The Sovereignty of God

In Salvation

Eternal Security – What does the Bible say?
Someone may ask, “is my salvation secure, or can I lose it.” As you read on we will answer this question in detail, but for now let us say that if it depended on us, or our ability to “remain faithful” to God, we would be hopelessly lost. Who is it that possesses such mighty strength in themselves as to never fall away or sin against God? Which one of us stands in the great hour of temptation except by the keeping power of God? The truth is that Christians stand in the faith not by their own strength, but by the power of God. Your salvation is secure not because you have great faith, but because your faith is in the One who is Great! If you belong to Christ, He will not leave you or forsake you, rather being the Good Shepherd, He will “lose none of all that the Father has given” him. He will see to it that you make it to Heaven’s door, and you can rest assured that you have eternal life if you have been born again as He commanded. The Bible plainly declares that those who truly believe will in fact Persevere to the end by Christ’s power.

Colossians 3:3-4 - 3 For you have died and your life is hidden with Christ in God. 4 When Christ, who is our life, is revealed, then you also will be revealed with Him in glory. NASB
1 Peter 1:3-5 - 3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His great mercy has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. 4 to obtain an inheritance which is imperishable and undefiled and will not fade away, reserved in heaven for you. 5 who are protected by the power of God through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. NASB

Consider these words of Peter. He says that God has “caused us to be born again to a living hope” and that this was to “obtain an inheritance.” Here is seen a twofold purpose of God in saving us, that we would have a “living hope” and that we would “obtain an inheritance.” This means that God expects us to have a hope in the future inheritance in Heaven which is alive, and vibrant and sure, because of the One who has caused it. But so as to make the ground of this hope solid, he tells us, “who are protected by the power of God through faith.” Now here we have living hope and are assured that this inheritance is ours! Who shall thwart the mighty power and purpose of God to protect us through faith, so that we will, in the end, receive the promised inheritance? None indeed! Could there be words which describe a more secure foundation of our hope? Note well dear Christian who it is that keeps you in the day of doubt and trouble.

They Shall Never Perish
In teaching of Jesus, he has very clearly designed to encourage us that we shall not fall away, but be kept by Him until the day of safety. Consider the heavenly words of John 10…..

John 10:27-29 - 27 “My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me; 28 and I give eternal life to them, and they shall never perish; and no one shall snatch them out of My hand. 29 “My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father's hand.” NASB

What Jesus is dealing with here is the infallible security of those whom the Father has given to Him (v-29), “they shall never perish.” Here the Lord makes some astounding statements about the security of the believer and their final perseverance. Here Jesus makes an emphatic statement that “His sheep, shall never perish” and that because He has given them “eternal” life. What else could the Lord have designed to say here except that our salvation is secure and that we “shall” live forever? However, in order to emphasize the strong nature of His statement he says, “no one shall snatch them out of my hand.” Here we see that His hand is what keeps us, and His point is He will keep us unto Himself and none shall pull us away or snatch us away. If this were not enough to convince us of this security, He says, “My Father, who has given them to
Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father's hand.” Learn, the guarantee of the final perseverance of Christ’s sheep is secured not by human power, but in the hands of the Father and the Son, and because of the great power of God, none shall be lost but rather kept forever, having eternal life. The Bible plainly declares that the final perseverance of the saints is not in human hands, but in the hands of God. This is common in the teaching Jesus. Consider what He said in John 6 about “those whom the Father had given Him.”

John 6:39-40 - 39 “And this is the will of Him who sent Me, that of all that He has given Me I lose nothing, but raise it up on the last day. 40 "For this is the will of My Father, that everyone who beholds the Son and believes in Him, may have eternal life; and I Myself will raise him up on the last day."

NASB

Here Jesus clearly says of everyone “given to Him by the Father,” that He will “lose nothing,” and will in “raise them up at the last day.” Again He makes emphatic statements about the security of the one who “believes in Him” (v-40). The point here is “He will lose nothing,” it is in “His” hands. And what is more, they will be resurrected and live forever, “I will raise it up on the last day.” He also describes the quality of the life He gives as “eternal” and repeats for emphasis, “I myself will raise him up on the last day.” Those who pervert this text to say something other than the clear infallible nature of the security of the believer discourage the saints and lie about the truth of their security. Dear Christian, hold firmly to this promise of our Shepherd, He will see us through to the end and we shall never perish!

