

# GOD'S INDISPUTABLE SOVEREIGNTY

By I.C. Herendeen

For the Lord of hosts hath purposed, and who shall disannul it? and his hand stretched out, and who shall turn it back?— Isaiah 14:21

O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments and his ways past finding out. — Romans 11:33

Dear Reader: —The subject of “God’s Sovereignty” is a matter concerning which we should humble ourselves. It is a profound, deep and humbling truth. No doctrine exalts or magnifies God and the finished work of Christ as that of “God’s Sovereignty”. And why, may we ask, should it not be reasonable to believe that God “worketh ALL things after the Counsel of HIS OWN will” (Ephesians 1:11) and not after the will His creatures?

The only reason anyone believes in the absolute universal Sovereignty of God is because it is revealed in the Bible. No other book in the world discloses this unqualified truth. Why should be so is simple. The Book called the Bible is distinctly and exclusively the Word and Work of God. All other books are the words and works of men. And further: the cause of anyone’s faith

in the unmodified “Sovereignty of God” as revealed in the Bible is that it is DIVINELY GIVEN them to believe it. That is, the gracious Sovereignty of God makes them able and willing to believe it (John 3:27).

In view of the reality that this truth is distinctly and most certainly set forth throughout the Bible: the fact that men, religious or irreligious, oppose and seek to distort it to suit feelings and fancies, is one of the best testimonies to the truth of this doctrine, though they mean it not so. This glorious “Sovereignty of God” which they so spleen against has not as yet condescended to give them that grace which is needed to humble their pride and make them willing and able to heartily believe “that which is written”. As the Scriptures declare, “Thy people shall be willing in the day of Thy power” (Psalm 110:3).

And now, dear reader, may you prayerfully and carefully read and study the following scriptures, and consider their meanings, for they are the Word of God.

## **CHOSEN**

“Selected from a number, picked out, elect, choice.” — Webster.

Matthew 20:15 “Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with mine own? Is thine eye evil, because I am good?”

“...for many are called but few chosen” (Matthew 22:14).

Mark 13:20 “...but for the elect’s sake, whom he has chosen, he has shortened the days” (verses 22, 27).

John 15:16 “Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you ...” (verse 19).

Acts 9:15 “But the Lord said unto him, Go thy way: For he is a chosen vessel unto me.”

Acts 22:14 “And he said, the God of our fathers hath chosen thee ...”

Acts 10:41 “Not to all people, but unto witnesses chosen before of God, even to us ...”

I Corinthians 1:27 “But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise, and God has chosen the weak things of the world...” (verses 26, 28) (speaking to the elect — Matthew 11:25).

2 Thessalonians 2:13 “But we are bound to give thanks always to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation...” (One of the greatest reasons a true Christian has for praising God).

Ephesians 1:4 “According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world ...” (Read the whole chapter).

1 Peter 2:9 “But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar (or purchased) people ...”

James 2:5 “...Hath not God chosen the poor of this world ...” (1 Kings 3:8, Ps. 89:3, 105:6, 106:5, etc.).

Revelation 17:14 “... and they that are with him are called, and chosen, and faithful” (verse 8) (chapter 19:9).

Psalms 33:12 “Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord; and the people whom he hath chosen for his own inheritance.”

John 13:18. “I speak not of you all; I know whom I have chosen” (Romans 16:13).

Deuteronomy 7:6, “For thou art an holy people unto the Lord thy God; the Lord thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto himself, above all people that are upon the face of the earth” (Isaiah 43:20).

## **ELECT**

“To determine in favor of, to designate, choose or select as an object of mercy or favor, predestinated in the

divine councils, one chosen or set apart, one chosen or designated by God for salvation, collectively, the saved.”—Webster ... “THIS ELECTION IS an act of distinguishing love, of Divine Sovereignty, eternal, absolute and irrevocable, personal” — Cruden.

Matthew 24:22. ... but “for the elect’s sake those days shall be shortened” (verse 24).

Matthew 24:31. “And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds ...”

Luke 18:7. “And shall not God avenge his own elect...?”

