

A marble bust of a man with curly hair is centered in the background. The background is a textured, brownish-gold surface with a network of thin, dark cracks, resembling aged parchment or stone. Overlaid on the bust is the text "The Lord Giveth" in yellow and "The Lord Taketh Away" in white.

**The Lord Giveth**  
**The Lord Taketh Away**





"Abba, Father, everything is possible for you."  
And if Jesus was right about that, then God either willed something so painful that it seems unforgivable or maybe God didn't will Helen's death but just allowed it. That lands a bit softer but does it make God any less culpable? God may not be a murderer but doesn't that make him a doctor who has the cure for cancer buried in the drawer of His nightstand, and yet he's

just sitting at home flipping through channels  
while people die of the disease he knows how to  
heal? How can that be?"

--Tyler Staton (author)



1 Samuel 10: 9 As Saul turned to leave Samuel, God changed Saul's heart, and all these signs were fulfilled that day. 10 When he and his servant arrived at Gibeah, a procession of prophets met him; the Spirit of God came powerfully upon him, and he joined in their prophesying...

1 Samuel 11: 6 When Saul heard their words, the Spirit of God came powerfully upon him, and he burned with anger.

1 Samuel 16: 14 Now the Spirit of the Lord had departed from Saul, and an evil spirit from the Lord tormented him.





**1 Samuel 16:** 12 Then the Lord said, “Rise and anoint him; this is the one.”

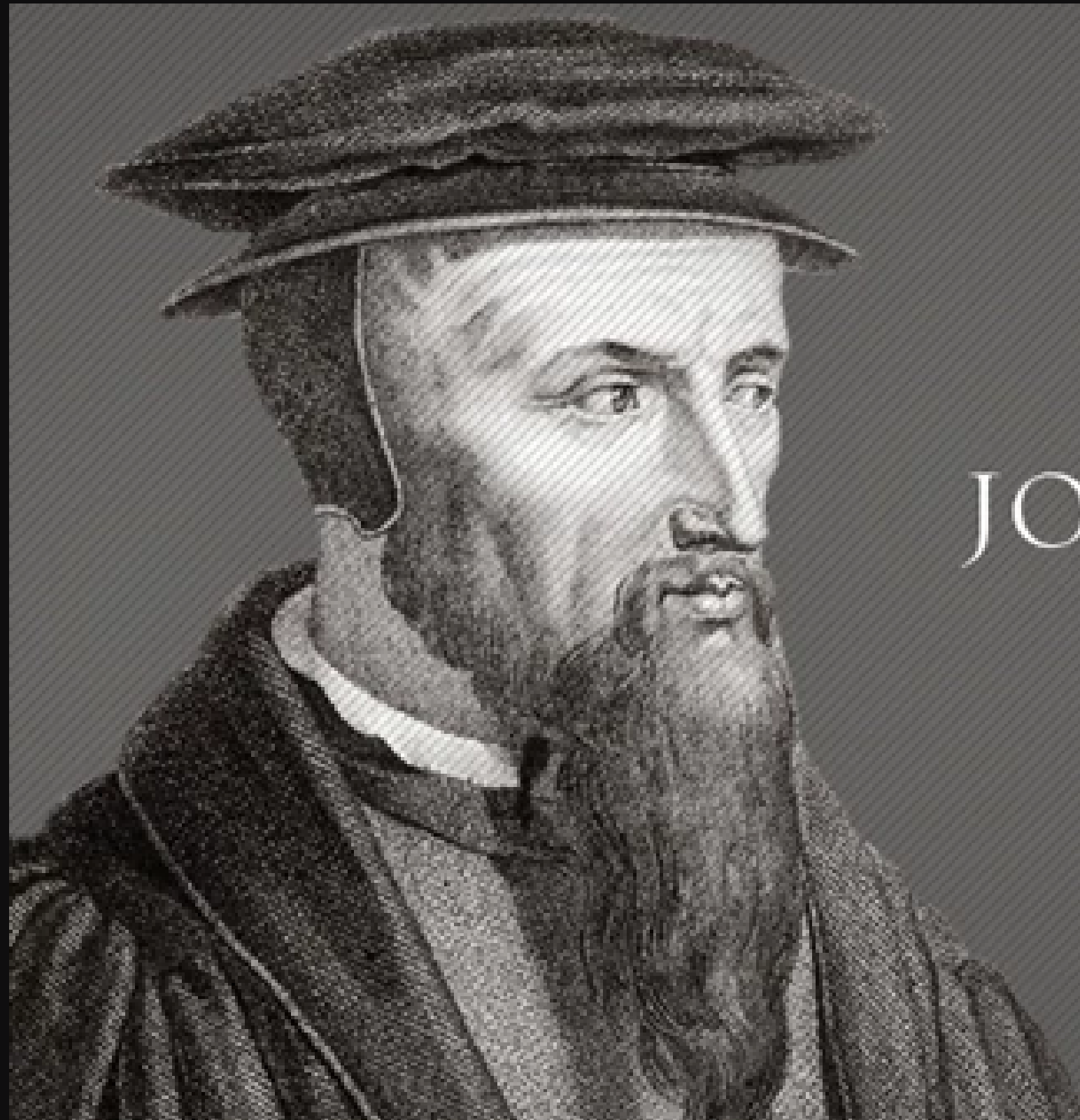
13 So Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him in the presence of his brothers, and from that day on the **Spirit of the Lord came powerfully upon David**. Samuel then went to Ramah.

