

The Sovereignty of God Bible Study

1. To be sovereign means to have unlimited control of all. God is “limited” only by His wisdom and purposes—factors in His character, never by the power of created beings or by the forces of the universe. Record what the following verses say about the extent of God’s power. Underscore the words “all things” when they occur.

He works	Ephesians 1:11
He upholds	Hebrews 1:3
He is able to	Phil. 3:20, 21, Psalm 119:91b

2. What do the following verses say about the Lord’s actions, past and future?

- that He did Psalm 135:6
- He has done Psalm 115:3
- His counsel shall stand and He will do Isa. 46:10

3. How can this affect my attitude toward what God has said and promised? See Romans 4:20,21. Numbers 23:19.

4. Another definition of sovereignty is “holding power that cannot be overruled.” From the following verses, select the phrases that most clearly show that God’s work cannot be thwarted. Isa. 43:13 RSV*; II Chron. 20:6; Rev. 3:7; Daniel 4:35.

5. Compared to God, what are all earth’s inhabitants like? Dan. 4:35; Isa. 40:22 In fact, even the nations are like what in His sight? Isa. 40:15,17

“The nations of the world are nothing to God except as they relate to His purpose of ‘taking out a people for His Name’ and preparing His people for glory.”

6. Though the nations “roar like the roaring of many waters,” what will God do? Isa. 17:12,13

7. God is chief or highest, supreme over all others. Read I Chronicles 29:11-13. What do I find in these verses about:

- a. God’s qualities as Ruler:
- b. The extent of His ownership and reign:
- c. What He is the Source of:
- d. What my response toward Him should be.

This portion is an excellent one to memorize and to use in worshipping the Lord.

8. Because He is highest in rank and authority, what is true of other rulers and powers? Daniel 5:18-21; Psalm 75:6,7; Romans 13:1; Exodus 9:16

“God is letting every human form of government run its course to demonstrate that man is not qualified to rule himself.” When history has set the stage, proving mankind’s inadequacy, then God will usher in His ideal form of government—theocracy, in which God rules openly through His Son. Until then His rule is behind the scenes. Yet He openly intervenes and overrules when His honor and the true interests of one or more of His people are at stake. **Optional: Can I think of examples, Biblical or otherwise, when He has done this?**

9. In order that God's position as sovereign may affect my thoughts and emotions, what must I do, and when? Deut. 4:39; Psalm 46:10
10. The Father's position of ownership and control is held equally by the Son. Notice again Phil. 3:20,21. According to John 3:35, 17:2 and Matt. 28:18, what has the Father given the Son? Optional: What does Eph. 1:20,21 (Phillips*) say about Christ's position? Record your answer on the back of this page.
11. If I belong to Him through faith, how can my attitude differ from that of unbelievers in these days? Luke 21:26, Luke 12:32.
Read Romans 8:37-39, NEB*, in view of the sovereign power of God. Paul lists many things I need not fear. Which ones do I fear most often?
As my eyes are upon God, instead of being fearful, what can I be like? Rom. 8:37.
12. Compare Acts 5:38,39 with Psalm 33:10,11 and Isa. 14:24,27. What things cannot be done to God's counsel, purposes and working?
In contrast, what happens to man's purposes and working when these conflict with God's? Therefore what aspects of life should I leave in His hands, waiting for Him to work? (The following verses may give some clues: II Chron. 20:12,15; Romans 12:19; 14:4; Psalm 37:1-8)
What specific circumstances in my life right now do I most need to place and leave in His hands?
13. Which of the following verses help me most to rest in God's sovereign planning and working in my life and circumstances? Job 23:10; Psalm 16:2 Moff.*, Psalm 31:15 in Psalms for Today*, Romans 8:28,29; Matt. 10:29-31.
What does God say about seemingly "chance" happenings in my life? Prov. 10:33 Amp.*, I Pet. 1:7, Phillips*
What can I count on when I fear that my life will be adversely affected by someone else's mistakes—or even malice? Gen. 50:20; John 19:11; Prov. 16:1; 21:1; Acts 5:38,39.
14. In God's plan for Himself and for world history, what is often true of His timing compared to ours? II Pet. 3:8; Psalm 74:10,11; 75:2,3 Moff.*; Heb. 2:3; Isa. 30:18.
Therefore what is important in my responses? Heb. 10:36; Isa. 28:16, 30:15; Psalm 37:7; Lam. 3:25,26.
Sometimes when I think I'm waiting for God, He is waiting for me. If I am rebelling against Him in some way, resisting His control or plan for me, what is He waiting for me to do? II Chron. 7:14; Lam. 3:40,41.
15. God possesses sovereignty over the universe. He is the "blessed controller of all things, the King over all kings and the Master of all masters" (I Tim. 6:15). Yet He created us with permission to choose or reject His personal sovereignty over our personal lives. Romans 12:1,2 are preceded by chapters that reveal much about God's sovereignty and mercy. In view of what God is like, what do these verses say my only reasonable response to Him should be?