Romans 8:33. “Who shall lay anything to the charge of God’s elect? ...” (Colossians 3:12).

2 Timothy 2:10. ... “therefore I endure all things for the elect’s sake, that they may also obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory” (Speaking of the elect that have not yet believed).

Titus 1:1 “Paul, a servant of God, and an apostle of Jesus Christ, according to the faith of God’s elect...”

1 Peter 1:2 “Elect according to the foreknowledge of God, the Father ...” (2 John 13).

Isaiah 45:4. “For Jacob my servant’s sake, and Israel mine elect, I have even called thee by thy name. I have surnamed thee, though thou hast not known me.”

Isaiah 65:9. “And I will bring forth a seed out of Jacob, and out of Judah an inheritor of my mountains and mine elect shall inherit it, and my servants shall dwell there” (verse 22).

2 John 13. “The elder unto the elect lady and her children.”

## **ELECTION**

“DIVINE CHOICE, predetermination of God, by which persons are distinguished as objects of mercy, become subjects of grace, are sanctified and prepared for heaven, the elect.” — Webster.

Romans 9:11. “For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth” (God speaking of his love for Jacob and his hate for Esau even before they were born—verse 13).

Romans 11:5. “Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace” (Romans 9:27).

Romans 11:7. “What then? Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for; but the election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded” (Romans 11:28).

1 Thessalonians 1:4 “Knowing, brethren beloved, your election of God.”

2 Peter 1:10 “Wherefore the rather brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure...”

Romans 11:28. “... but as touching the election, they are beloved for the Father’s sake” (verse 29; Eph. 1:9).

## **CALLED**

“To designate or characterize as, to affirm to be” — Webster.

## **CALLING**

“Divine summons, state of being divinely called; call” — Webster.

Romans 1:6. “Among whom are ye also called of Jesus Christ” (verses 5, 7).

Romans 8:28. “And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose” (verse 30).

1 Corinthians 1:24, “But unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God” (verses 9, 26, 27; Col. 3:15).

1 Timothy 6:12. “Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called ...”

Galatians 1:15,16. “But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother’s womb, and called me by his grace, to reveal his Son in me ...” (Not until it pleases God are any awakened and saved—Acts 13:2).

1 Peter 5:10 “But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Jesus Christ, ...”

Acts 2:39 “For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call.”

1 Thessalonians 2:12 “That ye would walk worthy of God, who hath called you unto his kingdom and glory” (chapter 4:7).

Hebrews 9:15 “... they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance” Rev. 17:14; Jude 1; 2 Peter 1:3; 1 Peter 1:15; Gal. 1:6; 1 Cor. 1:26).



2 Timothy 1:9 “Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began .”

Ephesians 4:4 “There is one body, and one spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling” (verse 1).

2 Thessalonians 1:11 “Wherefore also we pray always for you, that our God would count you worthy of this calling, ...” (Heb. 3:1; Eph. 1:18).

## **APPOINTED**

“To fix, to settle, to establish or fix by decree or decision” — Webster.

1 Peter 2:8 “And a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offense, even to them that stumble at the word, being disobedient, whereunto also they were appointed.”

1 Thessalonians 5:9. “For God hath not appointed us to wrath but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ.” (1 Thessalonians. 3:3; Acts 22:10; Psalm. 79:11).

Job 14:5. “Seeing his days are determined, the number of his months are with thee, thou hast appointed his bounds that he cannot pass.” (Chap. 23:14).

Acts 17:26 “And hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation.”

Proverbs 3 1:8. “Open thy mouth for the dumb in the cause of all such as are appointed to destruction.”

1 Kings 20:42. “...Thus saith the Lord, Because thou hast let go out of thy hand a man whom I appointed to utter destruction, ...”

## **ORDAINED**

“To decree to appoint, to arrange, to prepare” — Webster.

Jude 4 “For there are certain men crept in unawares who were before of old ordained to this condemnation...”

Acts 13:48 “... And as many as were ordained to eternal life believed.”

Ephesians 2:10. “For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them” (Chapter 1:4).

