

THE SOVEREIGNTY OF GOD

*“Then the word of the LORD came to me: ‘O house of Israel, can I not do with you as this potter does?’ declares the LORD. Like clay in the hand of the potter, so are you in my hand, O house of Israel’.”
—JEREMIAH 18:5-6*

There is a well-known argument that says God cannot be both sovereign and loving at the same time for the reason that if He is loving and all-powerful, then the very existence of suffering and tragedy indicates that He is not loving. And if God is loving, then He’s obviously not sovereign, because He seems unable to overcome all the evil and suffering in this world. So what is meant by the sovereignty of God?

1 John 5:19 says, “We know that we are children of God and that the whole world is under the control of the evil one.” Three times Jesus spoke of Satan as ‘the prince of this world’ and the Bible tells again and again of people acting in disobedience and rebellion against God. The difficulty is that if God rules sovereignly over our disobedience and sovereignly rules His judgment for our disobedience, what does that say about the integrity of God? It’s a problematic position, but God is never the author of evil and, in His sovereignty, created human beings with a free will.

God paints a wonderful picture of His sovereignty in the message He gave Jeremiah. At God’s instructions, Jeremiah went down to the potter’s house. “I saw him working at the wheel. But the pot he was shaping from the clay was marred in his hands; so the potter formed it into another pot, shaping it as seemed best to him” (Jeremiah 18:3-4).

God then revealed to Jeremiah His message. “O house of Israel, can I not do with you as this potter does? Like clay in the hand of the potter, so are you in my hand, O house of Israel.” God doesn’t say, “Well, that’s it; I’m finished here,” but because the clay is marred, He remolds it into something that seems good to Him.

Right from the Garden of Eden, Scripture is full of God remolding the clay. When Adam and Eve disobeyed Him, He made clothes out of skin for them, which was the first time an animal had died and blood was shed. It was a foreshadowing of Christ and what was going to be necessary to take away the sin of the world. God didn’t say, “Well, the heck with humanity.” He remolded the clay, and sent His Son.

God’s sovereignty is not a case of an all-powerful being up in a control tower. It needs to be seen as a potter who remolds the clay. God is continually remolding us, and the marvelous thing is that, in His sovereignty, He remolds us into something that seems good to Him, not second best, not a quick fix, but what seems good to Him.

PRAYER: Dear God, thank You for putting the pieces of my life together, and continuing your work of remolding me into what seems good to You.

TO REFLECT UPON: How has God reshaped my life in a way I didn’t expect?