the concluding words of the model prayer the Lord Jesus taught His disciples; “For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.” (Matt. 6:13b)

MEANING

God’s sovereignty can be summarized as follows:

- ▶ He rules over the entire universe (Zech. 9:10).
- ▶ There is nothing outside His dominion and control. Whether it is man, beast or even nature, all are under the control of the Lord God Almighty (Isa. 37: 29; Pro. 21:1; Matt. 8:27; Dan. 2:20, 21; 4:35).
- ▶ He does whatever He chooses and nobody can question Him or resist Him (Job 9:12; 42:2; Psa. 135: 6; Rom. 9:19).

Yes, it is true when man rejects the Lord’s rule and rebels, He may allow it. That does not mean He ceased to be the King. For example, when the people of Israel sought a king like the neighboring nations, the Lord Jehovah permitted even though He expressed His displeasure (1Sam. 8:7). Yet the word of God proves more than once, ultimately God’s perfect will comes to pass and no one can frustrate the eternal purposes of God. He is still on the throne.

RESPONSE

Our finite mind may continue to struggle with divine mysteries. Nevertheless, our explicit faith and confidence in the truth of God's absolute authority will revolutionize our lives. In fact, it was this vision of the Lord on the throne that transformed Isaiah's life (Isa. 6). There, you see praise and worship; confession and consecration; appointment and assurance as Isaiah faced the throne of God. No doubt, the reason behind all the bold and successful ministry of the prophet can be attributed to His conviction that the Lord is the King.

Today, in the national as well as international scene we see unprecedented skirmishes and commotion. In such a scenario, let us find comfort and reassurance in this truth. Governments may come and go, policies may be changed, and the environment may not be favorable to us, yet we can rejoice in the Lord, for He is on the throne, the unchanging King of kings.

He is not unaware of all that is happening around us. At the right time, He will lead, guide and deliver us. Then there will be absolute protection and safety (Isa. 52: 9, 12). Isaiah wanted this message to be echoed back and forth from every mountain in Zion, for it is good news for the depressed Jews, news of peace and joy (Isa. 52: 7 - 9).

KING BECOMES SERVANT

Just as Isaiah predicted in the following passages; the King became a Servant to deal with the sins of His people (Isa. 53: 4, 11). Like Nathanael, only very few recognized His true greatness (John 1:49). When Pilate asked the question, "Are You the King of the Jews?" the Lord Jesus answered in the affirmative (Matt. 27:11). Yet He was scourged, humiliated, and crucified as a hardcore criminal (Matt. 27:27ff; John 19: 16 – 19).

Praise be to God, not only He finished the work of atonement, He triumphantly rose again from the dead and reigns in heaven at the right hand of the Father (1Cor. 15: 25; Heb. 10: 12, 13 cf. Psa. 2: 6, 110: 1; Eph. 1: 20 – 23).

Let us continue to acknowledge the Lordship of Christ and allow Him to rule over us in all aspects of life. Irrespective of the situations we face, let us humbly and confidently declare, **'OUR GOD REIGNS!'**



CHRIST THE JUDGE OF ALL

"For God will bring every work into judgment, including every secret thing, Whether good or evil" (Eccles 12: 14).

The Fact of Judgement

Solomon closes his book emphasising that God will hold every human life accountable in the sum of all its actions, hidden as well as open, evil as well as good, vv. 13-14. It is a theme which persists throughout Ecclesiastes; see 3.17; 8.12-13; 11.9. Death is not the end. All of life will be reviewed by our righteous Lord. At the moment of physical death, there is a separation of body and spirit, v.7. The dust returns to the earth, and the spirit returns to God who gave it. We shall have dealings with God after death. God is the great Disposer of the spirits of all men. This verse does not teach universal salvation as some erroneously believe! It tells us that at death God puts every spirit where it properly belongs - those who have faith in Christ will go to heaven, and those who have no faith will go to hell, 2 Cor 5.8; Luke 16. 22 - 23.