The Saints will Persevere

The New Testament writers made this doctrine very clear. We have already examined the teaching of Peter above, but consider some statements from the Apostle Paul and even the Apostle Jude, the brother of Jesus. In Romans chapter 8, Paul makes the security of the believer to rest wholly upon the nature and purpose of God. Consider that great statement in verse 1…

Romans 8:1-2 - 1 There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. 2 For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set you free from the law of sin and of death. NASB

Here Paul speaks about the nature of Christ’s atoning work and the state of the Christian’s justification. We are “not condemned” by God’s Law but rather “set free” from that Law having the debt of sins completely paid and the matter settled. This is what it means to be a Christian! Or consider the profound truths exposed about our security and final perseverance in the Golden Chain, verses 28-30.

Romans 8:28 - 28 And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose.

Here the saints are seen as called to God’s purpose, in which He is causing all things to work together for the good of. Shall God cause all things to work together for the good, and then finally fail to bring us to the end of it? Not hardly!

Romans 8:29 - 29 For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to become conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the first-born among many brethren;

Is it not profoundly clear in this statement that our “destiny” shall be conformity to the “image of Christ?” It is and this is our destiny, we shall be like Him in the end and share in His glory! This is confirmed elsewhere in Paul.

Philippians 3:20-21 - 20 For our citizenship is in heaven, from which also we eagerly wait for a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ; 21 who will transform the body of our humble state into conformity with the body of His glory, by the exertion of the power that He has even to subject all things to Himself. NASB

What is more is that the calling and the foreknowledge and the predestination all have an end. This end is made crystal clear in verse 30, “glorification.”

Romans 8:30 - 30 and whom He predestined, these He also called; and whom He called, these He also justified; and whom He justified, these He also glorified. NASB

The saints whom God has called, foreknown and predestined, shall be “glorified.” These are the ones whom He elected from all eternity, shall we now think that they will be lost? Impossible!
Jude, the brother of our Lord makes a similar statement. He speaks of the keeping power of Christ and relates this to our final salvation.

Jude 24 - 24 Now to Him who is able to keep you from stumbling, and to make you stand in the presence of His glory blameless with great joy, 25 to the only God our Savior, through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory, majesty, dominion and authority, before all time and now and forever. Amen. NASB

The Bible plainly declares that it is God who “keeps us from stumbling.” This means that God makes us persevere so that we do not finally fall away. This is in view in the following statement, “to make you stand in the presence of His glory blameless.” Here again we see the divine nature of our salvation, we are “blameless” or guiltless in His presence because “He is able” to make us guiltless. We have had the guilt of all of our sins washed away by the powerful blood of Jesus so that we stand in His presence blameless! Dear saint, here is your rest, it is the shadow of the mighty cross of Jesus!

Romans 8:31-34 - 31 What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who is against us? 32 He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how will He not also with Him freely give us all things? 33 Who will bring a charge against God's elect? God is the one who justifies; 34 who is the one who condemns? NASB

Learn, the saints will persevere to the end and be glorified in the presence of God because of God’s Almighty power, His immutable purpose to save His elect, and His all-sufficient sacrifice of atonement at Calvary!

Does secure salvation depend on man or God?
We are the sheep, He is the Good Shepherd. He will lose none of all that the Father has given Him (John 6:39). It is Christ who keeps us, and our assurance is rooted in His sovereign love and His mighty power to keep us and give us eternal life!

John 10:27-29 - 27 "My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me; 28 and I give eternal life to them, and they shall never perish; and no one shall snatch them out of My hand.

Notice these works are attributed to Him, not to us. We are saved because He has caused us to be born again (1Pet 1:3), and we are protected by His power (1 Pet 1:5), sustained till the end blameless (Jude 24), and further in Hebrews 10, we are made perfect forever by His sacrifice.

Hebrews 10:14 - 14 For by one offering He has perfected for all time those who are sanctified. NASB

The security of our salvation does not rest on our ability, but on God’s. Perseverance is the work of God in salvation, not man. This is what is meant in the phrase, “the Sovereignty of God in salvation.” We are saved by God’s Sovereign electing love and power, not our human ability to keep ourselves from falling. If salvation depended on us or our ability, we would be hopelessly lost. True believers persevere by God’s power. This is crystal clear in the following Pauline passage. Here Paul speaks of God’s ability to “sanctify us entirely,” and to “preserve our whole being,” and to present us “without blame” at “the coming of our Lord.”

