

# Divine Sovereignty and Human Responsibility

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## 1. Text:

- a. **Genesis 50:15-20** <sup>[15]</sup> When Joseph's brothers saw that their father was dead, they said, "What if Joseph bears a grudge against us and pays us back in full for all the wrong which we did to him!" <sup>[16]</sup> So they sent *a message* to Joseph, saying, "Your father charged before he died, saying, <sup>[17]</sup> 'Thus you shall say to Joseph, 'Please forgive, I beg you, the transgression of your brothers and their sin, for they did you wrong.'" And now, please forgive the transgression of the servants of the God of your father." And Joseph wept when they spoke to him. <sup>[18]</sup> Then his brothers also came and fell down before him and said, "Behold, we are your servants." <sup>[19]</sup> But Joseph said to them, "Do not be afraid, for am I in God's place? <sup>[20]</sup> "As for you, you meant evil against me, *but* God meant it for good in order to bring about this present result, to preserve many people alive.

## 2. Intro

- a. Today's sermon is entitled "Divine Sovereignty and Human Responsibility."
- b. Background:
  - i. Study of Deuteronomy (D27-34)
  - ii. Topic came up
  - iii. Required a longer explanation
  - iv. Hence, today's sermon

## 3. Overview

- a. Concurrence: Principle of Concurrence from Genesis 50:20
- b. Doctrines: Two doctrines of sovereignty and human responsibility
- c. Extent: Extent to which this principle applies

## 4. Concurrence

- a. Context of Gen. 50:20
  - i. Events leading up to this famous statement (Gen. 37-50)
    - 1. Jacob shows favoritism toward Joseph.
    - 2. Joseph boasts about his dreams.
    - 3. Brothers are jealous of and hates Joseph.
    - 4. Brothers' shepherd Jacob's flock in Shechem then Dothan.

5. Brothers plot to murder Joseph.
6. Caravan of Midianite slave traders travel through Dothan.
7. Brothers sell Joseph to the caravanners.
8. Caravanners take Joseph to Egypt and sell him there.
9. Potiphar (captain of Pharaoh's bodyguard) buys Joseph.
10. Potiphar recognizes Joseph for his work in his house.
11. Potiphar makes him overseer over his house.
12. Potiphar's wife tries to seduce Joseph.
13. She falsely accuses Joseph of rape.
14. Joseph is thrown into Potiphar's prison.
15. Chief cup bearer is thrown into the same prison.
16. Joseph interprets the dream of the cup bearer.
17. Cup bearer is restored according to the dream.
18. Pharaoh has dreams and the cup bearer recommends Joseph.
19. Joseph interprets the dreams of a famine and suggests a solution.
20. Pharaoh makes him Prime Minister of Egypt.
21. Joseph stores food during the seven years of plenty.
22. Joseph sells food during the following years of famine.
23. Brothers come to Egypt to buy food but don't recognize him.
24. Joseph accuses them of espionage and imprisons them.
25. He demands they bring Benjamin the 12<sup>th</sup> brother and they do.
26. He reveals himself to them.
27. He brings the entire family to Egypt.
28. Jacob's family is spared during the famine.
29. Jacob eventually dies.
30. Brothers ask for forgiveness as if Jacob asked for it.
31. Joseph makes the famous statement.

ii. Unbeknownst to the brothers, selling Joseph resulted in great good.

b. Joseph's statement:

