

Were you predestined to read this? 1 of 4. The unseen realm - 20211106

Hi all,

In what seems like a long time ago in a galaxy far away, I was a boy standing with a group of kids waiting for the school bus. My neighbor Pam was standing next to me, and she asked: "Do you believe in predestination?"

When I asked what she meant she said, "Do you believe if you step in front of the bus, if you were predestined to die you would, and if you were predestined to live, you would, and that no matter what you did it wouldn't make any difference?"

What is predestination?

Predestination is the belief that before the creation of the universe God decided the eternal destiny of all angels and people. Therefore how one lives doesn't really matter because our eternal destinies were decided before creation.

Believing that God 'locked in' each person to heaven or hell and they have nothing to say about it, means God's will alone determines all things; human will has nothing to do with it. Prayer is pointless. Prayer fights against God because we pray to change things or people. If we believe all things are predetermined, what is the point?

It is a fatalistic theology, one that removes hope for living. It removes all reasons for living godly lives; If I've been predestined for heaven I can sin however I want because I'll still end up in heaven. The opposite is also true: If I'm predestined for hell, why should I live righteously, why not have fun until I get there?

Just on the basis of those points alone the average person will reject the idea of predestination

Why would prayer be so prominent throughout the Bible if all was predestined and no one had free will in anything?

There should be no 'Great Commission' if man doesn't have any ability to determine his own eternal destiny. Why are we told to witness our faith to others if their destinies were predetermined? And if we are all predestined to heaven or hell with no right of self-determination, why did God give moral absolutes like telling us murder and theft are wrong?

My experience has been those who argue over chapter and verse for predestination, most often have some unresolved guilt or sin or issue past or present they don't want to deal with way down inside. Sometimes it is fear, sometimes it is a lack of faith, sometimes it is a sin they can't overcome.

For some, by defending predestination they are convincing themselves God made them this way. Essentially they are looking for a theological excuse so they don't have to stop their behavior or change, and can stop fighting the urges and temptations. Not always, but quite often things like these have been the case.

Sometimes, overwhelmed by God's grace they can't imagine He is THAT good, THAT loving that He would want THEM.

Why do we have free will?

Romans 8:29-30 is the foundational passage for the doctrine of predestination: "For whom He knew before, He predestined them to be conformed to the image of His Son, and those He predestined (predetermined) He justified..."

This verse makes it clear the Lord is very logical. Knowing all things before the creation of the universe, He knew some would take His offer of salvation if He provided it. So He did provide it. That's all this passage says. It doesn't exclude anyone nor infringe on free will because it is all about God the Father's omniscience not us - it merely says He knew everything before creation and therefore made provision for those who would want Him.

Don't we as parents and grandparents do the same for our children? When I was in the elementary grades a mom would often make cupcakes or cookies for the entire class, and send them to school

with their own child. With say, 25 children to a class that mom provided cookies she knew her own child would like, and knew before that most of the children in the class would like them too - so she made provision for all the children.

Did her making enough cookies for all prevent a child from eating the cookie provided for them? Did her provision infringe on the free will of each student to eat it then, or save it for recess, or take it home? No. That mom knew ahead of time her child would eat a cookie if she prepared it, and also provided for all in case others would want one.

All it means is who that mom fore-knew, she also did predestine to provide cookies both for her child and the rest.

How free will came about: Creation began in the realm of the Spirit...

Hebrews 11:3 says; "Through faith we understand the worlds were framed by the (Person of) the Word of God. So that the things seen were made of invisible things."

The unseen Spirit realm created the physical, so there are invisible laws that govern the physical universe. Because of this fact the physical creation largely mirrors the unseen realm.

Now imagine a time when none of the physical universe existed. All that existed was the Father, Son, the angels....in the realm of the Spirit. No planets, no stars...just God's light filling everything in the realm of the Spirit/spirit.

All there was, was love, joy, peace, gentleness, patience, kindness, meekness, moral uprightness, self-control - the qualities of God. Light only. Love only. Only those things. There was no dark. There was no fear. There was no strife. There was no confusion. No opposing forces to God's light, love, joy. That means our physical universe as we know it today could not exist.

