

# The Sovereign in History

## INTRODUCTION

The narrative line running through the book of Joshua to the book of Esther showcases God's sovereignty over human history. Whether from the radical corruption in the period of the judges to His mighty power in the hearts of unbelieving kings, God's sovereign presence is undeniable. In this lecture, Dr. Lawson surveys a large portion of Scripture, from Joshua to Esther, pointing out the work of God's sovereign grace along the way.

## LEARNING GOALS

When you have finished this lesson, you should be able to:

- Identify the doctrines of grace in the books of Joshua through Esther
- Recognize God's sovereignty in the hearts and lives of men and women in history

## KEY IDEAS

- An outward religiosity cannot replace a true, saving knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ.
- God works out His eternal purpose through secondary agents and means, including the devil and ungodly men.
- God is not the author of sin but uses it for the furtherance of His own purposes, as beautifully demonstrated in the crucifixion of Jesus Christ.

## REFLECTION & DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Before the Video

*What Do You Think?*

Take a moment to answer the following questions. They will prepare you for the lecture.

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- Does God control the hearts of our political leaders? How do you know?
  - Why is it not enough to be raised in the right home, regularly attend church, or do other things that may be considered religious in order to be saved?
  - Was your conversion to Christ something that happened over an extended period of time or was it something that happened quickly at a single point in time?

### *Scripture Reading*

*There is none holy like the LORD: for there is none besides you; there is no rock like our God. Talk no more so very proudly, let not arrogance come from your mouth; for the LORD is a God of knowledge, and by him actions are weighed. The bows of the mighty are broken, but the feeble bind on strength. Those who were full have hired themselves out for bread, but those who were hungry have ceased to hunger. The barren has borne seven, but she who has many children is forlorn.*

—1 Samuel 2:2–5

- What does this passage reveal should be our attitude to God for our salvation? Why?

### During the Video

Answer the following questions while you watch the video. They will guide you through the lecture.

#### *Evil in the Sight of the Lord*

0:00–11:25

- How is the doctrine of total depravity seen at the beginning of the book of Judges? What sin did Israel commit that was considered “evil in the sight of the Lord” ?
- How is the doctrine of total depravity seen at the ending of the book of Judges?

#### *God over All*

11:25–25:33

- What does the fact that an evil spirit came over Saul demonstrate about the sovereignty of God?

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- How do you explain the fact that 2 Samuel 24:1 says that God incited David to take a census and that 1 Chronicles 21:1 says that Satan incited David to take the same census?
  - How is God's sovereignty displayed in the book of Ezra?

#### After the Video

Answer the following questions after you have finished the lecture. They will help you identify and summarize the major points.

- What was a major theme of this lecture related to total depravity, particularly in relation to the examples of the idolatrous generation during the period of the judges and the sons of Eli?
- Is God the author of sin and evil? How do you explain God's relationship with sin and evil?
- Throughout this lecture, Dr. Lawson emphasized God's sovereignty over the human heart, especially over the hearts of various kings and rulers. What example of God's sovereignty over the human heart was the most striking to you? Why?

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## PRAYER

Commit what you have learned from God's Word in this lesson to prayer.

- Praise God for His sovereign power and unquestionable goodness.
- Confess times when you have doubted God's goodness because of the existence of evil.
- Thank God for the assurance He has given you in Scripture of His absolute sovereignty.
- Ask God to work in the hearts of political leaders for the advancement of the gospel.