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THE SOVEREIGNTY OF GOD

By: Dr. C. D. Cole

The foundation of all true religion is to have proper thoughts of God. Of the wicked it is said that God is not in all their thoughts. Psalm 10:4, *“The wicked, through the pride of his countenance, will not seek after God: God is not in all his thoughts.”* Proverbs 23:7, *“For as he thinketh in his heart, so is he: Eat and drink, saith he to thee; but his heart is not with thee.”* Malachi tells of a remnant that thought on his name. Malachi 3:16, *“Then they that feared the LORD spake often one to another: and the LORD hearkened, and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the LORD, and that thought upon his name.”*

Repentance is a change of mind, resulting in a change of thinking. A thousand evils grow and flourish in an atmosphere of wrong thinking about God. Idolatry. Worldliness. False theologies.

The man who thinks right about God will not be far wrong in his thinking about other things. The man who thinks right about God will not stumble at the doctrine about hell, election, depravity, etc.

In this message I desire to direct your thinking about one of God’s attributes, namely, His sovereignty.

The sovereignty of God may be divided into two branches, namely, authority and power. Authority implies the right to do as He pleases; power means the ability to do.

Psalm 135:6, *“Whatsoever the LORD pleased, that did he in heaven, and in earth, in the seas, and all deep places.”*

Mr. Spurgeon has the following to

say on the subject of the sovereignty of God: *“There is no attribute more comforting to His children than that of God’s Sovereignty. Under the most adverse circumstances, in the most severe trials, they believe that Sovereignty has ordained their afflictions, that Sovereignty overrules them, and that Sovereignty will sanctify them all. On the other hand, there is no doctrine more hated by worldlings, no truth of which they have made such a football, as the great, stupendous, but yet most certain doctrine of the Sovereignty of God. Men will allow God to be everywhere except on His throne. They will allow Him to be in His workshop to fashion worlds and make stars. They will allow Him to be in His almonry to dispense His alms and bestow His bounties. They will allow Him to sustain the earth and bear up the pillars thereof, or light the lamps of heaven, or rule the waves of the ever-moving ocean; but when God ascends His throne, His creatures then gnash their teeth, and when we proclaim an enthroned God, and His right to do as He wills with His own, to dispose of His creatures as He thinks well, without consulting them in the matter; then it is that we are hissed and execrated and then it is that men turn a deaf ear to us, for God on the throne, is not the God they love. But it is God upon the throne we love to preach. It is God upon the throne whom we trust.”*

Perhaps some one would like to know what we mean by the Sovereignty of God.

Now, let us look at some of the Sovereign acts of God:

In His dealings with the angels. Some of the angels He placed on a conditional footing, that is, they were placed under law, and left to themselves as to whether they would obey and live or disobey and be cast down. Others He gave an immutable standing before Him. I Timothy 5:21, *“I charge thee before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, and the elect angels, that thou observe these things without preferring one before another, doing nothing by partiality.”*

Of these Christ was made their head. Colossians 2:10, *“And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power.”* They are in no danger of falling. The others sinned and fell, and for them no salvation was provided. II Peter 2:4, *“For if God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell, and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment.”*

Was this unjust? Yes, unless God is a Sovereign, and has the right to do as He pleases.

In His dealings with Adam. He sovereignly placed Adam in Eden upon a conditional footing. Had it pleased Him He could have placed Adam upon an unconditional footing; He could have placed him upon the same footing as the elect angels, or as the saints have in Christ. But, He chose to set him in Eden on the basis of creature responsibility, so that he stood or fell according as he measured or failed to measure up to his responsibility. Genesis 2:16, 17, *“And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou*

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mayest freely eat: But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die."

Fix this truth forever in your mind: God never does a thing because it is right; but everything that God does is right, He does it. God's will is the only basis of what is right. Then, God cannot be under any law; He is a law unto Himself, and does as He pleases. You often hear people say that for God to do a certain thing or pursue a certain course would be wrong. How wicked is such a thought. That puts God under the law of His creatures.

