



God's Sovereignty vs. Man's Freewill

A Possible Biblical Solution



We first need to define some items and lay a foundation of understanding.

Note: Also see the corresponding audio/video lecture and the related *Trinity Time Domains Chart*.

Sovereignty (as defined by Dictionary.com):

- 1) "the quality or state of being sovereign, or of having supreme power or authority."
- 2) "the status, dominion, power, or authority of a sovereign; royal rank or position; royalty."

God's Sovereignty (as described by KJV Bible verses):

- 1) "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." – Genesis 1:1 (KJV)
 - 2) "...and upholding all things by the word of his power..." – Hebrews 1:3 (KJV)
 - 3) "According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world..." – Ephesians 1:4 (KJV)
 - 4) "...he that formed thee from the womb, I am the LORD that maketh all things; that stretcheth forth the heavens alone; that spreadeth abroad the earth by myself;" – Isaiah 44:24 (KJV)
 - 5) "The LORD hath made all things for himself: yea, even the wicked for the day of evil." – Proverbs 16:4 (KJV)
 - 6) "The king's heart is in the hand of the LORD, as the rivers of water: he turneth it whithersoever he will." – Proverbs 21:1 (KJV)
 - 7) "Hath not the potter power over the clay [people], of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonour? What if God, willing to shew his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction: And that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory," – Romans 9:21-23 (KJV)
- (See also s Psalm 90:2, Psalm 147:5, Colossians 1:16-17, Daniel 4:35, etc.)

Freewill (as defined by Dictionary.com):

- 1) "made or done freely or of one's own accord; voluntary."
- 2) "of or relating to the metaphysical doctrine of the freedom of the will:"

Man's Freewill (as described by KJV Bible verses):

- 1) "In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths." – Proverbs 3:6 (KJV)
- 2) "A man's heart deviseth his way: but the LORD directeth his steps." – Proverbs 16:9 (KJV)
- 3) "The steps of a good man are ordered by the LORD: and he delighteth in his way." – Psalm 37:23 (KJV)
- 4) "I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, [that] I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live:" – Deuteronomy 30:19-20 (KJV)
- 5) "I will freely sacrifice unto thee: I will praise thy name, O LORD; for it is good." – Psalm 54:6 (KJV)
- 6) "...And they brought yet unto him free offerings every morning." – Exodus 36:3 (KJV)
- 7) "And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat:" – Genesis 2:16 (KJV)

Note: The intent of this information is not to address the doctrine of predestination.

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The following are two different ways of thinking of God's Sovereignty vs. Man's Freewill, so it does not become a stumbling block to you. Please keep in mind that the reality is probably different than either of the examples presented, and is more than we can comprehend.

The Biblical Choose Your Own Adventure Scenario:



God the Father is like the master Author, whose long-term plot is contained within the whole Bible, which has a beginning (the Book of Genesis), and an end (the Book of Revelation), plus key bits of information throughout the Bible about the beginning and end. What if God was the author of a choose your own adventure story e-book called *The Holy Bible*, and while you were reading the story, you could choose to send a prayer email request to the Author. Then the Author would actually consider revising your story, so long as it does not alter the ultimate long-term global story, but rather to only alter the character's options for their own adventure. Is this possible? How much will God change the story of a character within his book based on the humble and loving request of a character? God provides us with multiple glimpses into how much freewill he has previously provided people. The following are two examples.

Two Glimpses into Man's Freewill – Moses and Jonah:

Moses: God tells Moses to **strike a rock** to obtain water for the people (Exodus 17:6), which Moses does. Later, God tells Moses to **speak to a rock** to obtain water for the people (Numbers 20:7-8). **Moses disobeys**, and **strikes the rock** twice instead of speaking to it (Numbers 20:9-11). Moses' **punishment** is swift. *"And the LORD spake unto Moses and Aaron, Because ye believed me not, to sanctify me in the eyes of the children of Israel, therefore ye shall not bring this congregation into the land which I have given them."* – Numbers 20:12 (KJV). We know what God wanted Moses to do, and yet God allowed Moses to have freewill to disobey, even when this was an **important foreshadowing of future events**. The **rock represents Lord Jesus Christ**, and upon Christ's first coming he was struck (nailed to a cross), but his second coming will be much different. *"And did all drink the same spiritual drink: for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ."* – 1 Corinthians 10:4 (KJV). Even though this was a significant event, God allowed for man's freewill to alter events. Moses' decision was possibly allowed because it **did not ultimately change the outcome for the world** (See the Book of Daniel, Ezekiel, Revelation, etc.), but it does provide us with **important insight into the freewill** God allows mankind to have.