A physical universe requires unseen forces set in opposition to one another. Because the spirit realm had no opposition, any physical universe created could have no opposite forces at work. The unseen created the seen, so at that 'time' there were no 'opposites', there was only love, joy, peace, gentleness, patience, kindness, meekness...

Opposite forces in our realm prevents planets from flying off their orbits and into space. In a realm where only the qualities of God exists without opposition, the unseen laws which govern our present universe could not exist. I'm talking about a 'time' where only light exists, there is no darkness. There is only right, there is no wrong. In fact in that realm nothing is known but love, joy, peace, gentleness, meekness, kindness, patience, moral uprightness, brotherly love. Nothing else but God and His characteristics exist.

When the cherub we call Satan rebelled

Ezekiel 28:12-18 is generally considered a reference to Satan and his place in heaven before he rebelled. He is called a cherub, which is one of the multi-winged angelic beings around the throne seen in The Revelation 4 and called 'burning ones' or seraph in Hebrew for 'burning ones', in Isaiah 6. The passage in Ezekiel says: "You were perfect in your ways from the day you were created, until iniquity was found in you."

Angels were created with free will, and for a 'time' before time even existed, they served God without opposition for opposition wasn't known at that point. But at some point that cherub decided he wanted to displace the Father from His throne, take control and have a kingdom of his own. The passage above says he was lifted up by his beauty and authority, and a fire from within consumed him as a result of his lust for power - the source for the flames of hell and lake of fire. (The KJV says God will bring a fire from within him, but the Hebrew indicates the fire arose from within him due to his lust for power, possessions, place, and beauty).

The Revelation 12:4 alludes to one third of the angels who went along with him, deciding they did not want the qualities of God - all that love, joy, peace, gentleness, patience, kindness, moral uprightness, and so on - it just wasn't for them anymore, they wanted their own kingdom, what was God to do?

The Revelation 12:8 tells us there was 'found nor more place for them in heaven'. Jesus said in Matthew 25:41 there had to be 'a place prepared for the devil and his angels'.

The Father in His great kindness looked for a place in heaven but found none, so prepared a place for all who don't want all that He is: They don't want love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, gentleness, moral uprightness, and so on. So a place was prepared.

It was at that moment when the God who is Light, who is Love, withdrew to prepare a place without Himself - a place that would naturally be darkness, for they rejected the One who is Light. That place would naturally be a void, an absence of all that is God because that's what they wanted - the one place in that realm with an absence of God's light, the absence of love, joy, peace...and by that nature it is therefore a place of torment. A complete lack of anything that is characteristic of God. But that's what they wanted, so in His grace, He gave them what they wanted.

That was the inception of opposites in the spirit realm. Now there was darkness where there had before been only light. Now there was hate and fear where there had only been love and joy and peace...now if a physical universe were to be created, knowing the physical mirrors the unseen realm, it would have opposites: Light and dark. Gravity and the pull against gravity. Expansion and contraction. For every action there is an equal and opposite reaction.

All those unseen laws that hold tiny molecules together also hold the planets in orbit around the sun. They could only exist after Satan fell, after opposites came into being when he rebelled. Now God could create the universe we have today, and naturally any beings created from the unseen realm, would also have the ability to take part in opposites: To choose God or not.

It was all possible because God in His great mercy and grace, provided a place in the Spirit realm where He withdrew to provide Satan and followers what they wanted - a kingdom without God's love, light, joy, peace, gentleness, patience, kindness....

And we will pick it up there next week...laying the ground work for our physical universe, and our free will...until then, blessings,

John Fenn

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Were you predestined to read this? 2 of 4, why creation?, free will – 20211113

Hi all,

We ended last week sharing how the rebellion of Satan brought opposites into the spirit/Spirit realm. God is Light and Love, Satan is blackness and hate, God is peace and assurance, Satan is fear and confusion, and so on. Darkness, hate, fear, confusion, strife, envy, and the rest had never existed before Satan rebelled. There was only God.

That rebellion enabled our physical universe, and empowered free will

Because we are told the physical universe (sun, earth, stars) was created by unseen forces in the Spirit realm*, once that unseen Spirit realm had opposite forces at work, our universe, indeed we ourselves, could exist. Satan's rebellion and the preparation of a place for him that was the opposite of all that is God, caused the invisible spirit realm to be changed forever. *Hebrews 11:3, II Corinthians 4:16, 18

For the first time the spirit/Spirit realm now had light set against the complete absence of light, love set against hate and fear, joy set against torment, patience set against ungodly wrath, peace and order set against confusion and disorder. Moral uprightness set against moral depravity. Gentleness set against violence. Opposites. Opposite forces in the spirit realm. The physical universe can only mirror the unseen realm that created it.

