

IS IT GOD'S FAULT?

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There are many people who think and sincerely believe ... that God controls absolutely everything that happens in this world ... EVERYTHING! Their viewpoint would be that God is Sovereign. So ... nothing can happen that He doesn't approve or permit. Sickness ... disease ... wars ... calamities.

That's a fairly common belief. I've spoken previously about this subject and had some negative feedback. "Of course God controls everything ... He's sovereign ... He's all powerful ... He always gets His way".

Question. Is that so? That has consequences on a practical level. If everything that happens in our lives is God's will ... and for our good and His glory ... then we should JUST PASSIVELY ACCEPT WHATEVER HAPPENS TO US. After all ... God is sovereign. Just lie down and take it ... whatever it happens to be.

But what if the things that have happened to us come from satan ... or are consequences of perhaps foolish decisions we've made ... shouldn't we actively do something to bring about change? Maybe use our shield of faith to defend ourselves.

I didn't realise just how extreme this view of sovereignty was until reading earlier this week about Calvinism. John Calvin was a Protestant reformer from the 1500s. Very influential and many denominations today follow his teachings. Some of the most popular religious teachers today (authors, pastors) ... John MacArthur (Study Bible with thousands of his helpful notes) ... John Piper ... R C Sproul ... are enthusiastic Calvinists.

Like leaven ... teachings spread through other groups ... denominations ... believers generally ... who might not consider themselves to be Calvinists ... believe God is in charge of everything.

Here are some quotes:

In his Institutes of the Christian Religion Calvin used the illustration of a merchant who foolishly wanders away from his companions on a trip through a forest. He is set upon by thieves and murdered. Calvin asks how a Christian should regard this event—an all others like it. First, he admits, most Christians will think of it as accidental—not planned but fortuitous—bad luck. Second, however, he says that for the Christian nothing is ever merely accidental. The merchant's death was not only foreseen by God, he says, but planned and rendered certain by God. Even the reprobate, sinners, he says, are compelled by God's power to obey his plans

As Sproul says "If there is one maverick molecule in the universe, God is not God."

Calvinist theologian Paul Helm says "Not only is every atom and molecule, every thought and desire, kept in being by God, but every twist and turn of each of these is under the direct control of God."

So ... earthquakes ... house fires ... rapes ... child molestation ... car crashes ... diseases ... terrorist attacks by Jihadists ... are all manifestations of God's will.

If God didn't want these things to happen ... HE WOULD STOP THEM. So ... they must be His will.

Atheists use a similar logic to conclude that God doesn't exist. "All these horrible things in the world ... if there was a good God ... He

could stop them ... He's sovereign surely ... so there's no God".
Pretty much blame God for every evil thing that happens.

So. What do the scriptures teach? Does God always get His will?
Does God always get just what He wants? Is everything in your life
... in your nation ... the exact will of God?

Genesis 3:8-12 (NKJV)

8 And they heard the sound of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God among the trees of the garden.

9 Then the Lord God called to Adam and said to him, "Where are you?"

10 So he said, "I heard Your voice in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; and I hid myself."

11 And He said, "Who told you that you were naked? **Have you eaten from the tree of which I commanded you that you should not eat?"**

12 **Then the man said, "The woman whom You gave to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I ate."**

Genesis 3:17-19 (NKJV)

17 Then to Adam He said, "**Because you have heeded the voice of your wife, and have eaten from the tree of which I commanded you, saying, 'You shall not eat of it':**

"Cursed is the ground for your sake;

In toil you shall eat of it

All the days of your life. (There were problems thereafter ...
right up until today)

18 Both thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you,
And you shall eat the herb of the field. (*It will be quite hard work now ... because Adam made a bad choice*)

19 In the sweat of your face you shall eat bread

Till you return to the ground,

For out of it you were taken;
For dust you are,
And to dust you shall return."

Genesis 3:22-24 (NKJV)

22 Then the Lord God said, "Behold, the man has become like one of Us, to know good and evil. And now, lest he put out his hand and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live forever"—

23 therefore the Lord God sent him out of the garden of Eden to till the ground from which he was taken.

24 So He drove out the man; and He placed cherubim at the east of the garden of Eden, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to guard the way to the tree of life.

A change in the world from peace and paradise. Now ...trouble ...toil ... land cursed ... thrown out of God's garden ... no access to the Tree of Life ... and will eventually die.