- i. Gen. 50:20 <sup>[20]</sup> "As for you, you meant evil against me, *but* God meant it for good in order to bring about this present result, to preserve many people alive.
- ii. Three observations:
  - 1. Two agents: Joseph's brothers and God
  - 2. One action: The selling of Joseph to slavery
  - 3. Two intentions: Brothers' evil intent and God's good intent
- c. The brothers intend evil with their action, God intends good with that action.
  - i. There is one earthly action.
  - ii. But there were two intentions operating in that one action.
    - 1. One earthly intention by the brothers
      - a. On earth, the brothers intend their action for evil.
      - b. They chose to sin.
      - c. God will hold them accountable for their sin (G42:22, "Now comes the reckoning for his blood").
      - d. This is human responsibility unto their accountability.
    - 2. One heavenly intention by God
      - a. In heaven, God intends that exact action for good.
      - b. God chose to bring about good through their sin.
        - i. Gen. 45:8 <sup>[8]</sup> "Now, therefore, it was not you who sent me here, but God.
      - c. Thus God is praiseworthy for the good He has wrought.
        - i. The good here is more than the immediate good of preservation of Jacob's family. It is the coming of the Savior through this remnant (Gen. 45:7).
        - ii. The ultimate good is the anticipation announced in Gen. 3:15, the coming of the Savior, the seed of the woman, the seed of Abraham (Gen. 22:18), the Lion of Judah, the king whom the peoples will obey (Gen. 49:10). This Savior will redeem sinners from their sins and the curse of God arising from the sin of man.

- d. All the redeemed of the Lord will praise God for the good He has brought about.
    - e. This is God's sovereignty unto the praise of His glory.
  - iii. The surprising truth revealed here is that the two realities were at work at the same time in the same action.
    - 1. Theologians call this concurrence.
    - 2. Concurrence is the occurrence of two things at the same time. God's sovereignty and human responsibility are really operating simultaneously in two different ways.
    - 3. Humans have a real choice and, therefore, responsibility and God has real sovereignty and is worthy of real praise.
    - 4. No human can explain how these two operate together.
      - a. Even as we live in the reality of things we cannot explain, e.g., creation out of nothing, automobile, love, etc.
    - 5. But the Bible clearly teaches that they do work together.
  - iv. These two realities are two very well established doctrines of Scripture.
- 5. Two Doctrines of divine sovereignty and human responsibility
  - a. Doctrine #1: Divine Sovereignty is God's irresistible, comprehensive, and purposeful rule over His creation.
    - i. Irresistible:
      - 1. Job 42:2 <sup>[2]</sup> "I know that You can do all things, And that no purpose of Yours can be thwarted.
        - a. Context:
          - i. Job's testimony at the end of the book
          - ii. Job speaks after having learned that God's wisdom and power towers over his own. The LORD is God and Job is a creature, and as the supreme creator and sustainer of the universe, the LORD owes no explanation to His creatures.
          - iii. Given all this, while Job was still suffering, he repents in dust and ashes for his audacity to question the justice and the wisdom of God.
            - 1. Job 42:6 <sup>[6]</sup> Therefore I retract, And I repent in dust and ashes."

- b. 42:2 contains two statements:
  - i. Total Ability: God can do all things.
  - ii. Total Irresistibility: No one can thwart God's will.
- c. This is divine sovereignty.
  - i. Sovereignty = "sov" for super/over + "reign"
    - 1. God is sovereign over creation.
  - ii. The purpose of God is the unstoppable juggernaut that nothing and no one can resist.
  - iii. It cannot be resisted. It is irresistible.
    - 1. Not only consciously but also unwittingly
    - 2. Even as the brothers never intended good
- ii. Comprehensive:
  - 1. Ps. 103:19 <sup>[19]</sup> The LORD has established His throne in the heavens, And His sovereignty rules over all.
    - a. "in the heavens"
      - i. God's throne is in the highest place.
      - ii. Throne in the highest place means God rules over all lesser parts under heaven, e.g., the earth.
    - b. "rules over all"
      - i. The second line (parallels the first) confirms it: "And his sovereignty rules over over all."
    - c. For His people
      - i. This verse is near the end of the psalm, after David has explained at length God's lovingkindness to His people who keep God's covenant (v18) and fear Him (v17).
      - ii. The LORD works all things for the good of His people according to His lovingkindness (v17).
      - iii. Therefore, God's people are called to bless the LORD and forget none of His benefits (v2).
      - iv. God's benefits are far and wide for He rules over all.
    - d. Sounds much like Romans 8:28