For example, forces that keep the earth from escaping the sun's pull (gravity) while also preventing earth from being pulled into the sun (centrifugal force and centripetal force). The things that make our

world possible are only possible because the unseen realm created the seen, and first had opposing forces.

That we are of God's realm of light but were once darkness, is woven throughout the NT in particular:

"Having their understanding darkened, alienated from the life (light) of God.." Ephesians 4:18

"You were previously darkness, but now are you light in the Lord, so live as children of light..." Ephesians 5:8

"...wrestle against...rulers of the darkness of this world.." Ephesians 6:12

"...but when they knew about God but did not want to acknowledge Him as God, they became vain in their thinking and their foolish heart was darkened..." Romans 1:21

"...who (Father) has delivered us from the authority of darkness and translated us into the kingdom of His dear Son.." Colossians 1:13

"...you are children of the light, children of the day; we are not of the dark nor of the night..." I Thessalonians 5:5

"Those who are wise will shine as the brightness of the sky, and those who win others to righteousness will shine as the stars forever and ever." Daniel 12:3

Before Satan fell there was only God's light, love, joy, peace, gentleness, integrity, patience. Just God.

When God created man

But with Satan's rebellion, now the spirit realm had opposites. The physical universe that created our universe requires laws of opposites. That in turn allowed the Father to create His ultimate creation: Humans: Beings that could function and rule in both the spirit realm and the physical realm.

Because creation mirrors the spirit realm, being made in God's image and God's likeness would mean human beings would have the same free will as their Creator - We would have to have that ability to choose Light/dark, right/wrong in self-determination. That's how it was with the angels, that's how it would be with the highest creation, man.

Consider how amazing human beings are. By creating us spirit, soul, and body, He put spirit-beings in a physical body, which had never been done before. Angels have spirit-bodies. God the Father is a Spirit and is seen sitting on a throne in the whole of The Revelation chapter 4, and is seen as the Ancient of Days in Daniel 7, that throne and those elders around it, and the clear flooring before it, and the rainbow over it, are all in the Spirit realm.

After telling us in James 1:2 to 'count it all joy when you fall into various temptations, tests, and trials', he says in v13: "Let no man say when he is tempted, tested, or tried that God is doing it to him. For God is not tempted, tested, or tried by evil and neither does He tempt, test, or try anyone with evil."

One reason God is not tempted by evil is that He doesn't have a physical, of this earth body. Being tempted requires a human body. Satan occupies the dark realm of his kingdom but seeks to expand his borders by influencing human beings toward darkness.

Tempted with gambling away your money? That's of the earth and this body. Tempted by addiction? That is of this body. Tempted by eating too much or too little? That's of the earth and this body. The Father doesn't have a physical body so He is not tempted with evil, therefore neither does He tempt, test, or try people with evil. As James said a few verses later to support his claim: "Every good gift and perfect gift comes down from the Father of lights, in whom is no variableness, nor hint of shade in His being."

It is difficult to wrap our minds around the idea there was a 'time' before the beginning (for there to be a beginning there first has to be time so a 'beginning' could become a beginning) where only God and His qualities filled the unseen realm(s).

But once we understand when Satan rebelled and rejected all that is God, and He prepared a place to give him what he wanted, the unseen realm of the Spirit/spirit was forever changed. The physical universe we live in could only have come about after that rebellion, for it requires opposite forces to hold everything together. That should prove to anyone we were created with free will to choose God or Satan, light or dark, love or hate.

We will pick it up there next week, until then, blessings,
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Were you predestined to read this? 3 of 4, What 'in His image' means. - 20211120

Hi all,

Free will isn't hindered or non-existent because Romans 8:29-30 and Ephesians 1:5 and 11 (Greek: predetermine) say the Father predetermined those He knew would receive salvation and made provision for them.

I've been talking about the reason behind the reason human beings are sovereign beings, why we have free will. The reasons have to do with the Father making us in His image and His likeness. But that means the only thing predetermined was God the Father knew who would receive salvation and who would not.

