

Divine Power Not Limited to Creation

- God's eternal purpose, the plans He devised in eternity and every prophecy that gives details to this plan reveals a whole new layer of comfort to those who trust God's Power.
- *God, who gives life to the dead and **calls those things which do not exist as though they did**; Rom. 4:17*
- Consider the important application.
- God knows the future and has the power to work within man's freewill to make it happen.

Before He calls He Already Knows

- At every pivotal moment, as human history and God's eternal purpose intersected, God found a man or a woman to accomplish His will.
- Hebrews 11 reveals some of them.
- When the moment came to end the world in a flood, He chose Noah to build the ark
- When the moment came to choose the seed and the nation, God found Abraham and called him.
- This principle never varied. God's eternal purpose, built upon His everlasting power and divine foreknowledge will always work out His will exactly as He wants it to be.

The First Time – The Template for All

- *Then He said to Abram: “Know certainly that your descendants will be strangers in a land that is not theirs, and will serve them, and they will afflict them four hundred years. 14 And also the nation whom they serve I will judge; afterward they shall come out with great possessions.” Gen. 15:13-15*
- God would need to choose the nation, the means to get them there and the means to get them out.
- Later we learn, Egypt was the nation, chosen because it was evil. Joseph was chosen to get them there and Moses to deliver them b/c were righteous

The “Providence” of God

- “Providence” Latin – *“pro-videntia — “to know or see before, foreknowledge or foresight.”*
- God’s infinite wisdom and knowledge:
- *the preappointed times and boundaries of all nations Acts 17:26; Jeremiah’s Potter. Jer. 18:1-10*
- *the Lord searches all hearts and understands all the intent of the thoughts 1Chrn. 28:9*
- *Your eyes saw my substance, being yet unformed. And in Your book they all were written, The days fashioned for me, When as yet there were none of them. Ps. 139:16*
- *“I will never leave you nor forsake you.” 6 So we may boldly say: “The Lord is my helper; I will not fear. What can man do to me?” Heb. 13:5-6*

God's Providence

- Infinitely complicated and incomprehensible.
- With “*foresight*” and “*foreknowledge*,” joined to His infinite power to intervene in this creation:
- God can intervene at any moment in love and mercy to bring about His purposes.
- *What if God, wanting to show His wrath and to make His power known, endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath prepared for destruction, 23 and that He might make known the riches of His glory on the vessels of mercy, which He had prepared beforehand for glory, Rom. 9:22-24*

How Our Freewill Impacts Providence

- Our own decisions are based on our freewill.
- God does all He can to help us choose Him, but He forces no one.
- *desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth. 1 Tim 2:4-5*
- *He called you by our gospel, for the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ. 2Th. 2:14*
- *And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose. Rom. 8:28*

Back to the Beginning

- God wanted Israel in Egypt.
- Joseph was a vessel of mercy. God chose him to bring them to Egypt.
- When God revealed this, his brothers were jealous:
- *And the patriarchs, becoming envious, sold Joseph into Egypt. But God was with him 10 and delivered him out of all his troubles, and gave him favor and wisdom in the presence of Pharaoh, king of Egypt; and he made him governor over Egypt and all his house. Acts 7:9-11*

God took it all and worked it for Good

- God used the hatred of Joseph's brothers, the slave traders, his enslavement to Potiphar, the wicked slander of Potiphar's wife, his bitter years of imprisonment, and the dreams of a butler, baker, and Pharaoh to bring Joseph to power and bless all Israel.
- *"Do not be afraid, for am I in the place of God? But as for you, you meant evil against me; but God meant it for good, in order to bring it about as it is this day, to save many people alive. Now therefore, do not be afraid; Gen. 50:19-21*

God's Ways – Higher than ours

- With “*our ways*,” we can only see the outcome after it happens.
- Our proverb: “*hindsight is always 20/20*.”
- We don't have power over the outcome.
- What we can only do with **hindsight**,
- God can do with **foresight**!
- God doesn't need an outcome before He acts.
- He acts to create the outcome He desires.
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A Complicated and Thorny Issue

- Why didn't God stop Joseph's brothers?
- Freewill is absolute!
- The brothers, Potiphar and his wife, the jailer, butler and baker – all lived lives they chose.
- God didn't stop them!!! He overruled them!!!!
- He used them to help Joseph and save Israel!!!
- *For the Scripture says to the Pharaoh, "For this very purpose I have raised you up, that I may show My power in you, and that My name may be declared in all the earth." 18 Therefore He has mercy on whom He wills, and whom He wills He hardens. Rom. 9:17-18*

After Sin Entered the World

- We must all make the same choice.
- Joseph and his brothers is ever repeating....
- Moses and Israel were exactly the same.
- Jeremiah and Israel
- Jesus and Israel's Leaders
- Esther and Haman:
- *if you remain completely silent at this time, relief and deliverance will arise for the Jews from another place, but you and your father's house will perish. Yet who knows whether you have come to the kingdom for such a time as this?" Est. 4:14*

Every Choice Leads to Another....

- Our choices determine whether we become more useful to the Lord or less useful.
- *But in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and silver, but also of wood and clay, some for honor and some for dishonor. 21 Therefore if anyone cleanses himself from the latter, he will be a vessel for honor, sanctified and useful for the Master, prepared for every good work. 2 Tim 2:20-22*
- Every evil and bad choice diminishes us and every good choice makes us more useful.

Everything is Used – Nothing Wasted

- *My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials, 3 knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience. 4 But let patience have its perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing. James 1:2-5*
- No matter how hard things become remember Joseph.
- *God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able. 1Cor. 10:13*

Everything is Used – Nothing Wasted

- Jesus in the garden of Gethsemane.
- He fervently prayed for God's intervention,
- *“His sweat became like great drops of blood”* and His pleading *“with loud cries and tears, to Him who was able to save Him from death.”* (Lk. 22:44; Heb. 5:7).
- Jesus had an absolute confidence God knew best
- He prayed: *“not My will, but Yours, be done!”* Later it was said, *“though He was a Son, yet He learned obedience by the things which He suffered. And having been perfected, He became the author of eternal salvation to all who obey Him.”* Heb. 5:8-9

God is Just, Righteous, Loving & Merciful

- God is perfect to make these decisions for us.
- With wisdom we will defer to His judgment.
- Trusting as our life unfolds that He is working with us and for us.
- God has the power to intervene, the wisdom and knowledge to see all outcomes, both present and future, a perfect knowledge of our capabilities and needs, and the ability to know how these things will affect our friends and families in the future. We can and should feel great peace knowing everything is in His perfect and capable hands.

- *You will keep him in perfect peace, Whose mind is stayed on You, Because he trusts in You. 4 Trust in the Lord forever, For in Yah, the Lord, is everlasting strength.” (Isa 26:3-4)*