2. Ps. 135:6 <sup>[6]</sup> Whatever the LORD pleases, He does, In heaven and in earth, in the seas and in all deeps.
  - a. “in heaven and in earth, in the seas and in all deeps”
    - i. This also confirms comprehensive sovereignty.
  - b. “Whatever the LORD pleases”
    - i. In Psalm 135, what pleases the LORD is to defend and bless His people.
    - ii. In vv1-3, God’s people are called to praise Him.
    - iii. In vv4-6, the reason for this praise is given.
      1. They are the LORD’s chosen people, even His own possession (v4)
      2. The LORD is able to do whatever He pleases in all spheres (v6) and Nothing escapes the will of God.
    - iv. In vv8-12, the psalmist shows God’s wondrous works on behalf of His people.
    - v. What pleases the LORD is to do good to His people in every realm.
  - c. The LORD is sovereign over all things in all places.
- iii. Purposeful:
  1. Isaiah 46:10 <sup>[10]</sup> 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'
    - a. One of the clearest explanations of foreknowledge
    - b. Declaration of “the end from the beginning”
    - c. No mere prediction or premonition
    - d. But a proclamation of what He will do
      - i. “Declaring” parallels “saying”
      - ii. Foretells the future parallels controls the future.
    - e. God knows the future, because God controls the future.
    - f. History is the unfolding of the plan of God.

- g. Through history, God establishes His purpose.
  - h. Like channels of water in one's hands, the LORD directs all things in the world to accomplish His good pleasure.
  - i. The LORD's good pleasure is the eternal blessing of His people in salvation as the NT reveals it.
- iv. Irresistible, comprehensive, and purposeful sovereignty in the NT
1. Rom. 8:28 <sup>[28]</sup> 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.
    - a. "all things" speak of comprehensiveness of God's rulership over creation.
      - i. Including tribulation, distress, persecution (v35)
      - ii. And death, life, angels, principalities, things present, things to come, all created things (vv38-39)
    - b. "His purpose" speaks of the purposeful direction of all things. That purpose is to bring all His elect to the end of salvation which is their glorification (v30).
    - c. Irresistibility is seen in the certainty of the glorification of God's elect.
      - i. Glorification is the conclusion to salvation.
      - ii. This is so certain that Paul speaks of it in the past tense ("those whom He justified, He also glorified").
      - iii. Glorification is so certain that it is as good as done.
      - iv. Nothing can thwart this sovereign purpose of God.
      - v. God will definitely do eternal good to His people.
    - d. God's sovereignty is indeed comprehensive, purposeful, and irresistible.
    - e. As declared in the OT, the NT shows God sovereignly rules over all things for the good of His people and nothing can thwart His purpose to do eternal good to His people.
      - i. Eph. 1:11 <sup>[11]</sup> also we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to His purpose who works all things after the counsel of His will.

- f. What buttresses the biblical doctrine of salvation is the biblical doctrine of sovereignty.
- g. People are saved, because God is powerful to save.
  - i. He convicts, converts, and preserves His elect until their salvation reaches its end in glorification.
  - ii. Sovereignty of God is the gas that drives the engine and propels the vehicle of redemption to its destination.
  - iii. Divine sovereignty is what saves and sanctifies the sinner until he reaches heaven.
- v. Divine sovereignty is irresistible, comprehensive, and purposeful.
  - 1. Then is man a puppet in the hands of the sovereign God?
  - 2. No. The Bible also affirms the doctrine of human responsibility.
    - a. Deut. 10:16 <sup>[16]</sup> "So circumcise your heart, and stiffen your neck no longer.
    - b. Deut. 30:6 <sup>[6]</sup> "Moreover the LORD your God will circumcise your heart ... to love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul, so that you may live.
    - c. Ezek. 18:31 <sup>[31]</sup> "Cast away from you all your transgressions which you have committed and make yourselves a new heart and a new spirit...
    - d. Ezek. 36:26 <sup>[26]</sup> "Moreover, I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; and I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh.
- b. Doctrine #2: Human Responsibility
  - i. Humans are responsible.
    - 1. They have a real choice.
    - 2. They will be held accountable for their choice.
  - ii. Deut. 30:19-20 <sup>[19]</sup> "I call heaven and earth to witness against you today, that I have set before you life and death, the blessing and the curse. So choose life in order that you may live, you and your descendants, <sup>[20]</sup> by loving the LORD your God, by obeying His voice, and by holding fast to Him; for this is your life and the length of your days, that you may live in the land which the LORD swore to your fathers, to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, to give them."