Because the Spirit/spirit realm now has opposing forces, provision must be made for those choices. With God or without Him. Light or darkness. Love or hate. Peace or torment. Those who want to be with God require provision. Those who reject God require provision - all because the physical creation that includes us, flows from the spirit/Spirit realm that has those opposing elements.

People don't realize hell and the lake of fire is provision for those who don't want God. He simply gives them what they want, just like He provided for the devil and his angels. Matthew 25:41

In our image, after our likeness - the roots of free will.

"Let us make man in our image, after our likeness" Genesis 1:26

That statement alone exposes the error of predestination, for God is free-willed, able to determine His destiny. That we are made in His image and likeness demands we have free will as He does. If not, 'in our image, after our likeness' does not exist. He has free will. We are in His image and likeness, therefore we have free will.

Can a person paint a picture and claim that picture did not come from their heart and mind flowing through that brush to be seen on the canvas? Of course not, the image of that painting came from within them, and there is no way to separate that painting from them. Similarly we came from God, in His image and likeness, and He is free-willed, how can humans be anything BUT free-willed, for we came from Him.

Hebrews 12:9, Zechariah 12:1, and a host of other verses tell us God the Father creates the human spirit. We are conceived 'alive to God', born as innocent and naked as were Adam and Eve at their start. Alive to God, able to see Him (this is why young children often see angels and/or the Lord) as Adam and Eve walked naked in the Garden, seeing the Lord and not realizing they were naked. But they had to choose, as do we all...

That phrase 'in our image...'

The 'our' is there because the Hebrew word here for God is 'Elohim'. The 'im' suffix in Hebrew is the plural. Meaning Father, Holy Spirit, and Son. We are spirit, we have a soul, we live in a body. We are triune as is the Godhead. Have you ever talked to yourself about a decision before you? Have you ever internally contemplated doing one thing or the other? Have you ever argued with yourself?

We can therefore relate to a small degree the contemplation the Father, His inner most being in His Spirit, and Son had when considering creating man. I know, it's tough to wrap our mind around and this series isn't about the trinity, so let's look at 'likeness' and 'image'.

In Hebrew the word 'likeness' is 'demuth', and means 'likeness or similitude'. That would include the fact the Father is described as a man - Daniel 7:9 describes him as 'The Ancient of Days' and having hair like wool. In The Revelation 4 and 5 He is on the throne to whom Jesus comes to 'take the book

out of the right hand of Him who sits on the throne'. So we have 2 eyes, 2 hands, 2 legs and so on because we are in His likeness.

But the word 'image' is the Hebrew word 'tselem' and means 'a form of, an outward expression of, an outward display of what is in the heart'. It is used to describe the making of idols as an outward expression of what is in a person's heart who wants to worship that idol - an expression of what they think that god or goddess looks like. It is that painting on the canvas that began in the imagination of the artist. We are His outward expression.

Ephesians 2:10 says we are His 'workmanship', which is the Greek word 'poiema' which is the word 'poem'. Each one of us is uniquely God's poem, created by Him as a direct expression of His own heart, mind, emotions, and thoughts of how He wanted to create us...there is no such thing as a person without purpose.

There is no such thing as a person who is without purpose. Each one of us is a product of His imagination, and He is Love. Therefore by those very facts, the only 'predestination' for any human being is that He determined to create us and provide for all those who would want to walk with Him. Those He fore-knew, He predetermined to make provision through Christ.

For those He foreknew, those He did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son...Romans 8:29. He knew us, knew what we would choose.

But if all people came from Him, then He knew who would go to hell; Why make them if He knew that?

The easiest answer would be to say the reasoning is hidden in the heart of the Father God, and it would be true. But that's rather unsatisfying. Let's look at a possibility. But I have to get quantum physics on you for a moment...

We are told in I John 1:5 that God is light and in Him is no darkness at all. Every school child is taught (or used to) that the white light we see from the sun is actually the colors red, orange, yellow, green, blue, indigo, violet. These combine as ROYGBIV (Roy G Biv) as an easy way to remember them. Those core colors make white sunlight. When clouds or dust in the air filter some of the wavelengths out, we may see a red or pink sunset or sunrise, brilliant yellows or subtle shades of blue - and much more! Those colors are seen as white if unfiltered full-day sunlight.