Habakkuk 1:12. “Art thou not from everlasting, O Lord my God, mine Holy One? We shall not die. O Lord, thou hast ordained them for judgment; and, O mighty God, thou hast established them for correction” (Romans 13:1; 1 Corinthians 2:7).

## **PREDESTINATED or PREDESTINATION**

“The decree of God by which He has, from eternity unchangeably, appointed or determined whatever comes to pass. It is used particularly to denote the preordination of men to everlasting happiness or misery and is a part of the unchangeable plan of the Divine government; in other words, the unchangeable purpose of an unchangeable God” — Webster.

Romans 8:29, 30 “For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate... Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: ...”

Ephesians 1:5 “Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will”

Ephesians 1:11 “In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will” (Isaiah 46:9, 10).

John 6:37 “All that the Father giveth me shall come to me ...” (verse 39).

John 6:44 “No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him ...” (verse 64, 65).

John 3:27 “...A man can receive nothing except it be given him from heaven.”

John 10:26 “But ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep ...” (verses 27, 28, 29).

John 10:16 “And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice ...” (Christ had a definite work to do, and thus a definite number to die for).

Acts 18:10 “For I am with thee, and no man shall set on thee to hurt thee: for I have much people in this city.”

John 11:52 “And not for this nation only, but that also he should gather together in one the children of God that were scattered abroad.”

John 17:6 “I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world:”

John 17:2 “As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him”—(rather definite is it not?).

Jeremiah 1:5 “Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee ...” (Matthew 7:23, “never knew you”!).

Galatians 4:28 “Now we brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise” (Romans 9:8).

Romans 4:16 “Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace, to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed,...” (Who are His seed? See. Genesis 3:15).

Webster says, that Sovereign means “supreme in power, independent of and unlimited by any other.” Who can we attribute this to but God? Surely His Word we have been considering, and what is yet to follow, indisputably shows God as Sovereign, not only in salvation but in all things and in all His ways.

Romans 9:22. “What if God, willing to show his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much long-suffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction.”

Romans 9:13. “As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated” (verse 11).

Romans 9:21. "Hath not the potter power over the clay; of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor, and another unto dishonor?" (Isaiah 45:9).

Isaiah 64:8. "But now, O Lord, thou art our father; we are the clay, and thou our potter; and we all are the work of thy hand."

Isaiah 45:9. "Woe unto him that striveth with his Maker...Shall the clay say to him that fashioneth it, What maketh thou? or thy work, He hath no hands?"

Isaiah 43:7. "Even every one that is called by my name: for I have created him for my glory, I have formed him; yea, I have made him." (verse 21).

Isaiah 45:7. "I form the light, and create darkness: I make peace, and create evil: I the Lord do all these things" (verse 12).

Jeremiah 27:5. "I have made the earth, the man and the beast that are upon the ground, by my great power and by my outstretched arm, and have given it unto whom it seemed meet unto me."

Psalms 100:3. "Know ye that the Lord he is God: it is he that has made us, and not we ourselves;"

Psalm 33:11. "The counsel of the Lord standeth forever, the thoughts of his heart to all generations." (verse 12; Acts 4:27, 28).

Luke 4:25 to 29 (Note in verses 26, 27 "unto none of them", etc. Have we not a glimpse of God's Sovereignty in these verses, in doing according as He wills? Note verses 28, 29; the same thing happens today when God's Sovereignty is preached).

John 12:39, 40. "Therefore they could not believe, . . . He hath blinded their eyes, and hardened their hearts;"

Romans 11:8. "(According as it is written, God hath given them the spirit of slumber, eyes that they should not see, and ears that they should not hear); unto this day" (verse 7).

Matthew 11:25. "...I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes" (Luke 10:21, 22).

Matthew 11:27. "...neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the son will reveal him."

John 9:39. "And Jesus said, For judgment I am come into this world, that they which see not might see; and that they which see might be made blind."

Romans 9:18. "Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth" (verse 15).