1. Context:
  - a. Moses' final charge to the children of Israel
2. Responsibility:
  - a. Love the Lord, obey His voice, and hold fast to Him
3. Consequence:
  - a. Life or death, blessing or curse
  - b. Israel chose death.
  - c. Because they refused to believe
    - i. Heb. 3:19 <sup>[19]</sup> *So we see that they were not able to enter because of unbelief.*
  - d. Their action had eternal consequences.
    - i. They chose hell instead of heaven.
    - ii. They refused to repent.
4. Josh. 24:15 and 1 Kings 18:21 echo the same principle.
- iii. Ezek. 18:31-32 <sup>[31]</sup> "Cast away from you all your transgressions which you have committed and make yourselves a new heart and a new spirit! For why will you die, O house of Israel? <sup>[32]</sup> "For I have no pleasure in the death of anyone who dies," declares the Lord GOD. "Therefore, repent and live."

1. Context:
  - a. Ezekiel was a prophet to the exiled Jews in Babylon who refused to repent and get right with God.
  - b. They made many excuses
    - i. Suffering for the sins of their fathers (v2)
    - ii. Injustice of God (vv25 and 29, "the way of the Lord is not right").
  - c. But they were responsible for their own actions.
    - i. "The soul who sins will die." (v4)
    - ii. "The person who sins will die." (v20)
2. Responsibility:
  - a. To repent.

- b. To change their attitude (“make yourselves a new heart and a new spirit”)
  - 3. Consequence:
    - a. Death: “Why will you die?” (v31)
    - b. Life: “Repent and live.” (v32)
  - 4. Much like God’s call in Deut. 30.
  - 5. The same message in the NT.
- iv. Matt. 4:17 [17] From that time Jesus began to preach and say, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."
  - 1. Responsibility:
    - a. It is man’s responsibility to repent.
    - b. “Repent” is an imperative.
    - c. The same as Ezekiel 18:32
  - 2. Consequence:
    - a. Repentance will mean readiness for heaven.
    - b. Refusal to repent will mean the opposite: hell.
    - c. The Bible teaches only two eternal ends: heaven or hell.
      - i. No purgatory.
      - ii. No annihilation.
      - iii. No ancestor worship. No human becomes deity to be worshipped by their descendants. Humans do not become gods.
      - iv. Jesus tells us to repent and be ready for heaven. If we remain unrepentant, we will face eternity without a Savior and suffer judgment for our sins.
- v. Matt. 11:28-29 <sup>[28]</sup> "Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest. <sup>[29]</sup> "Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and YOU WILL FIND REST FOR YOUR SOULS.
  - 1. Responsibility:
    - a. Three imperatives:
      - i. Come to Christ.
      - ii. Take on Jesus' yoke (or submit to Christ).