**Psalm 51: 10** Create in me a pure heart, O God,  
and renew a steadfast spirit within me.

**11** Do not cast me from your presence  
or take your Holy Spirit from me.







JOHN CALVIN  
1509–1564

"You may speak if you will of God's permitting evil but if you mean by that he is merely a spectator and is helpless to do anything about it, then you're speaking blasphemously."

--John Calvin





**Acts 2: 23** Him, being delivered by the **determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God**, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain. **KJV**





We may not know how God's  
sovereignty works  
but we are assured that all of  
it is the result of God's mercy  
and grace.



When God's sovereignty doesn't  
make sense, remember:

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(1) God is working for your  
"good"

**Romans 8: 28** And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.

**Jeremiah 29: 11** For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the Lord, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future. 12 **Then** you will call on me and come and pray to me, and I will listen to you.

You can be disciplined  
without committing a sin  
(cf. Hebrews 5:8 "Jesus learned  
obedience...")



My life is manure...

Well, your life might be manure but it's  
that same manure that helps stuff grow.

--Lasso



When God's sovereignty doesn't  
make sense, remember:

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(2) You may think you're  
suffering senselessly but it always  
has a higher purpose.

**1 Peter 1: 6** In all this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while you may have had to suffer grief in all kinds of trials. **7 These have come so that** the proven genuineness of your faith—of greater worth than gold, which perishes even though refined by fire—may result in praise, glory and honor **when Jesus Christ is revealed.**

You personally may lose  
but you're on the winning  
team!





When God's sovereignty doesn't  
make sense, remember:

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(3) God's sovereignty (even  
judgment) is a sign of His  
intimate involvement.

**Psalm 23:** Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, **for you are with me**; your rod and your staff, they comfort me.



When God's sovereignty doesn't  
make sense, remember:

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(4) Not knowing is never a bad  
place to be.

**Job 38:** Then the Lord spoke to Job **out of the storm**. He said:

2 “Who is this that obscures my plans  
with words without knowledge?

3 Brace yourself like a man;  
I will question you,  
and you shall answer me.

4 “**Where were you when...**

**Romans 9:** 14 What then shall we say? Is God unjust? Not at all! 15 For he says to Moses,  
“I will have mercy on whom I have mercy,  
and I will have compassion on whom I have compassion.”

16 It does not, therefore, depend on human desire or effort, **but on God's mercy.**



Saul got what he deserved.

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David did not get what he  
deserved.

The question is not, "Why do bad things happen to good people?"

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But, "Why do good things happen to bad people?"

Don't rob people of their  
ignorance of God's will with  
trite answers.

Tell them about a God who  
knows what it means to suffer  
and suffer loss.



One last thought: Don't be a  
"Superstitious Christian"





**Job 1:** 20 Then Job arose, and rent his mantle, and shaved his head, and fell down upon the ground, and worshipped,

21 And said, Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return thither: the Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away;

**Blessed be the name of the Lord.**







**The Lord Giveth**  
**The Lord Taketh Away**