1 Thessalonians 5:23-24 - 23 Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you entirely; and may your spirit and soul and body be preserved complete, without blame at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. 24 Faithful is He who calls you, and He also will bring it to pass. NASB

This is emphatically clear in verse 24 where attributes all this work to God and His faithfulness. The security of salvation rests firmly on the faithfulness of God, not man. This is exactly Paul’s point. He makes a very similar statement in 1 Corinthians. Here he says God shall “confirm us to the end, blameless.”

1 Corinthians 1:7-9 - 7 so that you are not lacking in any gift, awaiting eagerly the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ, 8 who shall also confirm you to the end, blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. 9 God is faithful, through whom you were called into fellowship with His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. NASB

The Bible plainly declares that our final perseverance is a matter of God’s faithfulness. He makes a very similar statement in Philippians.

Philippians 1:6 - 6 For I am confident of this very thing, that He who began a good work in you will perfect it until the day of Christ Jesus. NASB
Dear saint, do you need more evidence that your salvation is secure? Believe God’s promise! However much more is to be found. Consider that John the Apostle speaks also directly to this point when he tells us that Jesus, “the one who is born of God, keeps us” and “the evil one does not touch him.”

1 John 5:18 - 18 We know that no one who is born of God sins; but He who was born of God keeps him and the evil one does not touch him. NASB

The Bible plainly declares that the Satan cannot cause us to habitually sin so as to fall away from the faith because Christ is the One who “keeps him.”

**Sealed by the Holy Spirit**

The New Testament makes it clear that regeneration is an irreversible act of God (see pgs. 49-52 above). If you are born again, you cannot be unborn. Someone will ask, what about those who believe for a while, but later commit apostasy and turn from the faith? We will answer that specifically below. *Indeed the scriptures declare that having believed the gospel we are “sealed” with the Holy Spirit, guaranteeing that we will inherit the kingdom.* In these passages, it speaks of the Holy Spirit being the earnest or deposit, which is the guarantee of redemption. You cannot lose your salvation because God will see to it that you remain in Christ. Salvation is not something you lose, it is an *eternal* relationship with God you have entered into because of His mighty power and calling. You have become a child of God, because the Holy Spirit has transformed your being (born again), implanting the life of God into your being, and sealing you for the day of redemption, if you are in Christ.

2 Corinthians 1:21-22 - 21 Now He who establishes us with you in Christ and anointed us is God, 22 who also sealed us and gave us the Spirit in our hearts as a pledge. NASB

Here Paul speaks of being “sealed” by the Spirit, and he says of this that it is a pledge. In other words, it is an earnest, a down payment toward the full payment of redemption. The Greek word here for pledge is “arrhabon” and means “a pledge, part of the purchase-money or property given in advance as security for the rest:—earnest.” Therefore this is to say we are guaranteed by God to be redeemed. Paul makes similar statements as these in Ephesians.

Ephesians 1:13-14 - 13 In Him, you also, after listening to the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation — having also believed, you were sealed in Him with the Holy Spirit of promise, 14 who is given as a pledge of our inheritance, with a view to the redemption of God's own possession, to the praise of His glory. NASB

Paul again tells us of this “sealing in Him with the Holy Spirit of promise” and tells us that this is a pledge of our inheritance. Because you have received the Holy Spirit to indwell your being, you are guaranteed the outcome of redemption. This is clear from the statement “with a view to the redemption.” The sealing of the Spirit is *unto* the redemption. This is clear also in Ephesians chapter 4.

Ephesians 4:30 - 30 And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. NASB

Here Paul describes our sealing as being for the purpose of redemption. The Bible plainly declares that Christians are sealed by God for the end result of being redeemed. The final perseverance and salvation of true believers in Christ is certain.

John 5:24 - 24 "Truly, truly, I say to you, he who hears My word, and believes Him who sent Me, has eternal life, and does not come into judgment, but has passed out of death into life. NASB

**Eternal Security is evident because of Election**

The primary reason that you have been saved is because God chose you for salvation from the beginning (2 Thes 2:13). If you are in Christ, you’re the “elect” or “chosen” of God. For this reason, you will persevere till the end of your life in faith and repentance. *God will so work that those whom he has chosen for eternal salvation will be enabled by Him to persevere in faith to*