

# THE GENESIS GENESIS FIVE

Part 5 • February 23, 2025 • Pastor Jason Smotherman

## SOVEREIGNTY OF GOD

The book of Genesis reveals God's absolute sovereignty over creation, human history, and redemption. From the beginning, He demonstrates His supreme authority, wisdom, and power in unfolding His divine plan.

### 1. Sovereign Over Creation (Genesis 1-2)

- God speaks, and the universe is formed (Genesis 1:1-3).
- He establishes order, purpose, and life, showing that everything exists by His will (Colossians 1:16-17).
- Mankind is created in His image and given dominion, but under His ultimate rule (Genesis 1:26-28).

### 2. Sovereign Over Human Free Will & the Fall (Genesis 3)

- Though Adam and Eve sinned, God was not surprised—He already had a redemptive plan (Genesis 3:15).
- He allows free will, yet His purposes still unfold despite human failure.
- Judgment (the curse) and grace (the promise of salvation) work together under His control.

### 3. Sovereign Over Judgment and Mercy (Genesis 6-9)

- In Noah's time, sin corrupts the world, but God preserves a remnant through the flood (Genesis 6:5-8).
- His justice destroys the wicked, while His mercy establishes a new covenant with Noah.

### 4. Sovereign Over Nations and Languages (Genesis 11:1-9)

- At Babel, human pride seeks to defy God, but He confuses their language and scatters them, fulfilling His plan to populate the earth (Genesis 11:7-8).
- Despite human rebellion, His sovereignty over history prevails.

### 5. Sovereign Over Covenant and Election (Genesis 12-50)

- God chooses Abraham to form a covenant people, Israel (Genesis 12:1-3).
- He sovereignly guides, protects, and blesses the patriarchs—Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph—despite their personal failures.

- In Joseph's life, even betrayal and suffering serve God's greater plan: "You intended to harm me, but God intended it for good" (Genesis 50:20).

## **SOVEREIGNTY AND FREE WILL**

- Unlike some deterministic views, we believe that while God is sovereign, He allows humans to make choices (Deuteronomy 30:19).
- This explains why people can resist the Holy Spirit (Acts 7:51), and why salvation requires faith and repentance (Romans 10:9).
- God's plans will ultimately prevail, but He chooses to work through human cooperation.

Genesis - ultimately tells us that God is His sovereignty will constantly chase after a relationship with His creation, not because He is desperate, but because He desires you. This sovereignty, should compel you to study His word, He has provided a written document about what He chooses.

## **PSALM 119**

The Psalm gives two major answers to this inquiry. It first tells us we are to value God's Word ... **BECAUSE OF WHAT IT IS.**

**VARIOUS NAMES:** This psalm employs ten names for the Word of God: **word, law, saying, statutes, way, commandments, path, testimonies, precepts, and judgments.**

A mere glance at these words is sufficient to realize that God's Word is more precious than words can convey. It is God himself speaking. It is God's law for our lives. It is God testifying of himself. It is God providing guidance for our walk in this world. All of these things and more are conveyed by these ten names.

**VARIOUS PICTURES:** But the importance of the Word of God is also conveyed by several graphic pictures. The psalmist likens the Word of God to **water** (v. 9), **a treasure**, (vv. 14, 72, 127, 162), **a companion and counselor** (v. 24), **a song** (v. 54), **honey** (v. 103), **light** (v. 105, 130), and **a heritage** (v. 111).

The psalmist also tells us that we should value the Word of God ... **BECAUSE OF WHAT IT DOES**

### **1. It brings happiness (vv. 1–2).**

- The word 'blessed' means 'happy'.
- The psalmist is, therefore, asserting something of strategic importance—our happiness is tied to valuing the Word of God!
- Tragically, the devil has succeeded in convincing most that the opposite is true.
- They see God's commands as being detrimental to their happiness, but just the opposite is the case.
- The key to happiness is to live in God's Word and to let his Word live in us.

### **2. It produces cleansing (vv. 9, 11).**

- The Word of God is the agent the Spirit of God used to regenerate the hearts of all of us who are saved (Eph. 5:25–27), and he continues to use that same

cleansing power in our lives. By that Word, the Holy Spirit shows us what pleases God and what doesn't and, in so doing, calls us away from sin and into purity of life.

- It is noteworthy that the psalmist specifically relates the cleansing power of the Word of God to young men (v. 9). He knew the tendency of young men to fall into unclean living, and he wanted them to understand that devotion to the Word of God could preserve them from such living.