- iii. Learn from Christ.
  - b. Jesus calls “all” to do these things as an expression of genuine faith.
    - i. The three imperatives are actions of faith.
    - ii. They do not mean save yourself.
    - iii. They mean faith in action. If you believe then act.
      - 1. Genuine faith takes action.
      - 2. James 2:26 <sup>[26]</sup> For just as the body without *the* spirit is dead, so also faith without works is dead.
      - 3. Inactive faith is dead faith. It cannot do anything. It cannot save your soul.
  - c. Where does one start?
    - i. Open your heart to Christ and come to Him by faith with humility and repentance ready to live according to God’s word.
    - ii. Become Jesus’ student.
    - iii. Start with the gospels.
    - iv. OT needs much more guidance. Listen to the Pentateuch sermon series.
2. Consequence:
- a. Condemnation for unwillingness to come to Jesus
  - b. Jesus denounced the cities that refused to repent,
    - i. Capernaum in v23
    - ii. Bethsaida and Chorazin in v21.
    - iii. Jesus consigns them to hell.
  - c. Choosing not to repent, not to come to Christ, not to humbly yield in submission to Him, not to learn from Him means choosing eternal damnation.
  - d. Refusing Christ means to face eternity alone without the Savior.
- vi. Matt. 7:13-14 <sup>[13]</sup> "Enter through the narrow gate; for the gate is wide and the way is broad that leads to destruction, and there are many who enter

through it. <sup>[14]</sup> "For the gate is small and the way is narrow that leads to life, and there are few who find it.

1. Responsibility:

- a. "Enter through the narrow gate" is an imperative.
- b. The narrow gate and narrow way refer to following Christ.
- c. There are only two ways. Jesus calls us to His way.

2. Consequence:

- a. There are only two destinations: life or destruction.
- b. Refusal to follow Christ means no eternal life.
- c. Doing what most others do is to choose destruction (*apōleia* [ἀπώλεια], also rendered perdition), which is hell.

3. Effort:

- a. The narrow way will require earnest effort.
- b. Not the effort to save yourself or to reform yourself but the effort to come to Christ and to learn from Him and to submit to Him.
- c. Luke 13:24 <sup>[24]</sup> "Strive to enter through the narrow door; for many, I tell you, will seek to enter and will not be able.
  - i. To strive is *agōnizomai* (ἀγωνίζομαι).
  - ii. To labor, work hard, even endure suffering, to enter through the narrow door.
  - iii. Follow hard after Christ.
  - iv. Many will try and fail.
- d. Like the marathon, many start, but only a few finish.
- e. Jesus said, "Strive" (imperative).
- f. Answer yes if you wish to enter heaven.
- g. Answer any other way and you'll be on the highway to hell.

vii. Man is responsible.

- 1. He must respond to the Lord's call to repent, to come to Christ, to take His yoke upon you, and learn from Him.
- 2. His choice is consequential. He will either enter heaven or hell based on whether he will believe and follow Christ.

- c. These are the two doctrines of divine sovereignty and human responsibility.
  - i. On the one hand, God is perfectly sovereign over all things. He rules over all and direct all things toward His purpose to do eternal good to His people. He convicts, converts, sanctifies, and preserves His people.
  - ii. But this does not mean that man is a puppet with no responsibility or will of his own. No. Man is fully responsible for his actions. God will hold him accountable. Everyone will be judged according to his deeds.
  - iii. The only way that a man can be saved from his evil deeds (of heart, mind, and body) is to have the Savior.
  - iv. The only way to have the Savior is to seek Him by faith and become His disciple (come to Him, take on His yoke, learn from Him).

## 6. Extent

- a. The principle of concurrence (Gen. 50:20, man meant evil but God meant good) is not limited to the story of Joseph alone. The two realities of divine sovereignty and human responsibility buttress all of biblical revelation.
  - i. Just how far does divine sovereignty go? To the farthest extent because divine sovereignty applies to all things ("God causes all things to work together good" [Rom. 8:28]).
  - ii. This applies to all unexpected things like Joseph's situation.
  - iii. Four biblical examples: Jesus, Paul, Simon, and Satan.
    - 1. We could also add many others: Pharaoh, Saul, David, etc.
    - 2. Acts 2:22-23 <sup>[22]</sup> "Men of Israel, listen to these words: Jesus the Nazarene, a man attested to you by God with miracles and wonders and signs which God performed through Him in your midst, just as you yourselves know—<sup>[23]</sup> this *Man*, delivered over by the predetermined plan and foreknowledge of God, you nailed to a cross by the hands of godless men and put *Him* to death.
      - a. Human intent:
        - i. Judas wanted money in exchange for Jesus' life.
        - ii. The Jews wanted Jesus dead and so falsely convicted Him and handed Him over to the Romans ("godless men") for crucifixion.
        - iii. Pilate wanted to keep his job and save his reputation by giving the orders for Jesus' execution.
      - b. Divine intent:

