

THE SOVEREIGNTY OF GOD IN CREATION

"Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory, and honor, and power: for Thou hast created all things, and for Thy pleasure they are and were created" (Rev. 4: 11).

Sovereignty characterizes the whole Being of God, let us observe how it marks all His ways and dealings.

In the great expanse of eternity which stretches behind Genesis 1:1, the universe was unborn and creation existed only in the mind of the great Creator. In His Sovereign majesty God dwelt all alone. We refer to that far distant period before the heavens and the earth were created. There were then no angels to hymn God's praises, no creatures to occupy His notice, no rebels to be brought into subjection. The great God was all alone amid the awful Silence of His own vast universe. But even at that time, if time it could be called, God was Sovereign. He might create or not create *according to His own good pleasure*. He might create this way or that way; He might create one world or one million worlds, and who was there to resist His will? He might call into existence a million different creatures and place them on *absolute equality*, endowing them with the same faculties and placing them in the same environment; or, He might create a million creatures each differing from the others, and possessing nothing in common save their creaturehood, and who was there to challenge His right? If He so pleased, He might call into existence a world so immense that its dimensions were utterly beyond finite computation; and were He so disposed, He might create an organism so small that nothing but the most powerful microscope could reveal its existence to human eyes. It was His Sovereign right to create, on the one hand, the exalted seraphim to burn around His throne, and on the other hand, the tiny insect which dies the same hour that it is born. If the mighty God chose to have *one vast gradation* in His universe, from loftiest seraph to creeping reptile, from revolving worlds to floating atoms, from macrocosm to microcosm, instead of *making everything uniform*, who was there to question His Sovereign pleasure?

Behold then the exercise of Divine Sovereignty long before man ever saw the light. With whom took God counsel in the creation and disposition of His creatures? See the birds as they fly through the air, the beasts as they roam the earth, the fishes as they swim in the sea, and then ask, Who was it that made them to differ? Was it not their Creator who *Sovereignly* assigned their various locations and adaptations to them!

Turn your eye to the heavens and observe the mysteries of Divine Sovereignty which there confront the thoughtful beholder: "There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars: for one star *differeth from* another star in glory" (1 Cor. 15:41). But why should they? Why should the sun be more glorious than all the other

planets? Why should there be stars of the first magnitude and others of the tenth? Why such amazing *inequalities*? Why should some of the heavenly bodies be *more favorably placed* than others in their relation to the sun? And why should there be "shooting stars," falling stars, "wandering stars" (Jude 13), in a word, *ruined* stars? And the only possible answer is, "For Thy pleasure they are and were created" (Rev. 4:11).

Come now to our own planet. Why should two thirds of its surface be covered with water, and why should so much of its remaining third be unfit for human cultivation or habitation? Why should there be vast stretches of marshes, deserts and ice-fields? Why should one country be so inferior, topographically, from another? Why should one be fertile, and another almost barren? Why should one be rich in minerals and another own none? Why should the climate of one be congenial and healthy, and another uncongenial and unhealthy? Why should one abound in rivers and lakes, and another be almost devoid of them? Why should one be constantly troubled with earthquakes, and another be almost entirely free from them? Why? Because thus it pleased the Creator and Upholder of all *things*.

Look at the animal kingdom and note the wondrous variety. What comparison is possible between the lion and the lamb, the bear and the kid, the elephant and the mouse? Some, like the horse and the dog, are gifted with great intelligence; while others, like sheep and swine, are almost devoid of it. Why? Some are designed to be beasts of burden, while others enjoy a life of freedom. But why should the mule and the donkey be shackled to a life of drudgery while the lion and tiger are allowed to roam the jungle at their pleasure? Some are fit for food, others unfit; some are beautiful, others ugly; some are endowed with great strength, others are quite helpless; some are fleet of foot, others can scarcely crawl-contrast the hare and the tortoise; some are of use to man, others appear to be quite valueless; some live for centuries, others a few months at most; some are tame, others fierce. But why all these variations and differences? What is true of the animals is equally true of the birds and fishes.

But consider now *the vegetable kingdom.* Why should roses have thorns, and lilies grow without them? Why should one flower emit a fragrant aroma and another have none? Why should one tree bear fruit which is wholesome and another that which is poisonous? Why should one vegetable be capable of enduring frost and another wither under it? Why should one apple tree be loaded with fruit, and another tree of the same age and in the same orchard be almost barren? Why should one plant flower a dozen times in a year and another bear blossoms but once a century? Truly, "*whatsoever the LORD pleased, that did He in Heaven, and in the earth, in the seas, and all deep places*" (Psa. 135:6).

Consider the angelic hosts. Surely we shall find uniformity here. But no; there, as elsewhere, the same Sovereign pleasure of the Creator is displayed. Some are higher in rank than others; some are more powerful than others; some are nearer to God than others. Scripture reveals a definite and well-defined gradation in the angelic orders. From arch-angel, past seraphim and cherubim, we come to "principalities and powers" (Eph. 3:10), and from principalities and powers to "rulers" (Eph. 6:12), and then to the angels themselves, and even among them we read of "the *elect* angels" (1 Tim. 5:21). Again we ask, *Why this inequality*, this difference in rank and order? And all we can say is "Our God is in the heavens, He hath done whatsoever He hath pleased" (Psa. 115:3).

If then we see the Sovereignty of God displayed throughout all creation, why should it be thought a strange thing if we behold it operating in the midst of *the human family*? *Why* should it be thought strange if to one God is pleased to give five talents and to another only one? Why should it be thought strange if one is born with a robust constitution and another of the same parents is frail and sickly? Why should it be thought strange if Abel is cut off in his prime, while Cain is suffered to live on for many years? Why should it be thought strange that some should be born black and others white; some be born idiots and others with high intellectual endowments; some be born constitutionally lethargic and others full of energy; some be born with a temperament that is selfish, fiery, egotistical, others who are naturally self-sacrificing, submissive and meek? Why should it be thought strange if some are qualified by nature to lead and rule, while others are only fitted to follow and serve? Heredity and environment cannot account for all these variations and inequalities. No; it is *God* who maketh one to differ from another. Why should He? "Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in Thy sight" must be our reply.

Learn then this basic truth, that the Creator is absolute Sovereign, executing His own will, performing His own pleasure, and considering nought but His own glory. "*The LORD hath made all things FOR HIMSELF*" (Prov. 16:4). And had He not a perfect *right* to? Since *God is God*, who dare challenge His prerogative? To murmur against Him is rank rebellion. To question His ways is to impugn His wisdom. To criticize Him is sin of the deepest dye. Have we forgotten *who* He is? Behold, "All nations before Him as are nothing; and they are counted to Him less than nothing, and vanity. To whom then will ye liken God?" (Isa. 40:17, 18).

A. W. Pink