In His dealings with Israel. God placed Israel upon a conditional footing, that is, He put them under law and made their happiness dependent upon their obedience to His law. But Israel were stiffnecked and uncircumcised in heart. They broke His laws, and brought his frown and displeasure down upon them. That is the explanation of a scattered and persecuted nation.

God's sovereignty is the basis of human responsibility. What God commands is right; what He prohibits is wrong. Great many things recorded in the Bible that were right merely because God commanded them; which would have been wrong, had He not commanded them. What right had Adam to eat of the trees of the garden? The permission of His Maker. Otherwise he would have been a thief. What right had Israel to borrow of the Egyptians jewels and raiment? None, unless God had authorized it. What right had Israel to slay so many lambs for sacrifice? None, except God commanded it. What right had Israel to kill off all the Canaanites? None, except Jehovah had bidden them. Right here let us observe that there are two kind of commandments in the Bible. We will classify them as Moral and Positive. A moral command; the ten commandments for instance, known as the moral law, carries in its statement a reason for its enactment. It appears at once to the moral nature inherent in man, and awakens in man an intuitive response, whether obeyed or not. In other words, there is in man that which sees a reason for a moral command. To illustrate: take the commands, Exodus 20:13-15, "**Thou shalt not kill. Thou shalt not commit adultery. Thou shalt not steal,**" etc.

On the other hand a positive command carries with it no such conviction. Its reason for being is not on

its face appearance and may never be. Its binding effect rests solely upon the right of God to make it. Examples: The forbidden fruit. Genesis 3:6, 7, "**And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat. And the eyes of them both were opened...**" Moses and the rock. Numbers 20:7-12 (part), "**And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, Take the rod...speak ye unto the rock...And Moses took the rod from before the LORD, as he commanded him...Hear now ye rebels; must we fetch you water out of this rock? And Moses lifted up his hand, and with his rod he smote the rock twice...And the LORD spake unto Moses and Aaron, Because ye believed me not, to sanctify me in the eyes of the children of Israel, therefore ye shall not bring this congregation into the land which I have given them.**" Uzzah and the ark. II Samuel 6:6, 7, "**And when they came to Nachon's threshingfloor, Uzzah put forth his hand to the ark of God, and took hold of it; for the oxen shook it. And the anger of the LORD was kindled against Uzzah; and God smote him there for his error; and there he died by the ark of God.**" The brazen serpent. Numbers 21:9, "**And Moses made a serpent of brass, and put it upon a pole, and it came to pass, that if a serpent had bitten any man, when he beheld the serpent of brass, he lived.**"

In His dealings with His saints. They are on an unconditional footing. They do not have to keep the law to get to heaven. But this does not mean that the law is set aside, and ignored. But he who came to save His people from their sins was placed upon a conditional footing. As Saviour he had certain duties to perform, and conditions to meet. Christ was made under the law to redeem them that were under the law. Galatians 4:4, 5, "**But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, To redeem them that were under the law...**" II Corinthians 5:21, "**For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.**"

Look at some of the conditions imposed upon Christ:

He was to be made in the likeness of

sinful flesh. Romans 8:3, "**...God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh.**"

He was to magnify the law and make it honourable. Isaiah 42:21, "**The LORD is well pleased for his righteousness' sake; he will magnify the law, and make it honourable.**"

He was to bear all the sins of all God's people; Matthew 1:21, "**...and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins.**" He was to make full satisfaction for them; Isaiah 53:11, "**He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied...**" He was to endure the outpoured wrath of God; Luke 23:44-45, "**And it was about the sixth hour, and there was a darkness over all the earth until the ninth hour. And the sun was darkened, and the veil of the temple was rent in the midst.**" Mark 15:34, "**And at the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani? Which is, being interpreted, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?"** He was to die and be buried. He was to rise again from the dead. I Corinthians 15:3-4, "**...how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures.**"

Now Christ did all this for His people. He was acting not for Himself, but for others. All these conditions were imposed upon Him that they might not be imposed upon us. I Peter 3:18, "**For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit.**"

Hebrews 7:22, "**By so much was Jesus made a surety of a better testament.**" Surety: one who becomes jointly bound with another. Genesis 43:8, 9, "**And Judah said unto Israel his father, Send the lad with me, and we will arise and go; that we may live, and not die, both we, and thou, and also our little ones. I will be surety for him; of my hand shalt thou require him: if I bring him not unto thee, and set him before thee, then let me bear the blame for ever.**" Surety ship: obligation of being bound to answer for another.

