

GOD'S KNOWLEDGE AND FOREKNOWLEDGE

The knowledge of God is complete. He knows the past, present, and the future. He knows everything about heaven, earth, hell, and even the new heaven and new earth, which is not yet formed. (Revelation 21) He knows everything that everyone has ever thought and He knows what they will think tomorrow. Daniel 2:22 says, ***"It is He who reveals the profound and hidden things; He knows what is in the darkness, and the light dwells with Him."*** Again, in Hebrews 4:13 we read, ***"And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are open and laid bare to the eyes of Him with whom we have to do."*** He never changes, in fact He can not change because He is perfect; and if He changed He would either show that He was not perfect and needed to change or He would change and then be imperfect. We read in Malachi 3:6, ***"For I, the Lord, do not change; therefore you; O sons of Jacob, are not consumed."*** God is totally aware of every aspect of our life. In Psalms 139:1-6 we read, ***"O Lord, You have examined my heart and know everything about me. You know when I sit or stand. When far away you know my every thought. You chart the path ahead of me, and tell me where to stop and rest. Every moment, you know where I am. You know what I am going to say before I even say it. You both precede and follow me, and place Your hand of blessing on my head. This is too glorious, too wonderful to believe!"***L.B.

Does the fact that God knows us so intimately make us uncomfortable, or does it give us comfort? I suppose that the answer to that question is determined by our view of God, and our relationship to Him. For people that think that God is standing over them with a club, waiting for them to make a mistake so He can beat them with it, The prospect of a God that knows them so well is frightening. The unrepentant does not want to acknowledge an omniscient God, so he either ignores Him or refuses to believe that He even exists. Even more common is the person that makes God in his own image. He thinks that God is like the leprechaun, or some lucky charm that he takes out when he has need of Him. Of course, such a god is comfortable to live with but is too weak to bring real comfort

when he needs it. Some people seem to think that if they don't believe in an omniscient God, then He doesn't really exist. For those who believe that God loves them and has their best interest in mind, it can be very comforting. We should not lose track of the fact that God is a just and holy God and does not wink at sin. But He has made a way for us to deal with our sin by confessing it to Him, repenting of it, and then forsaking it. As we then walk in the light that He gives us, the blood of His Son Jesus Christ then cleanses us from all sin. (I John 1:7) This is all summed up by the apostle Paul in the eighth chapter of his letter to the Romans, verses 1-8 as follows; "***There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set you free from the law of sin and of death. For what the law could not do, weak as it was through the flesh, God did: sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and as an offering for sin, He condemned sin in the flesh, in order that the requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit. For those who are according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who are according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit. For the mind set on the flesh is death, but the mind set on the Spirit is life and peace, because the mind set on the flesh is hostile toward God; for it does not subject itself to the law of God, for it is not even able to do so; and those who are in the flesh cannot please God.***"

The fact that God knows us so well has many benefits for the child of God. Because He is omniscient, He can listen to me and to a million others at the same time without being confused. I, personally, have a one track mind. I can not do two things at the same time. I envy those who can. Some people can study and listen to the radio at the same time; not me. God actually knows what we are going to say before we say it. He also knows our hearts, so we don't have to impress Him with our elegant prayers. The cry of our heart reaches God, even if we are unable to verbalize what we want to say. In Isaiah 65:24 we read, "***It will also come to pass that before they call, I will answer; and while they are still speaking, I will hear.***"

We have only lived in time, but God lived before there was time. In Genesis 1:5 it says, "...***And the evening and the morning were the first day.***" Since that was the first day, there was never a day before it. There was no need for time before the fall because no one