- i. “predetermined plan and foreknowledge of God”
      - 1. Divine foreknowledge is God’s knowledge of what He will do (cf. Is. 46:10).
    - ii. God’s intent was to accomplish atonement for sin and reconcile sinners to Himself through the death of Jesus on the cross.
    - iii. Because Jesus died in the place of sinners, all who repent and come to Christ are truly cleansed of their sins and are reconciled to God.
  - c. Concurrence:
    - i. While men intended evil with Jesus’ crucifixion (and they will be held accountable), God intended good in Jesus’ crucifixion to accomplish redemption.
3. 1 Tim. 1:13-16 <sup>[13]</sup> even though I was formerly a blasphemer and a persecutor and a violent aggressor. Yet I was shown mercy because I acted ignorantly in unbelief; <sup>[14]</sup> and the grace of our Lord was more than abundant, with the faith and love which are *found* in Christ Jesus. <sup>[15]</sup> It is a trustworthy statement, deserving full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, among whom I am foremost *of all*. <sup>[16]</sup> Yet for this reason I found mercy, so that in me as the foremost, Jesus Christ might demonstrate His perfect patience as an example for those who would believe in Him for eternal life.
- a. Human intent:
    - i. Paul’s intent to harm/terrorize Christians
    - ii. His intent to dishonor (blaspheme) Jesus
  - b. Divine intent:
    - i. God’s intent to save this foremost of sinners to show that His grace is big enough for every sinner.
    - ii. Every sinner that repents is welcomed to God.
  - c. Concurrence:
    - i. Paul intended evil, but God intended to assure His people of His grace through Paul’s conversion and salvation.

4. Luke 22:31-32 [31] "Simon, Simon, behold, Satan has demanded *permission* to sift you like wheat; [32] but I have prayed for you, that your faith may not fail; and you, when once you have turned again, strengthen your brothers."
  - a. Human intent:
    - i. Simon wanted to spare his own life by distancing himself from the Lord with denials and curses.
  - b. Divine intent:
    - i. God's intent was to restore Simon and use him to strengthen Christians and to make him into a true shepherd for His people (John 21:15-17).
  - c. Concurrence:
    - i. Simon did evil and denied the Lord, but God's intent was to restore him from failure and strengthen His people.
  - d. There is a third agent here: Satan, our 4<sup>th</sup> example.

#### iv. Satan

1. Is God sovereign over Satan? Yes, Satan is a creature over which the sovereign God reigns.
2. Two examples:
  - a. Simon Peter:
    - i. Satan wanted to tempt him and thus he fell into transgression.
    - ii. But God meant this for good to make Simon into a source of strength and encouragement amid failure.
    - iii. Many have failed and found strength in the Lord's grace toward Simon.
    - iv. What Satan meant for evil, God meant for good.
  - b. Job:
    - i. Satan wanted to get Job to curse God with trials.
    - ii. But God allowed all of Satan's works for good.
    - iii. Through suffering, Job's eyes were opened to who God truly was and he declared,