THE GOD OF THE BIBLE

By: Dr. C. D. Cole

Isaiah 46:9 *"...for I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me."*

Introduction: The world has a book and a Person on its hands. Something must be done with them. The Book is the **Bible** and the Person is **Jesus Christ**. The BOOK and the PERSON give mutual testimonies to each other. John 5:39, *"Search the scriptures: for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me."* John 10:35, *"...the scripture cannot be broken."*

Both the Bible and Jesus Christ had a miraculous origin. Luke 1:35, *"And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God."* II Peter 1:21, *"For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost."*

Both the Bible and Jesus Christ had a miraculous career. Jesus Christ had a miraculous birth, lived a miraculous life, died a miraculous death, had a miraculous resurrection, had a miraculous ascension back to the Father in heaven, and He will have a miraculous return to earth. The Bible had a miraculous career. It has miraculous power in the face of Satan and human oppositions. The Bible has stood down through the ages.

Seven ways the Bible has been tested:

(1) Stood the test of Persecution. It has been impossible to blot it out of existence.

(2) Stood the test of Criticism of those that write literature. The Bible is the greatest literature of all time.

(3) It has stood the test of Science. No scientific discovery has or will hurt the Bible. It is an old Book, but never out of date. True science only proves the Bible.

(4) It has stood the Moral test. If all men would live by the teaching of the Bible, the world would be a lot better place to live. The Bible is a clean book. It records the sins and impurities of other people but never in a way that would cause you to lust after those things.

(5) It has stood the test of Unity. One book in sixty-six parts, but it holds together. The scripture cannot be broken.

(6) It has stood the test of Time. The Bible is an up-to-date book. Its teachings are just as adaptable to this century as they were in the first. Human books soon get old and are gone, they are forgotten; but the BIBLE IS A LIVING BOOK.

(7) It has stood the test of human experience. It meets the demands of the human soul. It satisfies the hungry. Matthew 5:6, *"Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled."* It satisfies the mind as to the origin of things. It is dependable. It is authority. It tells of a Saviour that can satisfy a condemned soul. John 5:24, *"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life."* The Bible and Jesus Christ both are called the WORD OF GOD. The Bible is the written word. Jesus is the Incarnate word. John 1:1-2, *"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God."* They are called THE WORD because they fulfill the functions of the Word. It is the function of the Word to REVEAL and to COMMUNICATE. So the Bible

and Jesus Christ reveal and communicate God. From Christ and the Bible we learn what kind of Being God is. John 14:9, *"...he that hath seen me hath seen the Father..."* II Corinthians 4:4, *"...Christ, who is the image of God..."* Colossians 1:14-15, *"In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins: Who is the image of the invisible God..."* The Bible is the only source of information about the nature, and the character of God.

NATURE OF GOD

God is SPIRIT. John 4:24, *"God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth."* This distinguishes him from his material creation. Matter does not belong to Him, therefore he is invisible. No man hath seen God at any time. To be visible he manifested himself in the person of Jesus Christ. Matthew 1:21, *"And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins."*

God is ONE. God is one God. He cannot be divided, Yet God is in three persons; God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. He is one, yet in three persons.

THE CHARACTER OF GOD

God is eternal....without beginning or end. Genesis 1:1, *"In the beginning God..."*

He is infinite....No limitations.

He is immutable....without any change, same yesterday, today and forever.

He is independent....without being subject to control by others.

He is perfect in wisdom

and understanding. He is Almighty in power: Matthew 28:18, "**...All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.**" He is great in love, even for sinners. The assurance of His love was the gift of His Son for sinners. He is rich in grace and plenteous in mercy. There is all the mercy in God the sinner needs. He is a just God and his justice cannot be looked over. He could not spare His only Son so that the sinner might go free. Romans 9:32, "**He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all...**"