Proverbs 16:4. "The Lord hath made all things for himself: yea even the wicked for the day of evil" (Romans 9:22; Job 21:30).

Romans 9:23, 24. "And that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory, Even us whom he has called..." (verse 29).

Matthew 19:25, 26. "...Who then can be saved? With men this is impossible; but with God all things are possible" (Mark 10:26, 27; Luke 18:26, 27).

Romans 9:16. "So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy."

Luke 1:17. "...to make ready a people prepared for the Lord." (What does this mean? When were they prepared? Look again at Ephesians 1:4).



Matthew. 15:13. "But he answered and said, Every plant, which my heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up" (solemn thought this, Matthew 16:17).

2 Peter 2:12. "But these as natural brute beasts, made to be taken and destroyed," (contrast Chap. 1:3).

2 Thessalonians 2:11, 12. "And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: That they all might be damned,..." (Is God changeable? James 1:17: Are not God's decrees all made in eternity and, like God himself, unchangeable? Malachi 3:6: God loves from eternity and He hates from eternity. "I know that, whatsoever God doeth, it shall be forever: nothing can be put to it, nor anything taken from it: and God doeth it, that men should fear before him" Ecclesiastes 3:14).

Hebrews 2:13. "...And again, Behold I and the children which God hath given me." (If God had given all without exception to Christ, then all must or will be saved. Read again John 6:27, etc.; John 10:29).

Philippians 1:29. "For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake."

Colossians 1:12. "Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light."

Hebrews 2:10. "For it became him, for whom are all things and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory..."

Hebrews 6:17. "Wherein God willing more abundantly to shew unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, ..."

Ephesians 3:11. "According to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord:"

Romans 9:20. "Nay but O man who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus?" (Are not our mouths stopped at His word?) (Isaiah 29:16).

Ephesians 2:8. "For by grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God:"

Matthew 20:23. "...but it shall be given to them for whom it is prepared of my Father."

Matthew. 16:17. "...for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven."

Mark 10:26, 27. "...Who then can be saved? And Jesus looking upon them saith, With men it is impossible, but not with God: for with God all things are possible."

James 1:17. "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning."

Isaiah 14:24. "The Lord of hosts hath sworn, saying, Surely as I have thought, so shall it come to pass; and as I have purposed, so shall it stand" (verse 27).

Isaiah 43:21. "This people have I formed for myself;" (verses 1, 13; Chap. 8:18).

Isaiah 44:24. "Thus saith the Lord, thy redeemer, and he that formed thee from the womb, I am the Lord that maketh all things;" (verses 1, 2, 18).

## **THE WILL**

"The will is that faculty of the soul whereby we freely choose or refuse things. It is of the nature of the will to do freely whatsoever it wills. (But) it is unable, till it be changed by grace, to move itself towards God; and to will what is good, is of grace; our will being free in respect of sinful acts, but bound in respect of good

works, till it be made free by Christ” (Psalm 110:3; John 8:36; John 15:5; Phil. 2:13)—Cruden.

That doctrine therefore which teaches ‘that when grace is offered we may refuse it if we will, and if we will we may receive it’ is to be looked upon as contrary to the Scriptures.

We all acknowledge dark sayings in Scripture and things ‘hard to be understood’, but the difficulty is not so much from the Word as from a natural unbelief, prejudice and darkness within, which are those crooked, wrinkled or discolored mediums men commonly look through at spiritual things.

The doctrine of general love will not stand with that of special election, yet the doctrine of special election will stand without that, and against it, for there is nothing more plain than there is an election of men to salvation, as also the genuine import of election is, to choose one or more out of many, which necessarily implies the leaving or not choosing of some: and consequently the not willing of salvation to all universally. The will of God cannot be resisted successfully because with His willing the end, He also wills the means. ‘My counsel shall stand. I will do all my pleasure.’

It shows what reason we have to discard forever that groundless and blind opinion, which lays the stress of

salvation on a thing of naught, for what else is the will of a frail and mutable man? The grace of God is little beholden to that doctrine which would give the glory of it to a graceless thing — man.

