

God's Supremacy

Psalm 115:3 "Our God is in heaven; he does whatever pleases him."

This verse tells us that God resides in heaven and has the power and authority to do anything that He wants. It underscores the idea that no one can limit God or dictate what He should do. God's will is paramount, and He acts according to His own purposes and desires.

Psalm 135:6 "Whatever the Lord pleases, he does, in heaven and on earth, in the seas and all deeps."

Similar to Psalm 115:3, this verse expands on the notion of God's sovereignty by specifying that God's will is executed everywhere—on Earth, in the heavens, and in the deepest parts of the sea. This signifies God's unlimited control over all creation.

Daniel 4:35 "All the peoples of the earth are regarded as nothing. He does as he pleases with the powers of heaven and the peoples of the earth. No one can hold back his hand or say to him: 'What have you done?'"

This verse from Daniel further emphasizes that God's authority extends over all nations and people, and no one can question His actions or decisions. It illustrates God's absolute power and the fact that His plans are unchallengeable.

Ephesians 1:11 "In him we were also chosen, having been predestined according to the plan of Him who works out everything in conformity with the purpose of His will,"

This New Testament verse highlights that God has a plan and purpose for everything and everyone. His will is ultimately behind the unfolding of history and the destiny of individuals, showcasing His control over the course of events.

Isaiah 46:10 "I make known the end from the beginning, from ancient times, what is still to come. I say, 'My purpose will stand, and I will do all that I please.'"

Here, God declares that He knows the future and that His purposes will be fulfilled. This verse demonstrates God's foreknowledge and His power to bring about what He has planned, further affirming His sovereignty.

Proverbs 19:21 "Many are the plans in a person's heart, but it is the Lord's purpose that prevails."

This verse contrasts human plans with God's sovereign purposes, indicating that despite human intentions and desires, God's will is ultimately what stands. It's a reminder of the supremacy of God's plan over our own.

Together, these verses paint a picture of a God who is not only in control of the universe but also actively involved in the workings of the world and the lives of individuals. They affirm the belief that God possesses both the power and authority to enact His will in all circumstances, further supporting the idea of divine sovereignty as a key attribute of God's nature.

Jean-Paul Sartre, a prominent 20th-century French existentialist philosopher, supports atheism, particularly through his emphasis on freedom, responsibility, and the absence of a divine creator dictating human essence or values.

In Sartre's view, the notion of God as a creator is incompatible with human freedom. If God existed and had designed humans with a specific nature or purpose, then human freedom would be an illusion because our choices and actions would already be part of a divine plan. This is why Sartre famously declared that "man is condemned to be free" because without God, we are left with no excuses for our actions based on a predetermined nature or external authority, and we must take full responsibility for them.

Sartre's atheism is thus intertwined with his concept of freedom: the absence of God underscores the necessity of human freedom and the responsibility that comes with it. By asserting that we are wholly free to make our own choices and that our values and meanings are self-created rather than divinely ordained, Sartre's philosophy indirectly supports atheism by rejecting the idea of a God who designs and determines human life.

God supremacy – his supreme will is < our limited will

In Genesis we learn that our will is limited when God tells us not to eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

Isaiah 10:5-6

The question of how our choices matter if God controls everything perplexes many, leading to a struggle to reconcile God's sovereignty with human agency. This apparent contradiction, though seeming real to us, doesn't actually conflict with the divine order or reality itself.

Within the context of Isaiah 10:5-6, this theme of divine sovereignty and human responsibility is vividly illustrated. Assyria, described as the "rod of God's anger," is used as an instrument of wrath against Israel for their disobedience and idolatry. Interestingly, Assyria's intention isn't to fulfill God's will but rather to achieve its own goals of conquest and power. Unbeknownst to them, their actions align with God's sovereign plan to discipline Israel.

These verses highlight the dual themes of God's sovereignty in employing nations for divine purposes and the accountability of those nations for their actions, even when used as instruments of divine judgment. This narrative sets a foundation for exploring the dynamics of God's justice, mercy, and sovereignty as presented throughout Isaiah. It underscores that while God may utilize the ambitions of a powerful empire like Assyria, it doesn't excuse them from the consequences of their deeds.

Isaiah 10:6 delves deeper into God's use of Assyria as a means to execute judgment against Israel and Judah for their sins. God's deployment of Assyria against "a godless nation" showcases the severe but just divine retribution through the Assyrian campaign, which is depicted vividly as a punishment meted out with precision and intent.

This elaboration emphasizes God's dominion over nations and underscores the repercussions of disobedience towards Him. Despite Assyria acting on its cruel ambitions, it is, in essence, carrying out God's judgment unknowingly. Yet, the broader narrative of Isaiah also warns that Assyria will not escape judgment for its arrogance and inhumanity. This narrative intricately weaves together the themes of divine sovereignty, human free will, and the moral and spiritual accountability that ensues, showcasing the profound complexity of God's governance over human history.

John 3:1-8

John 3:1-8 tells the story of Nicodemus, a Pharisee and a Jewish leader, who visits Jesus at night to avoid being seen. He acknowledges Jesus as a teacher sent from God, evidenced by the miracles Jesus performs. However, Jesus, understanding the deeper question in Nicodemus's heart about entering the kingdom of God, directly tells him that one must be born again to see God's kingdom. Nicodemus, confused, wonders how a person can be born again once they're old, not questioning the physicality of being born but how one can experience a spiritual rebirth.