Those are just a spectrum of light that we can see with human eyes. But x-rays are also light. So are the microwaves that heat your food. But those light waves are invisible to the human eye, but they are still light. Radio and TV waves are light as well. Body heat is also light. So is the heat of the stove top or oven, or flame of a camp fire. That heat is a form of light just like the visible sunlight. We are bathed in light 24/7, though most of it we cannot see. Even the human body puts off visible light. <https://www.nbcnews.com/id/wbna32090918>

That means when you look into the night sky, it isn't really dark. It is bathed with light like gamma rays, x-rays, radio waves - the night sky is actually still as light as it is during the day, it's just the visible light of the sun is no longer present for a few hours.

Now imagine that within each wavelength of light there is a whole world, a whole realm. For instance, within red there is everything from bright red to pink to subtle shades of color with barely any red in them. Have you been to a paint store to see all the color cards of paint available? Think that many choices times many thousands of choices. And that for each color. That many for red. That many for yellow. That many for green. That many for microwaves. That many for x-rays. That many for the heat from your body. The degrees of differences in shade or tint are tiny, tiny differences. Millions upon millions of subtle shades of color. And within the color red there are millions within the confines of the color red. There is a whole other millions upon millions of shades within the color yellow. And so on.

God IS light. All those subtle tints and shades are within His light, within His very being. Now imagine from each one of those shades came all people who have ever lived or will live. God is light. That is in the Spirit/spirit realm. We look at natural light for a mirror image of the spiritual for the natural was created from the spirit.

From His imagination, from all that is light, He created each one of us, each a different shade, a different tint of His light, for we flowed from Him as a poem flows from the poet's heart. Scientists estimate about 100,000,000,000 (100 billion) people have lived over all time. Each person was so to speak, a different shade of color within God's light spectrum, in His imagination, no two could ever possibly be exactly alike. We are in His image, His likeness. His poems.

Each shade of color is a separate creation, and each having a choice in their destiny. Just like you might choose a paint at a store that is only slightly a shade different from another choice...imagine that light which is in the natural realm, was first in the spirit/Spirit realm. For before physical light could be created, there was the light of the Father God who is all light.

Stay with me in this science class that is about human free will and predestination...I'll pick it up there next week...

Until then, blessings,

John Fenn

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Were you predestined to read this? 4 of 4 - 20211127

Hi all,

I ended last week asking the question: If He knew who would and would not receive salvation, why did He create people He knew would end up in hell?

Either hell and the lake of fire really isn't all that bad, or something else is at work. Let's look at that something else. This is written as 'maybe' because I write of things we cannot know this side of heaven - but it will provoke thought that we may sort out within ourselves what we believe and why we believe it. So some of the possibilities...

Why do we pray, if not to change the future?

Romans 8:29 says this: "Those He foreknew He did also pre-determine (predestinate) to be conformed to the image of His Son". The statement 'Those He foreknew' implies there may be others He did not foreknow.

What if everyone's destiny is not fixed when they are created? What if He created everyone, but just chose to take a glimpse at some who He would know would choose salvation, and kept Himself from knowing the rest? Isn't that why we pray - to change a person's future? Isn't prayer so God may set a person along a path to a different destiny?

What if God knows all, but at times He will withhold from Himself some knowledge?

An example we might understand would be a parent of a teenager who gives the family car to the teen on a Friday night with the condition they return home at midnight.

Because they foreknew their child, they know one thing the kid may do is hang out with other 'good kids' and just talk and eat pizza at someone's house. But they also know they might drive the car up and down the Main Street cruising to see what others are doing. They also know they might try to race a friend with the car and perhaps get caught by the police. That parent also knows another possibility is that some person might attack their child and injure or even kill them, or maybe just a minor wreck.

That parent can think of 100 things their child might do on a Friday night with the family car, but they don't know exactly what decision the kid will make. They could know if they wanted - by GPS tracking or following them at a distance. But they decide to let them go to make their own decisions.