Was that God's will? NO! God commanded "Don't eat!"

God was disappointed ... even if not completely surprised(?). It wasn't much of a test was it? A simple test ... and he blew it.

Adam and Eve had a huge part to play here. They had free will ... choice. God can (and did) express His will ... they were free to ignore it ... to choose differently.

In many ways ... the serpent got his will ... didn't he. Didn't he set out to separate the man and woman from their Creator?

Numbers 14:1-4 (NKJV)

1 So all the congregation lifted up their voices and cried, and the people wept that night.

2 And all the children of Israel complained against Moses and Aaron, and the whole congregation said to them, "If only we had died in the land of Egypt! Or if only we had died in this wilderness! (They should have "zipped their lip")

3 Why has the Lord brought us to this land to fall by the sword, that our wives and children should become victims? Would it not be better for us to return to Egypt?"

4 So they said to one another, "Let us select a leader and return to Egypt."

Numbers 14:11-12 (NKJV)

11 Then the Lord said to Moses: "How long will these people reject Me? And how long will they not believe Me, with all the signs which I have performed among them? (I've shown them time and time again that I am for them)

12 I will strike them with the pestilence and disinherit them, and I will make of you a nation greater and mightier than they."

Numbers 14:20-24 (NKJV)

20 Then the Lord said: "I have pardoned, according to your word; 21 but truly, as I live, all the earth shall be filled with the glory of the Lord—

22 because all these men who have seen My glory and the signs which I did in Egypt and in the wilderness, and have put Me to the test now these ten times, and have not heeded My voice,

23 they certainly shall not see the land of which I swore to their fathers, (That was God's will) nor shall any of those who rejected Me see it.

24 But My servant Caleb, because he has a different spirit in him and has followed Me fully, I will bring into the land where he went, and his descendants shall inherit it.

Numbers 14:26-32 (NKJV)

26 And the Lord spoke to Moses and Aaron, saying,

27 **"How long shall I bear with this evil congregation who complain against Me?"** I have heard the complaints which the children of Israel make against Me.

28 Say to them, **'As I live,' says the Lord, 'just as you have spoken in My hearing, so I will do to you:**

29 **The carcasses of you who have complained against Me shall fall in this wilderness, all of you who were numbered, according to your entire number, from twenty years old and above.**

30 Except for Caleb the son of Jephunneh and Joshua the son of Nun, **you shall by no means enter the land which I swore I would make you dwell in.**

31 But your little ones, whom you said would be victims, I will bring in, and they shall know the land which you have despised.

32 But as for you, **your carcasses shall fall in this wilderness.**

God's will was clear... it wasn't vague. "Enter the Promised Land ... as sworn to your fathers". Joshua and Caleb desired to go with the plan ... they were ready at the time. The majority didn't.

THEY CHOSE. Ultimately ... God will perform His Promises to Abraham etc. But now He'll adapt to the circumstances. His will was ... go straight in and enjoy. But ... God didn't get His will. Because He has given much leeway to His creation ... they can choose a different future.

Leviticus 26:3-12 (NKJV)

3 **"If you walk in My statutes and keep My commandments, and perform them,**

4 then **I will give you rain in its season, the land shall yield its produce, and the trees of the field shall yield their fruit.**

5 **Your threshing shall last till the time of vintage, and the vintage shall last till the time of sowing;**

you shall eat your bread to the full, and dwell in your land safely.

6 I will give peace in the land, and you shall lie down, and none will make you afraid;

**I will rid the land of evil beasts,
and the sword will not go through your land.**

7 You will chase your enemies, and they shall fall by the sword before you.

8 Five of you shall chase a hundred, and a hundred of you shall put ten thousand to flight;
your enemies shall fall by the sword before you.

9 **"For I will look on you favourably and make you fruitful,
multiply you and confirm My covenant with you.**

10 You shall eat the old harvest, and clear out the old because of the new.

11 I will set My tabernacle among you, and My soul shall not abhor you.

12 **I will walk among you and be your God, and you shall be My people.**

Abundance ... peace ... security. This was God's will for them. Did it happen? Not for very long!! There was a condition: **"If** you walk ..."

People got to choose ... like Adam and Eve.

Ultimately ... they went into captivity: I'm pretty sure some would say, "I guess it's God's will ... all things work together for good to them that love the Lord". "Nothing we can do to resist the will of God". I'm sure that words like that would have been spoken.