grew old or died, there was an even climate all year long and there was fruit bearing all year long. It didn't make any difference how old you were because you were never sick and you didn't show any signs of aging as we do today. Since God created time, he is above it and is not affected by it. The creation is subject to the creator but the creator is not subject to the creation. The past, present, and the future is all the same to Him. He can "remember" the future the way we remember the past. Nothing that happens is a surprise to Him. God does not have to control the future in order to know it. He can know what we are going to do before we do it and still allow us to operate in our own free will. The closest thing to this that I can think of is seeing a movie for the second time. The person that is seeing the movie with you doesn't know that you have seen the movie before. You tell him, from time to time, what is going to happen before it happens. That doesn't mean that you had control over the movie or its actors. It means that you are "remembering" the future, as far as that showing of the movie is concerned, because you are remembering the past, when you saw the movie for the first time. We see this in Jeremiah 1:4-5 where we read, ***"Now the word of the Lord came to me saying, Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, And before you were born I consecrated you; I have appointed you a prophet to the nations."*** And in Psalms 139:13-16 we read, ***"You made all of the delicate, inner parts of my body, and knit them together in my mother's womb. Thank you for making me so wonderfully complex! It is amazing to think about. Your workmanship is marvelous-and how well I know it. You were there when I was being formed in utter seclusion! You saw me before I was born and scheduled each day of my life before I began to breathe. Every day was recorded in Your book!"*** (L.B.)

There is an interesting situation posed in I Samuel 10-12. ***"Then David said, Oh Lord God of Israel, Thy servant has heard for certain that Saul is seeking to come to Keilah to destroy the city on my account. Will the men of Keilah surrender me into his hand? Will Saul come down just as thy servant has heard? O Lord God of Israel, I pray, tell Thy servant." And the Lord said, He will come down.'*** Then David said, ***Will the men of Keilah surrender me and my men into the hand of Saul?' And the Lord said, They will surrender you."*** Though the men of Keilah didn't actually turn David over to Saul; God knew that they would. Because of this, David left Keilah and escaped from Saul. Not only

does God know what will happen before it occurs, He knows what would happen if the circumstances were different, as with the case with David and Keilah. What if David had not asked God that question, and stayed in Keilah, would he have been killed? We will never know. Don't forget that Christ was to later be born in the line of David. David learned what God said in Isaiah 42:9, ***"Behold, the former things have come to pass, now I declare new things; before they spring forth I proclaim them to you."***

There is a very revealing portion of scripture in Isaiah 48:3-11; ***"I declared the former things long ago and they went forth from my mouth, and I proclaimed them. Suddenly I acted, and they came to pass. Because I know that you are obstinate, and your neck is an iron sinew, and your forehead bronze, therefore I declared them to you long ago, before they took place I proclaimed them to you, lest you should say, my idol has done them, and my graven image and my molten image have commanded them,"*** You have heard; look at all this. And you, will you not declare it? I proclaim to you new things from this time, even hidden things that you have not known. They are created now and not long ago; and before today you have not heard them, lest you should say, Behold, I knew them.' You have not heard, you have not known. Even from long ago your ear has not been open, because I knew that you would deal very treacherously; and you have been called a rebel from birth. For the sake of My name I delay My wrath, and for My praise I restrain it for you, in order not to cut you off. Behold I have refined you, but not as silver; I have tested you in the furnace of affliction. For My own sake, for my own sake, I will act; for how can My name be profaned? And My glory I will not give to another." In this portion we see the fact that God reveals things but there is a tendency for man to give the credit to another. We have seen the tendency of man to try to capitalize on prophesy. Many books that were hot items a few years ago, are now given away to people who will just buy any other book. These are books that tried to link the Gulf War with prophesy; books like, Armageddon, Oil and the Middle East Crisis. There is always a desire for man to profit from these times of uncertainty. It was no different in Isaiah's day, the religious people tried to capitalize on any situation. I'm sure that there are, or will be books on how the Hale-Bopp comet fulfills prophesy. There will be people who will preach about how this

comet fulfills some prediction and from that conclusions will be drawn that tell us when Christ will return. Be skeptical of things like that. Take time to see how it all works out before you jump on the band wagon. Notice the last line of the portion of scripture that I quoted in Isaiah; ***"And My glory I will not give to another."*** Anyone who deals in prophesy must be careful not to try to go beyond what he actually knows and what God has revealed. He must also be careful to glorify God in his heart and determine not to make gain his goal. Jesus Himself warned us about these things in Matthew 24:4-5

"And Jesus answered and said to them, See to it that no one misleads you. For many will come in My name, saying, 'I am the Christ,' and will mislead many." Paul's instruction to Timothy was this; ***"Preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with great patience and instruction. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but wanting to have their ears tickled, they will accumulate for themselves teachers in accordance to their own desires; and will turn away their ears from the truth, and will turn aside to Myths."*** (II Timothy 4:2-4) This sure sounds like the conditions that we see in our land today.

Paul Ziegler