Jesus explains that being born again means being born of water and the Spirit, referring to a spiritual transformation that aligns with Ezekiel's prophecy of a new covenant—where one is cleansed (washed with water) and given a new heart and spirit by God's power. This rebirth is not something one can achieve through human effort but is a divine act by God.

John 3:27, the discussion underscores the concept of divine sovereignty. John clarifies that **no one can receive *anything* unless it has been given from heaven**, emphasizing that spiritual rebirth is entirely a gift from God, not the result of human desire or actions.

To put it simply, Jesus's conversation with Nicodemus reveals that entering God's kingdom requires a transformation that only God can initiate and accomplish. This transformation, or being "born again," is not about literal physical rebirth but a profound spiritual change—a cleansing and renewal of the heart by God's action. Despite Nicodemus's knowledge and status, Jesus points out that understanding and experiencing this transformation goes beyond human logic and requires divine intervention. It's a miracle, a change that God alone can bring about in someone's life, emphasizing that our spiritual rebirth and salvation are not things we can earn or achieve on our own; they're gifts from God.

Philippians 2:12

The context of Philippians 2:12 is part of a larger discourse in which Paul encourages the believers in Philippi to live in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ. This particular exhortation comes right after Paul presents the example of Jesus Christ's humility and obedience, culminating in His death on the cross and God's subsequent exaltation of Him to the highest place (Philippians 2:5-11).

In this section, Paul is emphasizing the importance of the Philippians' own conduct and spiritual growth. The call to "work out your own salvation with fear and trembling" is not about achieving salvation through works; rather, it's about living out the implications of their salvation in practical, everyday actions. The phrase "with fear and trembling" signifies an attitude of deep reverence and awareness of the seriousness of living a life that reflects one's relationship with God.

The following verse, Philippians 2:13, provides further context and clarification: **"for it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for His good pleasure."** This suggests that while believers are to actively pursue a life that mirrors their salvation, it is ultimately God who empowers and enables them to do so. Thus, the process of working out one's

salvation is a cooperative effort between God and the believer, grounded in humility and the transformative work of God within them.

Philippians 2:12 is an appeal for believers to live lives that are consistent with the gospel, inspired by the example of Christ's humility and obedience, and **empowered by God's work within them to fulfill His purpose and pleasure.**

A heart of stone being dead in sin is given a free gift of God, by grace through faith results, in man, having the ability to believe, leading to repentance and salvation.

Death – [Gift – Belief – Faith] – Repentance – [Salvation – Life]

The conversion of knowledge to belief—internalization—is a deeply personal and often subconscious process influenced by various external and internal factors. While people and environments can provide the knowledge, experiences, and conditions conducive to this transformation, the actual moment or process through which knowledge becomes a deeply held belief is not something that can be precisely controlled or predicted. Here are a few reasons why this is the case:

1. Personal Experience and Perception

Each individual's unique experiences and perceptions shape how they interpret and internalize knowledge. Two people can be exposed to the same information or experience but may integrate it into their belief systems differently based on their backgrounds, previous experiences, and personal biases.

2. Emotional and Psychological Factors

Emotions and psychological states play significant roles in how we process information and adopt beliefs. Knowledge that resonates on an emotional level is more likely to be internalized. These emotional and psychological factors are fluid and can change over time, influencing when and how knowledge converts to belief.

3. Cognitive Readiness

The state of an individual's cognitive readiness, including their openness to new information and their ability to critically assess and reflect on this information, affects the internalization process. Cognitive readiness is influenced by various factors, including education, maturity, and intellectual curiosity, which vary widely among individuals.

4. Social and Cultural Context

The social and cultural context in which knowledge is presented and the norms and values prevalent in an individual's environment can facilitate or hinder the conversion of knowledge to belief. Social pressures, cultural expectations, and the need for social belonging can significantly impact this process.

5. Timing and Receptivity

The timing of exposure to certain knowledge and an individual's receptivity to it at that moment can influence whether and how quickly that knowledge becomes internalized as belief. Moments of vulnerability or significant life changes can make individuals more receptive to new beliefs, but these moments cannot be orchestrated at will.

6. Reinforcement and Repetition

While repetition and reinforcement can strengthen the likelihood of knowledge becoming a belief, they do not guarantee this outcome. Individuals may resist or reject repeated messages if they conflict with deeply held values or if they perceive the reinforcement as manipulative.

In summary, while external influences can create the conditions for knowledge to transform into belief, the internalization process itself is complex and deeply personal. It involves a blend of cognitive, emotional, and social dynamics that are not fully under the control of any external agent. This underscores the importance of fostering environments that encourage critical thinking, open-mindedness, and emotional support to facilitate healthy belief formation.

The main point here is that God's sovereignty and human actions interact in complex ways. God has a plan, and somehow, even our free choices are part of this plan. Just like Joseph's brothers meant harm, but God used it for good, our lives are filled with choices and actions that, whether good or bad, can be woven into a greater divine purpose.

In simpler terms, God is in charge, but that doesn't make our choices meaningless. Our actions have consequences, and God can use them to bring about His plans. This doesn't mean we don't have freedom; it means our freedom operates within God's greater sovereignty. Understanding this helps us see our place in the world and reassures us that, even when things seem chaotic, there's a bigger plan at work.