They also know this before they ever hand that child the keys to the car: They will be there for them no matter what destiny their child chooses. They hope the teen will follow what they have been taught and walk through the door by midnight, unharmed and untarnished from the world. But because they love their child if needed, they will go to the police station if they have to bail them out, or to the hospital, or even to the morgue - because they love their child. They know they will be there for their child to care for them to the extent their child's actions will allow them. No matter what decisions their child makes that night, they will be there for their teenager.

Is it possible that our Heavenly Father is like that? Is it possible that because He is eternal and He is light and within all those 'wavelengths' of light there are millions of possible outcomes to decisions we free-willed beings might make, that He withholds from Himself the knowledge of all we might decide so that He might interact with us in real time, with honesty and with real emotion? (Just as He did with Israel when they worshiped a golden calf and He wanted to destroy them, or acting with pity to spare Nineveh, or the same with Hezekiah.)

Quantum physics has proven a light particle can be in two places at once, which proves by science not only that God is everywhere, but that whatever 'wavelength' your life is following, He is there. Whatever destiny you choose, He is there.

In quantum physics terms that would be a parallel universe in the life of Hezekiah - one that had him dying of that sickness and another under God's control, where he gets healed and lives another 15 years. And God varies the outcome based and in reaction to man's free will and sets us on another timeline for our lives.

Again: He provides for several possible futures in our lives based on our free will. Thus Hezekiah's life was spared. He has done that for everyone who has ever lived or will live.

A personal example

Because God is Light, let us think of each ray of light, each shade and tint of color, as a path for a person's destiny. We were created from Him, who is all light. So what if our lives are moving along one 'color', one 'ray of light' within His light, but then we make a decision that takes us along a different 'ray of light' in another path. Yet still we are in Him, in His light, and we find He has made provision for us even though we stepped off what we know is His perfect path for us.

When I was a teenager I wanted to be an airline pilot, thinking about going into the military to receive training. But later I wanted to be a Marine Biologist and study whales. If not those, I could have taken over my dad's business, or become employed in my friend's dad's business and have a full career. But I also wanted to serve the Lord in ministry.

When I was a manager for a national pizza delivery chain I was offered franchise opportunities that would have made me very wealthy. I could have done that and continued to walk with the Lord. But my heart was ministry, so I stayed on that path. But either path would have the Lord's provision and blessing, but each would have its own set of consequences.

All of those paths of my life could be considered to be within His spectrum of Light and each path would have its own timeline for my life. If I choose to study the ocean the Lord would bless me in that. If I responded to His call and go into ministry, then His provision would be for that. If I had chosen a career path in my hometown, He would have been there for me. Within each timeline would be His provision and consequences I'd have to live out - with limitless timelines because He is all light, all paths to the future. Whatever path I chose for my life, He would be found in each one.

What if the Lord withholds from Himself knowing a person's choices?

Yes, the Father knows all, and some knowledge He retains within Himself. We are told in Deuteronomy 29:29: "The secret things belong to the Lord our God, but the things revealed belong to us and our children that we may do all the words of the Law." Let's look at some difficult passages people have contemplated for centuries.

One such passage is Genesis 18 when Christ and 2 angels appear in human form to Abraham. The angels go on to Sodom to rescue Lot and his family, while the Lord stays behind to tell Abraham what was happening. That is the passage where Abraham asks the Lord to spare the cities if He could find 50 righteous, then 40, then 30, then 20, then 10 righteous. And each time the Lord said He would spare them if He could find even that few in number of righteous people.

Consider that for a moment. As it was, Sodom was on a timeline to be destroyed. But God would have spared the city had He found 10 righteous people in it, which would have put them into another timeline, another destiny. And for each person they would have lived at least in this life, without ever knowing God had spared their lives.

But the Lord also said this in v21: "I will go down now and see if they have done according to the outcry which has come to me, and if not, I will know it."

I've examined that verse in every way in every Hebrew version I can find, and it is accurate by all accounts. The King James Version is spot on. If God knows everything, why did the Lord have to come down to see Sodom for Himself in order to know how bad it was? Also, why was Jonah later sent to Nineveh if the Lord knew they would repent and He was not going to destroy them? If God is Truth, then perhaps He didn't know how they would react to Jonah because He kept that from Himself so He could deal honestly and in real time with them?