One God was the maker of all, but all were not made for the same use and end. As in a great house are many vessels, 'some to honor and some to dishonor', so in the Word we have some God raised up to be monuments of His power and justice, (Exodus 9:16; Jude 4; 1 Peter 2:8), called therefore 'vessels of wrath' (Romans 9:22); others are 'vessels of mercy' whom He formed for Himself (Isaiah 43:7,21), and are therefore said to be 'afore prepared unto glory' (Romans 9:23).

The principle thing intended and merited by the death of Christ was the justification of sinners; and 'that God might be just in justifying of them' (Romans 3:23), and finally that they might have eternal life (John 17:2). If therefore He merited this for all, then all must be justified and saved (Romans 5:8, 9, 10), and it cannot be justly denied to any, for it is their due, by virtue of price. For none can be condemned for whom Christ died (Romans 8:34). Therefore if Christ died for all, then all must be justified and saved and it must be concluded that all are not justified, so consequently Christ did not give Himself for all.

“To say that Christ died for all without exception and yet admitting that only a few are saved would seem to tax God of injustice or else that the sufferings of Christ were not sufficient to make a discharge due to them, or it insinuates a deficiency of power, or want of good will, to prosecute His design to perfection.

“That election is founded upon grace or the good pleasure of God’s will, is the only original cause and motive of election” — Coles.

Isaiah 46:10. “Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure.”

Daniel 4:35. “And all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing: and He doeth according to His will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay His hand, or say unto Him, What doest thou?”

John 1:13. “Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of GOD.”

John 5:21. “. . . even so the Son quickeneth whom he will.”

James 1:18. "Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth."

Romans 9:17. "For the Scripture saith unto Pharaoh, Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might shew my power in thee and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth."

(God in His wisdom made Pharaoh for destruction that He might shew His power and might to all the ends of the earth) (Prov. 16:4).

Exodus 9:16. "And in very deed for this cause have I raised thee up, for to shew in thee my power; and that my name be declared throughout all the earth" (Romans 9:22; Proverbs 21:1).

Exodus 7:3. "And I will harden Pharaoh's heart . . ."  
Exodus 10:1. "And the Lord said unto Moses, Go in unto Pharaoh: for I have hardened his heart, ..." (No less than ten times God says He will harden Pharaoh's heart, and not until God hardens it do we read of Pharaoh hardening his own heart), Exodus 9:12; 10:20, 27; 11:10; 14:8, etc.

Joshua 11:20. "For it was of the Lord to harden their hearts, . . . that he might destroy them utterly, . . ."

1 Sam. 15:3. "Now go and smite Amalek, and utterly destroy all that they have, and spare them not; but slay both man and woman, infant and suckling.."

John 3:3, 7, 8 "Jesus answered, and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, (or from above) he cannot see the kingdom of God." (We are just as helpless when it comes to our spiritual birth as we were at our natural birth, not only helpless as to its accomplishment but worse; we violently oppose it) (Verses 6, 8).

Romans 11:24. "For if thou wert cut out of the olive tree which is wild by nature, and wert grafted contrary to nature into a good olive tree, . . ." (Is it possible for a thing to graft itself?).

Romans 16:13. "Salute Rufus chosen in the Lord,. . ." (This election is personal).

Ephesians 2:1. "And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins." (God in His Word likens a sinner to one who is dead, and as a dead person, we are unable to do one thing to accomplish our salvation, not even to believe, except it be given us to do so. In John chapter eleven, we have in Lazarus a good type of a sinner dead in trespasses and sins, helpless, hopeless, unable to move toward God, until His quickening power awakens and enables the sinner to "come forth").



Isaiah 40:13. "Who hath directed the Spirit of the Lord or being his counselor hath taught him?"

Isaiah 40:8. "The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: but the word of our God shall stand for ever."

Proverbs 19:21. "There are many devices in a man's heart; nevertheless the counsel of the Lord, that shall stand" (Let us beware lest many devices are found in our heart, and we are found fighting against God and His Word as many are doing today, deceiving themselves and others. "Nevertheless the counsel of the Lord, that shall stand.")