It's not our circumstances that reveal God's will to us ... it's what the scriptures say.

Deuteronomy 30:11-20 (NKJV)

11 "For this commandment which I command you today is not too mysterious for you, nor is it far off.

12 It is not in heaven, that you should say, 'Who will ascend into heaven for us and bring it to us, that we may hear it and do it?'

13 Nor is it beyond the sea, that you should say, 'Who will go over the sea for us and bring it to us, that we may hear it and do it?'

14 But **the word is very near you, in your mouth and in your heart, that you may do it.**

15 "**See, I have set before you today life and good, death and evil,**

16 **in that I command you today to love the Lord your God, to walk in His ways, and to keep His commandments, His statutes, and His judgments, that you may live and multiply; and the Lord your God will bless you in the land which you go to possess.**

17 **But if your heart turns away so that you do not hear, and are drawn away, and worship other gods and serve them,**

18 **I announce to you today that you shall surely perish; you shall not prolong your days in the land which you cross over the Jordan to go in and possess.**

19 **I call heaven and earth as witnesses today against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing; therefore choose life, that both you and your descendants may live; (there's a choice ... life or death. Blessing or cursing. Two ways ... two futures)**

20 **that you may love the Lord your God, that you may obey His voice, and that you may cling to Him, for He is your life and the length of your days;** and that you may dwell in the land which the Lord swore to your fathers, to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, to give them."

God set before them life and death ... **YOU CHOOSE! God's will was CHOOSE LIFE!**

What did they choose? What do our nations today choose? What do you and I choose? We've got free will ... that's what makes us sons and daughters.

You can make myriads of choices everyday ... breakfast ... colour of socks you want wear ... what car to buy ... you can choose your spouse ... you can choose your friends ... job ... TV viewing.

God is not sovereignly ordaining and controlling all of these in our lives ... theft ... adultery ... gossip ... lying. That is you and me choosing ... and God gave us freedom to choose ... knowing we would make some wrong choices.

1 Samuel 8:1-5 (NKJV)

1 Now it came to pass when Samuel was old that he made his sons judges over Israel.

2 The name of his firstborn was Joel, and the name of his second, Abijah; they were judges in Beersheba.

3 But his sons did not walk in his ways; they turned aside after dishonest gain, took bribes, and perverted justice. *(That was not the sovereign will of God)*

4 Then all the elders of Israel gathered together and came to Samuel at Ramah,

5 and said to him, "Look, you are old, and your sons do not walk in your ways. **Now make us a king to judge us like all the nations.**"

1 Samuel 8:6-9 (NKJV)

6 **But the thing displeased Samuel** when they said, "Give us a king to judge us." So Samuel prayed to the Lord.

7 And **the Lord said to Samuel, "Heed the voice of the people in all that they say to you; for they have not rejected you, but they have rejected Me, that I should not reign over them.** *(That wasn't God's will. It wasn't God's will to be rejected)*

8 According to all the works which they have done since the day that I brought them up out of Egypt, even to this day—with which **they**

have forsaken Me and served other gods—so they are doing to you also.

9 Now therefore, heed their voice. However, you shall solemnly forewarn them, and show them the behaviour of the king who will reign over them."

1 Samuel 8:10-22 (NKJV)

10 So Samuel told all the words of the Lord to the people who asked him for a king.

11 And he said, "This will be the behaviour of the king who will reign over you: He will take your sons and appoint them for his own chariots and to be his horsemen, and some will run before his chariots.

12 He will appoint captains over his thousands and captains over his fifties, will set some to plow his ground and reap his harvest, and some to make his weapons of war and equipment for his chariots.

13 He will take your daughters to be perfumers, cooks, and bakers.

14 And he will take the best of your fields, your vineyards, and your olive groves, and give them to his servants.

15 He will take a tenth of your grain and your vintage, and give it to his officers and servants.

16 And he will take your male servants, your female servants, your finest young men, and your donkeys, and put them to his work.

17 He will take a tenth of your sheep. And you will be his servants.

18 And you will cry out in that day because of your king whom you have chosen for yourselves, and the Lord will not hear you in that day."