If He knew Hezekiah would cry out to Him when he was told to set his house in order for he was about to die of his sickness, why did He change His mind within minutes after Hezekiah prayed? He told Isaiah He changed His mind and added 15 years to Hezekiah's life before Isaiah even left the palace. (II Kings 20:1-6; Isaiah 38:1-5)

Another situation was that at the Burning Bush the Lord told Moses to tell the people they would go to the Promised Land flowing with milk and honey - yet after 10x rejecting the Lord along the way - He judged them, telling them He would give them what they wanted, to die in the wilderness rather than face the giants in the Promised Land. (Numbers 14). Why go through all these things if He knew before what would happen?

Is it possible a person's future is not set, and is in fact totally determined by our free will - even if that means hell for some - and God has made provision for every possible decision we would ever make? He provided hell for those who reject Him. He provided heaven for those who want Him.

Is it possible He had seen all the timelines before He ever made this universe, because all timelines would be within His Light and Life - and made provision for all the possible timelines in our lives? Is it then possible He withholds from Himself the knowledge of what decisions we might make along the way, and sometimes our decisions slide us over into another destiny with a different outcome? Hezekiah was going to die of his illness, yet the Lord slid him into another timeline that gave him 15 more years.

Have you looked back on your life and thought something like: What if I had married ____ my life would have been so different? or, What if I had gone to ____ school I never would have met _____. ? or Why did I get into that car that night, it changed my life forever?

Do you know that whatever timeline, whatever destiny you decided for yourself, the Lord is still there for you? What if we make decisions and He adjusts according to the myriad of possible outcomes He saw before He ever made us? And Jesus died for all those millions of decisions we make and have made and will make that take us down the paths of life. Amazing.

For us...

What if because we are eternal beings, all those amazing things He saw a possibilities of your life, will come to pass in the ages to come? What if you will answer that call to ministry in the Millennial age, and discover other gifts and talents and desires in your heart, all of which are possible directions you could go in the ages to come? What if He made provision for every single possible decision you would ever make, but withholds from Himself some things so that He can honestly act and react to your decisions and decision making process?

Interesting to think about, yes?

Romans 8:29 says for those He knew before He prepared salvation. That doesn't infringe on anyone's free will, and it provides salvation as a possibility for everyone - which is why Paul said He wants all to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth - even though He knows only some will receive salvation.

But because of all those possible outcomes, He provided salvation for all. I'm putting out a possibility theologians have talked about for centuries to find a way to explain difficult passages. My point in my Weekly Thoughts is in part to provoke thought, so that we might give an answer for our faith to those who ask those difficult questions.

I do believe this however: God the Father sees all the possible outcomes, all the universes, and equally occupies them all. Israel worshipped a Golden Calf, and He wanted to destroy them for it. That was real emotion He showed. Real anger and hurt. But Moses interceded and got Him to change His mind. Sodom was marked for destruction, but the future could be changed by the Lord if at Abraham's request, He had found but 10 righteous. Nineveh was marked for destruction, but when they repented a new future was opened to them. Hezekiah was set to die of his illness, but his deep intercession moved the Lord and a new timeline for his life appeared.

Have we not had similar experiences? What of the person who says as they know they are headed to hell and an early grave: "Lord, if you get me out of this I will serve you!", and He rescues them and sets them on a different destiny. Weren't we headed for hell until we changed our destiny by giving our hearts to Jesus? Provision is made for either decision - heaven or hell - but some He foreknew and determined to provide salvation.

The Father provided for each outcome. Why did He make everyone if He knew some would reject Him? Maybe because each person's destiny is totally up to them to decide, and He has kept Himself from knowing what path we would choose until the time we make it. Maybe He who knows all, stepped back from knowing everything like that parent of a teenager on a Friday night with the family car, that He might protect free will and act and react honestly to our decisions.

Either way we know He provides for several possible futures in our lives based on our free will. Our free will determines which time line, which path within His light we choose. So yes, for those He foreknew He did predetermine they would be conformed to the image of His Son. But that does not infringe on the free will of anyone, and according to their free will, any number of paths in life and eternity are possible. So He provided heaven for those who want Him, and hell for those who don't want Him. That's the only fair thing to do. If you step in front

of that bus, you will get hit. It's not predestination at work, its your free will at work. The rest...well there are those secret things that belong to Him...

Interesting topic - but that should get you thinking for quite a while! New subject next week, until then,

Blessings,

John Fenn

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