### **3. It gives liberty (v. 45).**

- Sin always promises to bring freedom, but it only creates bondage (2 Peter 2:19). It is the truth of God that brings true and lasting freedom (John 8:32).

### **4. It provides direction (v. 105).**

- We live in a dark, perplexing world that offers us many paths. If we are careless about the paths we choose, we invite misery and ruin. The Word of God provides the direction we need. It is like a light shining in a dark place (2 Peter 1:19).

### **5. It produces understanding (v. 130).**

- Our walking and understanding are inseparably linked. In addition to shedding light on our path, the Word of God enlightens our minds so we can discern what we ought to do.

Another major emphasis in this Psalm is this: **How we show that we value the Word of God.**

#### **1. Studying it**

- Firstly, we will study it diligently. God's purpose in giving His Word was to point us to Himself. We are, therefore, to seek Him through His Word (v. 2), and this seeking is to be done wholeheartedly (vv. 2–10). We are to 'look' into His Word (v. 6) and to learn its judgments (v. 7).

#### **2. Obeying it**

- Secondly, we will obey its commands. The duty of obedience is set forth in these verses in several ways: walking in the law of the Lord and in His ways (vv. 1, 3), keeping His testimonies (vv. 2, 129), and taking heed to our ways to make sure they correspond to the teachings of God's Word (v. 9).

#### **3. Storing it**

- Thirdly, we will hide it in our hearts. This means we are to store it in our minds and treasure it in our affections with the confidence that it will fortify us against sin (v. 11). G. Campbell Morgan summarizes this verse in this way: 'The best book, in the best place, for the best purpose.'

#### **4. Declaring it**

- Fourthly, we will declare it to others (v. 13). Studying the Word of God will cause our hearts to burn within us (Luke 24:32) in such a way that we won't be able to keep it to ourselves. We'll be anxious to share its message of salvation with those who don't know Christ and to discuss its teachings with fellow Christians.

#### **5. Rejoicing over it**

- Finally, we will constantly rejoice over the Word of God and delight in it (vv. 14–16). We must not miss the connection the psalmist makes in these verses.

The rejoicing of verse 14 and the delighting of verse 16 are connected by the meditating of verse 15. As we reflect on what the Word of God is and what it does, we will find the rejoicing and delighting to be inescapable.

The Truth is that God is sovereign. In His sovereignty, He gave you and I choice. In that choice, before we could choose Him, He chose us. Foreknowledge is different than predestined. Just because He sees the beginning to the end, doesn't mean He predestined the beginning to the end. God looks into the future the way we look into the past.

**Our Doctrinal Paper, "Assurance of Salvation" writes the following beautifully:**

*The apostle Paul put God's saving purposes in divine perspective as he wrote, "For those God foreknew He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brothers and sisters" (Romans 8:29). In this crucial passage, God is not shown to deny humanity's freedom and ability to choose. Rather, Paul shows that God has made provision from eternity for those whom He has foreseen would respond to the gospel and believe in Christ. The Greek term translated "to foreknow" (proginōskō) expresses God's knowing people from eternity. It is also important to note that the verb "to know" (Greek ginōskō; Hebrew yada), when used of God with regard to people in both the Old and New Testaments, expresses a richness of love and mercy mirrored in the healthy marital relationships of God's human creatures. An often cited passage to illustrate this is, "You only have I known [Hebrew, yada; Greek Septuagint, ginōskō] of all the families of the earth" (Amos 3:2, ESV)<sup>2</sup>, which expresses God's loving foreknowledge and election of Israel. Inspired by the Spirit, Peter used the corresponding noun to this lovingly selective verb proginōskō when he addressed far-flung believers in the Roman Empire as "God's elect... chosen according to the foreknowledge [prognosis, emphasis added] of God the Father" (1 Peter 1:1-2).*

The foreknowledge of God is an exercise of omniscience (knowing everything) rather than omnipotence (being all-powerful).

**JONAH 3:10 (KJV)**

*<sup>10</sup> And God saw their works, that they turned from their evil way; and God repented of the evil, that He had said that He would do unto them; and He did it not*

God relented the devastation He predestined, because His sovereignty made a way for the people of Nineveh to repent. He is not looking to cancel choice, but to create an environment where He created choice.

**JOSHUA 24:14-15 (KJV)**

*<sup>14</sup> Now therefore fear the Lord and serve Him in sincerity and in faithfulness. Put away the gods that your fathers served beyond the River and in Egypt, and serve the Lord. <sup>15</sup> And if it is evil in your eyes to serve the Lord, choose this day whom you will serve, whether the gods your fathers served in the region beyond the River, or the gods of the Amorites in whose land you dwell. But as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord."*