The God of Judgement

This same teaching is common to both OT and NT. The apostle Paul wrote, "AS I LIVE, SAYS THE LORD, EVERY KNEE SHALL BOW TO ME, AND EVERY TONGUE SHALL CONFESS TO GOD" (Rom 14.11). The Lord Jesus revealed the



identity of the divine Person within the Godhead and assigned the awesome task of universal judgship. He said, "For the Father judges no one, but has committed all judgment to the Son" (John 5.22). Whether it is the Bema judgement for believers, 2 Cor 5.10, or the Great White Throne judgement for the unregenerate lost, Rev 20. 11, the Judge is our Lord Jesus Christ. God is determined, through the instrument of divine judgement, there shall be universal honour rendered to His obedient and co-equal Son, John 5.23; Phil 2. 9 - 11.

The Subjects of Judgement The whole of mankind, saved and unsaved, will one day stand before the Judge. The 'end of the matter' v. 13, is that all men have a 'duty' to 'fear God, and keep his commandments', v. 13. The fear of God means due reverence for His Person, His will, His requirements, and His authority in the life. The certainty of divine judgment demands we live in this wholesome 'fear of God' with eternity's value in view. Lord...Let me live every day of my life, Lord, with eternity's values in view! **G&P**

REGENERATION OR RESTORATION!

“And many will follow their destructive ways, because of whom the way of truth will be blasphemed.” (2 Peter 2:22)



God is the sovereign One who is in full control and knowledge of everything that's happening. Everything that happens in a Christian's life is providential. Nothing happens by chance. But what many show up is only an external profession of false faith while on the inside they continue to tactfully blend with the world around them. Peter takes the illustration of a dog and a swine to refer to such people who are without any moral scruples. They are intent on satisfying their inflamed appetites of the flesh. Their spiritual and doctrinal ignorance has led to all kinds of fleshly indulgences (Acts 17:30; Ephesians 4:17-19). Born with a fallen nature, it is natural to live sinful lives. It's our unsaved, inward nature that influences our outer appetites and actions. That means the heart has never experienced any change (1 Corinthians 15:22).

Like these animals, we chase our bodily appetites by succumbing to the delusions of the devil. Sexual immorality is openly practiced without any feeling of shame. In ancient times, when the dogs were not owned by anyone, they wandered and scavenged around by living on filthy garbage. Though these people learned about Christ and knew the truth at one time, they had by now rejected it and continued to live the old sinful life.

In the Bible, Orpah is a good example. Washing a pig does not change its heart. Today also if anyone rejects God's righteousness in Christ, then our guilt is far greater. God will one day expose our hidden life of lust and sin, by judging them openly.

A True believer may fall into a dirty puddle, but if they are sheep, they will not wallow in it. We can receive a new nature only by being born again. We will, then, jump out of it immediately. Peter denied the Lord, but after weeping his heart out, he was restored.

© Stanley K Sam

“Attempts to make it (Divine Election) palatable to man only succeed in detracting from the sovereignty of God.”

William MacDonlald

GRACE & PEACE

An E-periodical For spiritual enlightenment, edification and encouragement

GRACE & PEACE - ONLINE



Join our WhatsApp group:

<https://chat.whatsapp.com/BC6SOk36FeR6lkxqmNKSS>



Access both HTML and pdf files:

<http://gracepeace.net/gap/gap.htm>

'Grace & Peace' is an electronic periodical, sent out monthly, aiming the overall spiritual growth of Christian Believers everywhere. You can reproduce this e-periodical fully or in part in any medium, provided it is unedited, and retain the original author / copyright information and a reference to our website gracepeace.net

For further details contact:- gracepeaceu@gmail.com / Whatsapp: **+91 9869638285**

Prepared, and posted by **Nelson Thomas Kumaramparampil (NTK)** for the Glory of God & the Joy of the saints.

Editorial assistance: **Tom Jacob**

Design & Layout: **Jiju Mathew, Dhanya Mohandas**

Technical Support: **Robin Johnson (RJDeals)**

www.gracepeace.net

visit our website



join whatsapp

