

PRE... WHAT? Destination or Knowledge?

The Jews used their limited understanding as they tried to reason among themselves how it was possible that Jesus could read—“having never learned” letters.

This episode was, of course, stated in John 7:12-15, “And there was much murmuring among the people concerning him: for some said, He is a good man: others said, Nay; but he deceiveth the people. Howbeit no man spake openly of him for fear of the Jews. Now about the midst of the feast Jesus went up into the temple, and taught. And the Jews marveled, saying, How knoweth this man letters, having never learned?”

How would you answer their question? Some have even taught that God does not know the end from the beginning. Proponents of this “God of limited knowledge” doctrine insist that in the case of Abraham’s faith that God was unaware of the true devotion of Abraham until Abraham raised his knife to sacrifice his son

Isaac, then, and only then, as the event unfolded. Actions became apparent; God was to have “learned” the faithfulness of Abraham and declared, “Now I know.” Was God truly lacking knowledge of Abraham’s devotion prior to the raising of the knife?

Was the God of all light in darkness as to the true intentions of Abraham? Is God unaware of the outcome of events only until they have been played out? Is God “learning” as the human drama unfolds? How then is it possible for God to declare the end from the beginning? Isaiah 46:9-10, “Remember the former things of old: for I *am* God, and *there is* none else; I *am* God, and *there is* none like me, Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times *the things* that are not *yet* done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure.”

How could an unknowing or limited in knowledge God possibly move men called prophets to “prophecy”? Since “prophecy” means to “foretell,” how could such a thing as prophecy even exist? These “foretellers” would

not have been “prophets” at all but rather “guessers,” or, better yet, “perhaps-ers” if the Spirit that moved on them was uncertain as to the outcome of events.

There is a vast difference in the “foreknowledge” of God and the “predestination” of God, for God to foreknow is not the same as predestined. His knowledge of future events is not the same as predetermining events.

A poor analogy of this would be having read a book previously before your friend ventures to do so. Since you have read the book already, you can tell him the turn of events in the book before he reads it. You did not create the events nor make them happen. You only had knowledge of the outcome of the events prior to that of your friend. Likewise, God has seen the end from the beginning. He has knowledge of the outcome of events prior to their happenings.

That foreknowledge of God did not produce the events necessarily but only tells us that as far

as human history is concerned, all is open before Him with whom we have to do, like an open book.

That is, of course, a simplified explanation of the foreknowledge of God. God, of course, is not just a reader of events, but in many things, He is the Author of certain events. However, one must never confuse the “foreknowledge” of God with the “predestination” of God.

Neither does this foreknowledge of God do injustice to the grace of God or any other attribute of God—rather, it enhances them all! When one considers that God knows all our actions (past, present, and future) and still loves us is an awe-inspiring thought!

Whereas human love must wait for the outcome of events to determine if love is still justifiable, you must recall that God died for us “while we were yet sinners.” Do a “Selah” (pause and consider) on that thought!

We must remember that God dwells outside of time, being eternal and that our way of viewing

events is always sequential, but God sees all time as a panorama, and thus all things are "open" to Him with which we have to do. "A day is a thousand years and a thousand years as a day." God is IN time at ALL times because He exists as The Eternal One—thus, God can interact in time NOW and in the future at THE SAME TIME (what an awesome God!).

We become confused about God's interactions with us when we can only think sequential and limited when considering the flow of time. God is not bound by such limitations; therefore, He knows the end from the beginning. The fact that we pray about future events does no damage to this principle (nor to free will) because the God of Now is the God of Tomorrow at the same TIME (Hebrews 13:8). His foreknowledge has led Him to predestine certain events, and He also allows some of man's choices to predestine certain events. We might exclaim as the Psalmist—to not dabble in things too high for us. Who but God can fully understand Who created TIME itself and will someday cause it to cease?

God's foreknowledge and predestination are two very DIFFERENT things. In that He foreknew is not the same as being predestined.

Rom. 11:1 I say then, Hath God cast away his people? God forbid. For I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin.

Rom. 11:2 God hath not cast away his people which he foreknew. Wot ye not what the scripture saith of Elias? how he maketh intercession to God against Israel, saying,

Rom. 11:3 Lord, they have killed thy prophets, and digged down thine altars; and I am left alone, and they seek my life.

Rom. 11:4 But what saith the answer of God unto him? I have reserved to myself seven thousand men, who have not bowed the knee to *the image* of Baal.

And He predestinated certain things but never certain people (other than Himself). The Church is predestined. HE WILL have one, but those that make up the church are not predestined.

But HE foreknew WHO would be in that predestined church!

Eph. 1:4 According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love:

Eph. 1:5 Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will,

Eph. 1:6 To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved.

Eph. 1:7 In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace;

Eph. 1:8 Wherein he hath abounded toward us in all wisdom and prudence;

Eph. 1:9 Having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself:

Eph. 1:10 That in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; *even* in him:

Eph. 1:11 In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will:

Eph. 1:12 That we should be to the praise of his glory, who first trusted in Christ.

God, Who knows the end from the beginning—predestined Creation, Calvary, the resurrection, the Church, the rapture, the judgment and the destruction of all things and hell—and He foreknew ALL the individuals that would be engaged in ALL of those situations.

What a Great God!

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