Luke 11:28. "But he said, Yea rather, blessed are they that hear the word of God, and keep it."

This pamphlet is written to four classes of people, for their learning (Proverbs 1:5). May God who is rich in mercy, open the eyes of saint and sinner as they read and ponder over His Word.

1. For those who are saved, and have not yet seen this great truth. May they get a glimpse of God, such as they never had before, of His power and might, and realize that God is SOVEREIGN in all things and doeth according to His "own will" and not the will of the creature; for when a person grasps this in its fullest sense, they will

praise Him as they never have before for His distinguishing love in making them objects of mercy while others have been made “vessels of wrath”.

2. For those who are not saved, that they might perhaps for the first time have the fear of God implanted in their hearts and be made to realize that God is Sovereign; and that He is just as righteous in thrusting sinners into hell as He is in saving them; that their salvation rests with God, and except it pleases Him to have mercy on them they will have no hope in time or eternity and thus be made to cry “What must I do to be saved?” Yes, the gospel is still sounding forth and sinners are still being saved, but time is short. Hasten then His Word to obey (Isaiah 45:22; Romans 5:6, 8; John 6:37; 2 Corinthians 5:21; 1 Timothy 1:15).

3. For those to whom it has pleased God to reveal His Sovereignty, that they might be strengthened in this truth to the fuller realization of God Who is all in all, and that it might be the means of their walking continually before Him in fear. (Malachi 3:16; Psalm 89:7; Psalm 103:17; Nehemiah 7:2; Acts 10:2; Luke 1:50).

4. For those who profess to be children of God, yet deny and hate His Sovereignty, who scoff and gnash their teeth and maliciously utter slander against those whom God has shown this great truth. Little do they realize

they have formed themselves with a great alliance, those who are at enmity with God, the unregenerate.

Oh that God would deal graciously with those who profess but do not possess, to remove from their hearts the hatred against His Word and His people and put in its place the “love of Christ which passeth knowledge.”

If the Lord of Heaven and earth has hid the majestic truth of ‘God’s Sovereignty’ from such “wise and prudent” ones, it is because “it seemed good in His sight”. And if the Lord of Heaven and earth has graciously made others receptive of this truth, it is again “because it seemed good in His sight” (Matthew 11:25, 26). “For a man can receive nothing, except it be given him from Heaven” (John 3:27).

Man is totally depraved in all his faculties. The human doctrine that God in His gracious Sovereignty brings His “elect” upon an intermediate ground where they are able and willing of themselves to accept as well as to reject Christ, and leaves them to decide their own fate, is gross error. According to “sound doctrine” and human experience, the “effectual calling” of God never brings one of His elect into such a sort of intermediate state where he can and will reject Christ. For at the effectual call of the Gospel he is supernaturally made able and willing to come all the way to Christ. All who are willing to believe the truth of God, and who also realize the

thorough depravity of their own sinful hearts, readily acknowledge that a sinner must be Divinely brought all the way to and through that experience called “conversion”. In fact, so complete and so continuous is human depravity, that every believer not guilty of dishonesty will be compelled to admit by reason of his experience as a Christian, that even after conversion he can never persevere unless he is kept by the power of God through faith (Titus 1:1; 2 Thessalonians 3:2; Ephesians 2:8), unto that salvation “ready to be revealed in the last time” (1 Peter 1:5).

One more reminder. The extremely over-emphasized doctrine of “human responsibility” is equally revealed in the Bible, with no less distinction. Dear reader, if you cannot harmonize the truth of “Divine Sovereignty” with “Human Responsibility” and your heart has been harboring and your mouth disclosing a bitter and bigoted resentment against God for revealing His “Sovereignty”, or against any of His people for believing and teaching it, hold thy hand upon thy mouth lest thou “be found even to fight against God” (Acts 5:39). “Nay, but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God?” (Romans 9:20). See to it well that thou “be not rash with thy mouth, and let not thine heart be hasty to utter anything before God” (Ecclesiastes 5:2).