19 Nevertheless the people refused to obey the voice of Samuel; and they said, "No, but we will have a king over us,

20 that we also may be like all the nations, and that our king may judge us and go out before us and fight our battles." (*They wanted their will and not God's will*)

21 And Samuel heard all the words of the people, and he repeated them in the hearing of the Lord.

22 So the Lord said to Samuel, "Heed their voice, and make them a king." (They're choosing their future ... and it will be bad)

And Samuel said to the men of Israel, "Every man go to his city."

Israel and Judah had some terrible kings. Absolutely not God's will ... the idolatry ... servitude ... captivities ... desolations ... not God's will ... simply the consequence of their choices. The FRUIT OF THEIR OWN DECISIONS.

Much that we see in our lives is the same ... we have free will to be foolish!

Ezekiel 33:2-11 (NKJV)

2 "Son of man, speak to the children of your people, and say to them: 'When I bring the sword upon a land, and the people of the land take a man from their territory and make him their watchman,

3 when he sees the sword coming upon the land, if he blows the trumpet and warns the people,

4 then whoever hears the sound of the trumpet and does not take warning, if the sword comes and takes him away, his blood shall be on his own head.

5 He heard the sound of the trumpet, but did not take warning; his blood shall be upon himself. But he who takes warning will save his life. (Who decides that? You do!)

6 But if the watchman sees the sword coming and does not blow the trumpet, and the people are not warned, and the sword comes and takes any person from among them, he is taken away in his iniquity; but his blood I will require at the watchman's hand.'

7 "So you, son of man: I have made you a watchman for the house of Israel; therefore you shall hear a word from My mouth and warn them for Me.

8 When I say to the wicked, 'O wicked man, you shall surely die!' and you do not speak to warn the wicked from his way, that wicked man shall die in his iniquity; but his blood I will require at your hand.

9 **Nevertheless if you warn the wicked to turn from his way, and he does not turn from his way, he shall die in his iniquity;** but you have delivered your soul.

10 "Therefore you, O son of man, say to the house of Israel: 'Thus you say, "If our transgressions and our sins lie upon us, and we pine away in them, how can we then live?"'

11 Say to them: '**As I live,' says the Lord God, 'I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live. Turn, turn from your evil ways! For why should you die, O house of Israel?'**

God set up watchmen. They gave warnings. That shows what God wanted. But ... He didn't get His way. The people chose to stay in their sinful lifestyles.

No doubt in captivity some said ... "must be God's will that we're here. To learn lessons? God could have delivered us if it was His will". They put all of the blame on god.

Was it God's will that David committed adultery with Bathsheba? That he murdered Uriah? That Solomon had 700 wives and 300 concubines and turned to his wives' gods ... and raised up hundreds of idols across Jerusalem?

Obviously not!! Those were choices ... bad ones!! With consequences ... which God usually warned them about.

End for Israel:

2 Kings 17:7-23 (NKJV)

7 **For so it was that the children of Israel had sinned against the Lord their God,** who had brought them up out of the land of Egypt, from under the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt; and they had feared other gods,

8 and had walked in the statutes of the nations whom the Lord had cast out from before the children of Israel, and of the kings of Israel, which they had made.

9 Also the children of Israel secretly did against the Lord their God things that were not right, and they built for themselves high places in all their cities, from watchtower to fortified city.

10 They set up for themselves sacred pillars and wooden images on every high hill and under every green tree. (there were idols everywhere)

11 There they burned incense on all the high places, like the nations whom the Lord had carried away before them; and they did wicked things to provoke the Lord to anger,

12 for they served idols, of which the Lord had said to them, "You shall not do this thing."

13 Yet the Lord testified against Israel and against Judah, by all of His prophets, every seer, saying, "Turn from your evil ways, and keep My commandments and My statutes, according to all the law which I commanded your fathers, and which I sent to you by My servants the prophets."

14 Nevertheless they would not hear, but stiffened their necks, like the necks of their fathers, who did not believe in the Lord their God.

15 And they rejected His statutes and His covenant that He had made with their fathers, and His testimonies which He had testified against them; they followed idols, became idolaters, and went after the nations who were all around them, concerning whom the Lord had charged them that they should not do like them.

16 So they left all the commandments of the Lord their God, made for themselves a moulded image and two calves, made a wooden image and worshiped all the host of heaven, and served Baal.

17 And they caused their sons and daughters to pass through the fire, practiced witchcraft and soothsaying, and sold themselves to do evil in the sight of the Lord, to provoke Him to anger.

