

GOD'S SOVEREIGNTY AND HUMAN RESPONSIBILITY

1. **God is Sovereign:** Sovereign is defined as PRINCIPAL, CHIEF, SUPREME. As to God, it refers to His position and His power. He is the CHIEF BEING over all beings, and His power is SUPREME. As Sovereign, He is over all, and all are under His authority and control (Deut. 10:14; 1 Chron. 29:11-12; Neh. 9:6; Ps. 95:3; Isa. 44:6; Dan.4:3, 17; Acts 17:24-28; Rev. 1:8, 19:6,16). God not only is over all things, but He also determines all things according to His comprehensive plan, which He has foreordained. This plan includes all things: past, present, and future and the inevitable outworking of this plan will redound to the eternal glory of God according to the counsel of His own will.

Under the umbrella of God's sovereignty, He promotes some things (Isa. 9 6-7), He permits some things (1 Sam. 12:12-17), and He prevents some things (Gen. 20:6), but all things are under His jurisdiction and in accordance with His plan, purpose and will (cf. (Eph. 1:11-14; Isa. 46:10; Acts 4:28, 15:18; Luke 22:22).

2. **Human Responsibility:** People are responsible for the choices they make (Gen. 4:6-7; Josh. 24:15; Isa. 1:18-20; Jn. 3:16, 12:86; Heb. 2:3; 2 Pt. 3:9; Rev. 22:17). All things are to be understood in relationship to God's sovereignty including "freedom of choice" (Eph. 1:11). God's sovereignty and human responsibility present a paradox to the human mind. If God "works all things after the counsel of His will" where does human response or choice come in? And yet there is human choice, responsibility, and accountability (Jn. 3:18; Rev. 20:12-13).

Accepting God's revelation over human rationale (taking the Bible for what it says by faith) shows that both the sovereignty of God and human responsibility are reality. Yet, in the final analysis, OUR SALVATION is all of GRACE and all the GLORY goes to God. All the credit for our salvation from beginning to end (including the middle) belongs to the God of the Bible. He planned it in eternity. He made provision for it in time. He works to bring us to it. It's all the Lord's doing. His grace brings it to pass (Matt. 11:25-27; Jn. 6:37, 44, 17:2; Acts 13:48; Rom. 9-11, 11:4-6; 1 Cor. 15:10; Eph.1:4-11).

Truly, God is AMAZING, and His grace is AMAZING! The Bible teaches ELECTION AND PREDESTINATION, but it also teaches human responsibility and accountability. It teaches both. And how this perfectly harmonizes is ultimately a mystery beyond what our finite minds can comprehend. Paul didn't understand it, and I don't either (Rom. 11:33; cf. Isa. 55:8-11). However, I believe it all because the Bible teaches it all.

If God wasn't sovereign, He wouldn't at all times be in control of all things, thus leaving things to chance. God would not know for certain what is going to happen. He would not know the "beginning to the end". But He does because He is SOVEREIGN. He KNOWS because He DETERMINES. He is in control of ALL things. However, human responsibility must also be a reality because God cannot in any way be held responsible for sin.

NOTE: In the final analysis, salvation is entirely a result of God's grace, and yet there is human responsibility in the equation. I emphasize a God-centered theology and soteriology. I emphasize GRACE. I recognize human responsibility and accountability (cf. Phil. 1:6, 2:12).