Optional: Study Romans 14:7-9 in Phillips. What light does this portion throw upon our supposed "independence"? What comfort and challenge do I find here? In view of verses 10-12, why is submission to Him as sovereign in this life so important?

References from other versions; quotations...

Isa. 43:13 RSV - I am God, and also henceforth I am He; there is none who can deliver from my hand; I work and who can hinder it?

Eph. 1:20,21, Phillips - describing Christ's position after His resurrection and ascension:

“the place of supreme honor in Heaven—a place that is infinitely superior to any conceivable command, authority, power or control, and which carries with it a name far beyond any name that could ever be used in this world or the world to come.”

Romans 8:37-39, NEB - After listing afflictions, hardships, needs and dangers: “...and yet, in spite of all, overwhelming victory is ours through him who loved us. For I am convinced that there is nothing in death or life, in the realm of spirits or superhuman powers, in the world as it is or the world as it shall be, in the forces of the universe, in heights or depths—nothing in all creation that can separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

Psalms 16:2, Moff. - “Thou art my Lord,” I say to the Eternal, “my welfare rests on thee alone.”

Psalms 31:15, Psalms for Today - But I have complete confidence in You, Lord, for I have said, “You are my God, my destiny is under Your control.”

Daniel 5:23b - ...the God who holds in His own power your breath of life and all your destiny. (Moff.)

Psalms 74:10,11, 75:2,3, Moff. - O God, how long is the foe to be scoffing? Are the enemy always to blaspheme thee? Why hold back thy hand, O God? Stretch out thy right hand and strike, thou who art our King of old, gaining victories on earth! ...God says, “Through all the long delay I am still ruling in my justice; when men in any panic melt away, I still uphold the order of the world.”

Prov. 16:33 AOT - The lot is cast into the lap but the decision is wholly of the Lord—even the events (that seem accidental) are really ordered by Him.

Peter 1:6,7, Phill. - . . .at present you are temporarily harassed by all kinds of trials and temptations. This is no accident—it happens to prove your faith, which is infinitely more valuable than gold..... .This proving of your faith is planned to result in praise and honor and glory in the day when Jesus Christ reveals Himself.

With God nothing is incidental, nothing is accidental, and no experience is wasted.”

God is too wise to ever make a mistake, too loving to ever do anything unkind.”

“Say not, my soul, From whence
Can God relieve thy care?
Remember that Omnipotence
Hath servants everywhere.

“God is a God of a million alternatives.
We can usually think of two or three.”

We like to take credit for the good things in life, and blame God for the bad things. The opposite is true.”

Somehow God moves in and before and above the affairs of man for the accomplishment of His purpose. Those who yield can be instruments; those who rebel cannot thwart His purpose, except in their own lives.”

“But simply to drop all our dreams and ambitions and preferences and have no mind about it all, but be willing for God to shift us anywhere in life's checkerboard, or bury us anywhere in life's garden, counting not our lives dear and loving them not unto death, gladly yielding ourselves for God to please Himself with, anywhere and anyway He chooses—that is rarely done.”