18 **Therefore the Lord was very angry with Israel, and removed them from His sight; there was none left but the tribe of Judah alone.**

19 Also **Judah did not keep the commandments of the Lord their God, but walked in the statutes of Israel which they made.**

23 until the Lord removed Israel out of His sight, as He had said by all His servants the prophets. So Israel was carried away from their own land to Assyria, as it is to this day.

What an end. The Land of Milk and Honey ... homes ... fields ... vineyards ... weddings ... music ... originally God as King. Now ... the land desolate ... the people dragged off as captives.

Why? Was this God's will? Who was responsible? Did God in His sovereign will ... control every thought of the people ... every atom and molecule?

Can we blame God for Israel's captivity? Hold Him accountable?

Certainly He had a part ... but the major part belongs to the people. God had been warning them for 700 years! Turn turn! CHOOSE LIFE!!

Centuries later ... nothing had changed.

Matthew 23:29-39 (NKJV)

29 "**Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites!** Because you build the tombs of the prophets and adorn the monuments of the righteous,

30 and say, 'If we had lived in the days of our fathers, we would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the prophets.'

31 "Therefore you are witnesses against yourselves that you are sons of those who murdered the prophets.

32 Fill up, then, the measure of your fathers' guilt.

33 **Serpents, brood of vipers!** How can you escape the condemnation of hell?

34 Therefore, indeed, I send you prophets, wise men, and scribes: some of them you will kill and crucify, and some of them you will scourge in your synagogues and persecute from city to city,

35 that on you may come all the righteous blood shed on the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel to the blood of Zechariah, son of Berechiah, whom you murdered between the temple and the altar.

36 Assuredly, I say to you, all these things will come upon this generation. *(because they are rebellious)*

37 "**O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the one who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you were not willing!**

38 **See! Your house is left to you desolate:**

39 for I say to you, you shall see Me no more till you say, 'Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord!'

Jesus said that THEY were not willing. He wanted to protect them. That was His desire ... His will.

Does God control everything? Always gets His way? Obviously not! He's shared the decision-making with us. We get a great deal of choice. We can choose to go to hell if we want to and God will protect our choice.

We also live in a fallen world that's been cursed. That plays its part too.

2 Peter 3:9 (NKJV)

9 The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance.

Will God get His will? Will all repent? NO!! The scriptures tell us "Many are called ... few are chosen". There is a Lake of Fire ... 2nd death. Many will perish. God won't get His will.

1 Timothy 2:1-6 (NKJV)

1 Therefore I exhort first of all that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men,
2 for kings and all who are in authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and reverence.

3 For **this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour,**

4 who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.

5 For there is one God and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus,

6 who gave Himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time,

Jesus has died for us all. Calvinists don't believe that ... they believe in a limited atonement ... Jesus didn't die for all. (One of the 5 Points of Calvinism: TULIP acrostic). But ... the scripture tells us that God desires that all men be saved. Will that happen? No! The Lake of Fire (there will be at least 2 in it ... the Beast and the false Prophet ... but no doubt many others ... such as those who attack the camp of the saints in Revelation 20).

The reality is that there are many things that happen in our lives that aren't God's will. Many are entirely contrary to His will.

One main purpose of the scriptures is to instruct us to make better choices ... obtain better outcomes ... not all pre-ordained.

1 Corinthians 10:1-6 (NKJV)

1 Moreover, **brethren, I do not want you to be unaware that all our fathers were under the cloud, all passed through the sea,**

2 all were baptised into Moses in the cloud and in the sea,

3 all ate the same spiritual food,

4 and all drank the same spiritual drink. For they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them, and that Rock was Christ.

5 But with most of them God was not well pleased, for their bodies were scattered in the wilderness.

6 Now these things became our examples, to the intent that we should not lust after evil things as they also lusted. (Examples for us to make better choices and ... for us to avoid the mistakes that these people made)

1 Corinthians 10:7-9 (NKJV)

7 And do not become idolaters as were some of them. As it is written, "The people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play."

8 Nor let us commit sexual immorality, as some of them did, and in one day twenty-three thousand fell;

9 nor let us tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted, and were destroyed by serpents;

1 Corinthians 10:11 (NKJV)

11 Now all these things happened to them as examples, and they were written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the ages have come. (Written instructions for us. To help us make better choices)

Luke 6:46-49 (NKJV)

46 "But why do you call Me 'Lord, Lord,' and not do the things which I say?