1. Job 42:5-6 <sup>[5]</sup> "I have heard of You by the hearing of the ear; But now my eye sees You; <sup>[6]</sup> Therefore I retract, And I repent in dust and ashes."
- iv. What Satan meant for evil, God meant for good.
3. Someone has said, "In fiery trials, Satan intends to burn us but God intends to purify us."
  - a. There is a concurrence of two intentions even with Satan.
- v. This also applies to Satan's presence in the Garden of Eden.
  1. God was sovereign over Satan in Eden. "His sovereignty rules over all" (Ps. 103:19). He causes all things for good (Rom. 8:28).
  2. God allowed Satan to fall and enter Eden.
    - a. Ultimately the sovereign God planned for Satan to be in Eden.
    - b. Satan, sin, the fall, suffering, death, and hell were a part of God's redemption plan to save sinners and reconcile them to Himself through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ.
    - c. If redemption did not require the sacrifice of God's beloved Son, we would wonder whether God is cruel to let man sin and experience unspeakable suffering. It would nearly seem that God was playing games with His creation.
    - d. But God had skin in the game. He gave up the apple of His eye, His beloved Son. If redemption cost God nothing, then it would all be a trivial game to God. But redemption cost God His only begotten Son. Therefore, we know that His love is true and His grace real.
    - e. He made provision for Satan and sin to persuade our cynical hearts the reality of His grace and love.
  3. Scripture does not reveal how Satan fell into sin but it does show that he did and even this was according to the purpose of God.
    - a. Cf. John Piper, *Spectacular Sins and Their Global Purpose in the Glory of Christ*, esp. the third chapter entitled, "The Fall of Satan and the Victory of Christ: Why Does God Permit Satan to Live?"



- vi. The Bible resounds with the declaration of God's irresistible, comprehensive, purposeful sovereignty.
- vii. Its application stretches to the farthest extent, even including original sin, the temptation of Eve, and even the fall of Satan.
  - 1. What sinners today mean for evil, God means for good.
  - 2. What Adam and Eve meant for evil, God meant for good.
  - 3. What Satan meant for evil, God meant for good.
- viii. The sovereign God triumphs over all, by ruling over all, even every manner of evil, to purpose all of them for our eternal good beyond our wildest imagination. But he does so without ever making man an unthinking robot or puppet. But He has sent the Savior so that sinners can be saved through faith in Christ as Savior and Lord.
- ix. Our Sovereign God (#33)
  - 1. Our Sov'reign God by His own word  
sustains this world and reigns as Lord.  
No angel, demon, sinful man  
can change His course, restrain His hand.  
O Sov'reign God, we praise Your pow'r;  
Your wisdom, goodness we adore!  
We bow our hearts before Your throne;  
help us, O Lord, to trust You more!  
Help us, O Lord, to trust You more!
  - 2. When the fullness of the time had come,  
God sent His own beloved Son  
to keep God's law, live in our place,  
to bear our sin, guilt and disgrace.  
Dead in our sin, estranged from God,  
we fled as rebels from His love.  
In sov'reign grace He made us sons  
and saved us from the wrath to come,  
and saved us from the wrath to come.
  - 3. Before our birth He planned our days,  
laid out our course, ordained our ways.  
The moments of our lives He weaves  
so all the glory He receives.  
To those He loved before all time,  
to all He called, in grace renewed,

He cannot lie; His Word is true—  
He makes all things to work for good!  
He makes all things to work for good!

4. He has written hist'ry's final page;  
His Son's return will end this age.  
The Lamb will come in glorious might,  
take back His world and end its night.  
How deep the wisdom of our God,  
unknown, unfathomed are His ways!  
None counsels Him or knows His mind.  
We bow before Him all our days,  
we bow before Him all our days.

## 7. Conclusion

- a. We take biblical responsibility for our actions.
  - i. We do not excuse our ignorance or our sinful actions and attitudes.
  - ii. We come to Christ, take on His yoke, and learn from Him, our Savior.
  - iii. We take responsibility for our sins and repent of them and trust in the blood of Christ for them.
- b. We trust and rest in our sovereign God.
  - i. Spurgeon, "The sovereignty of God is the pillow upon which the child of God rests his head at night, giving perfect peace."
  - ii. Ps. 91:1-2 <sup>[1]</sup> He who dwells in the shelter of the Most High Will abide in the shadow of the Almighty. <sup>[2]</sup> I will say to the LORD, "My refuge and my fortress, My God, in whom I trust!"
  - iii. We worship the LORD for His sovereign goodness. We declare with Paul,
    1. Rom. 11:36 <sup>[36]</sup> For from Him and through Him and to Him are all things. To Him *be* the glory forever. Amen.