



[Deuteronomy 7:7-8](#)

(7) The LORD did not set his affection on you and choose you because you were more numerous than other peoples, for you were the fewest of all peoples. (8) But it was because the LORD loved you and kept the oath he swore to your forefathers that he brought you out with a mighty hand and redeemed you from the land of slavery, from the power of Pharaoh king of Egypt.

(9) For the LORD's portion is his people,
Jacob his allotted inheritance. (10) In a desert land he found him,
in a barren and howling waste.
He shielded him and cared for him;
he guarded him as the apple of his eye,

[Ephesians 1:11](#)

(11) In him we were also chosen, having been predestined according to the plan of him who works out everything in conformity with the purpose of his will,

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Consider Israel's roots from its geographic location and history. The Israelites were a slave people living in a land that was not theirs, yet [God](#) freed them from that slavery without a revolution. God led them on a journey that took forty years to complete, through an area in which, from all the records, they did not grow a crop or tend huge flocks of animals, yet all their needs were supplied, at least all the basic needs—food and water.

Whenever they were attacked, God defended them. When that forty years was over, they were then led into another land that was not theirs—one already occupied by seven nations greater, mightier, and stronger than they, so much so that even the Israelites said, "We were as grasshoppers in their eyes." They were afraid to enter it. But they did, and they occupied the land relatively easily.

They should have been easily defeated by the people whose land they took over. Consider the geography of that land. The land was situated among stronger and larger nations, namely: [Egypt](#), [Edom](#), Moab, Ammon, Phoenicia, and Syria. They were surrounded on all sides, and all of those nations coveted the land because of its strategic position. It was situated where its possessor could

become fabulously wealthy as a trading bridge between these other nations. Thus, these nations constantly fought over this land. But somehow, the Israelites survived. Even today, thousands of years later, they continue to exist, even though [the world](#) thinks they have virtually disappeared.

Consider these things in light of what Paul writes in [Ephesians 1:11](#), that the history of Israel is no accident. We need to make this personal, as he is using the Israelite example to show that it is no accident that the church has succeeded Israel as God's inheritance. He implies in the context that it is no accident that you, personally and individually, are in the church, because God has been working toward these events from the beginning. What God wills is done. So, without saying it directly, what Paul is stressing that God is sovereign over His creation.

We can stretch "all things" in [Ephesians 1:11](#) into other areas of life. Recall that [Jesus](#) said that a sparrow cannot fall without God taking notice ([Matthew 10:29](#)). That indicates close attention. Is God scrutinizing what is happening? Jesus concluded His saying with, "You are of more value than many sparrows" (verse 31), which is encouraging. It helps us to understand that if God pays attention to a sparrow, He will surely pay attention to us! He has not gone far off somewhere!

Perhaps one could make a case that some things occur out in the world that are of no importance to God's purpose. But could we say that about things that happen in His church, the "apple of His eye," the focus of His attention? This question fits the context of what Paul writes in Ephesians 1. Is God unaware? Is He unconcerned about His children so that things happen without His notice, without His scrutiny, without His judgment as to what He should do?

Is God really the Almighty? Either God rules, or He is ruled over by [Satan](#). Either His will must be done or be thwarted by what He has created. Either He is the only [King of kings](#) who has perfect vision, limitless power, and unassailable wisdom, or He is God in name only.

It cannot be any other way; there is no middle ground in this issue. Perhaps we take this subject for granted because we say that we have no arguments that God rules His creation. [Faith](#) undergirds our reasons for following Christ, but living faith is itself undergirded—supported, strengthened—by an essential factor that enables us to produce good works: our knowledge of the true God.

— John W. Ritenbaugh

To learn more, see:

[The Sovereignty of God \(Part One\)](#)



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