47 Whoever comes to Me, and hears My sayings and does them, I will show you whom he is like:

48 He is like a man building a house, who dug deep and laid the foundation on the rock. And when the flood arose, the stream beat vehemently against that house, and could not shake it, for it was founded on the rock.

49 But he who heard and did nothing is like a man who built a house on the earth without a foundation, against which the stream beat vehemently; and immediately it fell. And the ruin of that house was great."

We need to hear and do. If not ... calamity may come. There are many storms in life. When calamity comes someone is bound to say:

- "Must be God's will ... He is sovereign"
- "God gives ... God takes away"
- "All things work together for good ... God has a great purpose in this"

NO! All of that is wrong! The man failed to build his house on the rock. It was his fault. He's to blame ... NOT GOD!

If we ignore God's teachings ... or get tempted ... or just plain weak ... and go contrary to God's ways ... then we're not building our lives on a rock. We shouldn't be surprised when things go wrong. But there is no point bellyaching at God ... "Why did you let this happen to me?"

Proverbs 19:3 (NKJV)

**3 The foolishness of a man twists his way,
And his heart frets against the Lord.**

Proverbs 19:3 (NASB)

**3 The foolishness of man ruins his way,
And his heart rages against the Lord.**

Proverbs 19:3 (GNB)

**3 Some people ruin themselves by their own stupid actions and
then blame the Lord.**

"It must be God's will". "Why has God allowed this?" "Must be some teaching or lesson?"

A lot of people misunderstand the term "Sovereign".

Dictionary: a monarch ... king ... supreme ruler. A state having sovereign authority. (Adj): being above all others in importance ... having supreme rank ... pre-eminent.

God is sovereign by this definition. But Sovereign doesn't mean He is responsible for everything that happens in the universe ... rape ... car accidents ... plane crashes ... cancer ... murders ... businesses going bust ... spread of pornography ... war ... ad nauseam. (The Queen is sovereign in the UK ... but not personally responsible when some drunk crashes a car and kills 3 young children). Most of it is down to our choices or satan.

Luke 13:10-17 (NKJV)

10 Now He was teaching in one of the synagogues on the Sabbath.

11 And **behold, there was a woman who had a spirit of infirmity eighteen years, and was bent over and could in no way raise herself up.**

12 But when Jesus saw her, He **called her to Him and said to her, "Woman, you are loosed from your infirmity."**

13 And He laid His hands on her, and immediately she was made straight, and glorified God.

14 But the ruler of the synagogue answered with indignation, because Jesus had healed on the Sabbath; and he said to the crowd, "There are six days on which men ought to work; therefore come and be healed on them, and not on the Sabbath day."

15 The Lord then answered him and said, "Hypocrite! Does not each one of you on the Sabbath loose his ox or donkey from the stall, and lead it away to water it?"

16 **So ought not this woman, being a daughter of Abraham, whom Satan has bound—think of it—for eighteen years, be loosed from this bond on the Sabbath?"**

17 And when He said these things, all His adversaries were put to shame; and all the multitude rejoiced for all the glorious things that were done by Him.

Did God give her this spirit of infirmity? Some would say yes. Some would say ... "Sister ... God gives and takes away. All things work together for good ... God has put this on you for a great purpose ... God works in mysterious ways His wonders to perform". She may have heard that all of her life? If she did ... it was wrong. It wasn't God's sovereign will ... it was satan's will.

The Bible is given ... in large part ... to show us God's will and to reveal how God's will can be affected by our choices ... and also by satan's influence.

Definitely not the case that everything that happens on earth is God's express will. Not everything in your life is God's will. Some situations will be your fault. Some your government's ... your neighbours ... some will be the influence of satan.

Be careful not to passively accept everything ... just lie down and let satan trample all over you ... or continue to do foolish things and blame God for the consequences.

God has given each of us a precious gift of free will ... choice ... the ability to make better decisions. One good decision to make might be to actually read the scriptures ... "which are able to make us wise unto salvation".

So. Don't fall for this common view that God's to blame for everything that happens around us and to us. There will be occasions when God does intervene ... the Flood ... Tower of Babel ... Day of the Lord ... Jesus' Return.

Most "stuff" happening around us is just life in a fallen world ... with the consequences of our decisions and input from satan.

So. Let's not blame God.