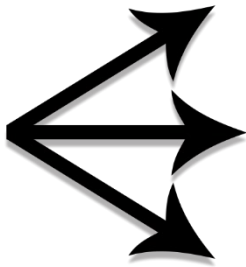
Jonah: God tells Jonah to **go to Nineveh** (Jonah 1:2). Jonah boards a ship to **flee to Tarshish** from the presence of the LORD (Jonah 1:3). God **does not remove Jonah's freewill**, and does not control Jonah like a robot. Instead, God *"sent out a great wind into the sea, and there was a mighty tempest in the sea, so that the ship was like to be broken"* (Jonah 1:4), and Jonah told the ship's crew to *"cast me forth into the sea"* (Jonah 1:12). Jonah decided to do the right thing. *"Now the LORD had prepared a great fish to swallow up Jonah. And Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights."* – Jonah 1:17 (KJV). The additional details make it sound as though Jonah died while in the belly of the fish, and then the fish, *"vomited out Jonah upon the dry land"* (Jonah 2:10). *"So Jonah arose, and went unto Nineveh, according to the word of the LORD..."* – Jonah 3:3 (KJV). Later, Lord Jesus Christ (who is God in the flesh) uses what happened to Jonah to describe future events. *"For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth."* – Matthew 12:40 (KJV). In this example of man's freewill, **God** shows us that he can use our wrong actions to **still accomplish his ultimate goals**, including using Jonah's plan to flee from the presence of the LORD, and spending three days in a fish as a foreshadowing of God the Son's death and resurrection. (Another example is the three choices God provides King David. *"So Gad came to David, and told him, and said unto him, Shall seven years of famine come unto thee in thy land? or wilt thou flee three months before thine enemies, while they pursue thee? or that there be three days' pestilence in thy land? now advise, and see what answer I shall return to him that sent me."* – 2 Samuel 24:13 (KJV))

(Also see the short lecture on this subject called, 'God's Sovereignty vs. Man's Freewill: A Possible Biblical Solution')

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Decision Paths and Decision Hubs – The following is simply for your consideration:



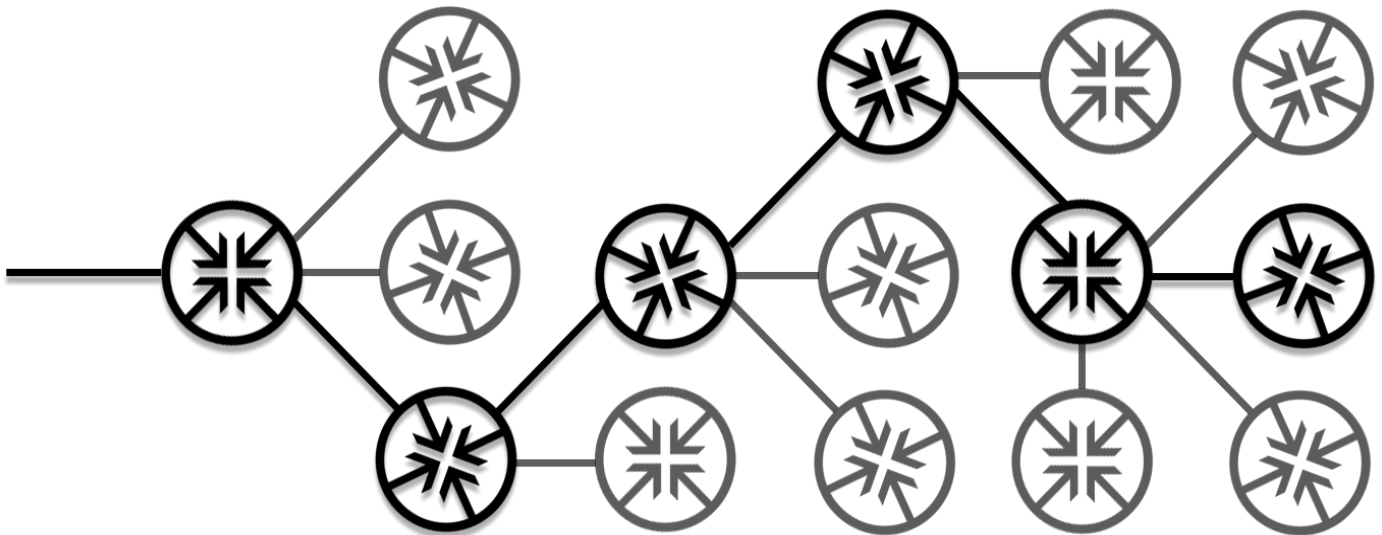
Decision Paths: Consider that God chose our first decision path by choosing us before the creation of the world (Ephesians 1:4), and made us in the womb (Job 31:15). Your first decision path ends at your first decision hub, which could be responding to a greeting in the womb (Luke 1:41). Each decision hub has possible decisions you can make like spokes on a wheel. You can only move forward, never backward.



Decision Hubs: Each decision path you choose leads to a decision hub. A decision hub contains decisions you can choose that have been provided by God. You can choose a decision path that is in more agreement with God's ideal, or in less agreement with God's ideal. The number of decision paths available at each decision hub is entirely up to God, and some decision paths may lead to the same decision hub.

Summary with example:

God is in complete control of what decision paths and decision hubs are made available to each person. Man's freewill is in what decision paths are chosen. Darker decision paths indicate the paths chosen.



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