For “whom shall he teach knowledge? and whom shall he make to understand doctrine? them that are weaned

from the milk drawn from the breasts.” Are you weaned from the wisdom that comes from the human breast? (Isaiah 28:9).

Let us consider for a moment. Is there any like unto our God? Is there any other of whom the seraphims could say “Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of Hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory? (Isaiah 6:3)? Our God is a great God (2 Chronicles 2:5) unto whom belongs righteousness (Psalm 11:7), glory (John 17:5), wisdom (Romans 11:13), power (Psalm 66:3) and might (Ephesians 1:19); an everlasting (Isaiah 40:28), eternal God (Deuteronomy 33:27), righteous in judgment (Revelation 16:7), tender in mercy (James 5:11); a God of love (Romans 8:39) and patience (Romans 15:15), reserving the wicked for destruction (Job 21:30) yet showing lovingkindness unto thousands (Jeremiah 32:18): not a man that He should lie (Numbers 23:19), ever the great “I am” (Exodus 3:14), Father of our Lord Jesus Christ (Romans 15:6), “a Friend that sticketh closer than a brother” (Proverbs 18:24).

Can we find words to sufficiently magnify the name of such a God? “What is man that Thou art mindful of him?” (Psalm 8:4). “It is He that sitteth upon the circle of the earth, and the inhabitants thereof are as grasshoppers; that stretcheth out the heavens as a curtain, and spreadeth them out as a tent to dwell in” (Isaiah 40:22). “Whatsoever God doeth, it shall be

forever: nothing can be put to it, nor anything taken from it: and God doeth it, that men should fear before Him” (Ecclesiastes 3:14).

Let us ask another question. Is there any other doctrine, or anything else, that so exalts God as does His Sovereignty, His right to do as He pleases with His own? “For all the earth is Mine” (Exodus 19:5). “Behold, all souls are Mine” (Ezekiel 18:4). There is nothing that magnifies His love in the heart of a saved sinner as does His Sovereignty. The wicked appreciate not God’s love, for they know nothing of it. It is only those who have been made the objects of His Divine choice who can know the real love of God and praise Him for it. We say again, God’s Sovereignty is in keeping with such a God as we have to do with, and magnifies His love as nothing else can do.

## **THE MEANING OF “KOSMOS” IN JOHN 3:16**

**A. W. Pink**

It may appear to some of our readers that the exposition we have given of John 3:16 in the chapter on “Difficulties and Objections” is a forced and unnatural one, inasmuch as our definition of the term “world” seems to be out of harmony with the meaning and scope of this word in other passages, where, to supply the world of believers (God’s elect) as a definition of “world” would make no sense. Many have said to us,

“Surely, ‘world’ means world, that is, you, me, and everybody”. In reply we would say: We know from experience how difficult it is to set aside the “traditions of men” and come to a passage which we have heard explained in a certain way scores of times, and study it carefully for ourselves without bias. Nevertheless, this is essential if we would learn the mind of God.

Many people suppose they already know the simple meaning of John 3:16, and therefore they conclude that no diligent study is required of them to discover the precise teaching of this verse. Needless to say, such an attitude shuts out any further light which they otherwise might obtain on the passage. Yet, if anyone will take a Concordance and read carefully the various passages in which the term “world” (as a translation of “kosmos”) occurs, he will quickly perceive that to ascertain the precise meaning of the word “world” in any given passage is not nearly so easy as is popularly supposed. The word “kosmos” and its English equivalent “world”, is not used with a uniform significance in the New Testament. Very far from it. It is used in quite a number of different ways.

Below we will refer to a few passages where this term occurs, suggesting a tentative definition in each case:

1. “Kosmos” is used of the Universe as a whole: Acts 17:24— “God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that He is Lord of heaven and earth.”

2. “Kosmos” is used of the earth: John 13:1; Ephesians 1:4, etc., etc.— “When Jesus knew that His hour was come that He should depart out of this world unto the Father, having loved His own which were in the world He loved them unto the end.” “Depart out of this world” signifies, leave this earth. “According as He hath chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world.” This expression signifies, before the earth was founded — compare Job 38:4, etc.

3. “Kosmos” is used of the world system: John 12:31, etc. “Now is the judgment of this world come: now shall the prince of this world be cast out” — compare Matthew 4:8 and 1 John 5:19.

4. “Kosmos” is used of the whole human race: Romans 3:19, etc. — “Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law: that ever mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God.”

5. “Kosmos” is used of humanity minus believers: John 15:18; Romans 3:6— “If the world hate you, ye know it hated Me before it hated you.” Believers do not “hate” Christ, so that “the world” here must mean the world of unbelievers in contrast to believers who love Christ. “God forbid: for then how shall God judge the world.” Here is another passage were “the world” cannot mean



‘you, me and everybody,’ for believers will not be “judged” by God, see John 5:24. So that here, too, it must be the world of unbelievers which is in view.

6. “Kosmos” is used of Gentiles in contrast from Jews: Romans 11:12, etc. “Now if the fall of them (Israel) be **the riches of the world**, and the diminishing of them (Israel) **the riches of the Gentiles**; how much more their (Israel’s) fulness.” Note how the first clause in bold face is defined by the latter clause placed in bold face. Here, again, “the world” cannot signify all humanity for it excludes Israel!

7. “Kosmos” is used of believers only: John 1:29; 3:16, 17; 6:33; 12:47; 1Corinthians. 4:9; 2Corinthians 5:19. We leave our readers to turn to these passages, asking them to note, carefully, exactly what is said and predicated of the “world” in each place.

Thus it will be seen that “kosmos” has at least seven different meanings in the New Testament. It may be asked: Has then God used a word to confuse and confound those who read the Scriptures? We answer, No! —nor has He written His Word for lazy people who are too dilitary, or too busy with the things of this world, or, like Martha, so much occupied with serving, they have no time or heart to search and study Holy Writ! Should it be asked further: But how is a searcher of the Scriptures to know which of the above meanings the term “world” has in any given passage? The answer is:

This may be ascertained by a careful study of the Context, by diligently noting what is predicated of “the world” in each passage, and by prayerfully consulting other parallel passages to the one being studied.

The principal subject of John 3:16 is Christ the gift of God. The first clause tells us what moved God to “give” His only begotten Son, and that was His great “love”; the second clause informs us for whom God “gave” His Son, and that is for, “whosoever believeth;” while the last clause makes known why God “gave” His Son (His purpose), and that is, that everyone that believeth “should not perish but have everlasting life.”

That “the world” in John 3:16 refers to the world of believers (God’s elect), in contradistinction from the “world of the ungodly” 2 Peter 2:5, is established, unequivocally established, by a comparison of the other passages which speak of God’s “love.” “God commendeth His love toward US”—the saints, Romans 5:8. “Whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth”—every son, Hebrews 12:6. “We love Him because He first loved US—believers, 1 John 4:19. The wicked, God “pities” (see Matthew 18:33). Unto the unthankful and evil, God is “kind” (see Luke 6:35). The vessels of wrath He endures “with much long-suffering” (see Romans 9:22). But “His own,” God “loves”!! (taken from “The Sovereignty of God” by Arthur W. Pink.)

One more word that should at least be briefly considered is the word **ALL**. A word that is so often stubbornly used by some without consideration only to accommodate their own means. We will not go into a lengthy discussion but leave it to the reader's honesty to take God's Word and see for himself how limited that little word "ALL" can be or how inclusive, depending on that which God has under consideration.

Webster says, the word All means:

"The whole; the total; the actual aggregate of particulars or persons or those involved in any PARTICULAR CONSIDERATION" etc. Thus we must be careful that we do not take the attitude of some which say, without consideration, "All means all and that is the end of the matter."

In closing it must be emphasized again that God's Sovereignty in no way interferes with man's responsibility. Nor does it in any way modify or interfere with any doctrine found in His Word. It gives God the glory that rightfully is His, and it would be well if we would take heed to it.

"A wise man will hear and will increase learning: and a man of understanding shall attain unto wise counsels."  
— Prov. 1:5.