

GOD IS: FULLY FORE-KNOWING

What happens when you push a crosswalk button at a traffic light? You expect the light to change. But a recent study reveals in New York City the button does nothing at all. Because it would affect all the traffic for miles around. Expand this to a cosmic scale, and it's similar to the idea some people have of God - as though He is a genie, a being who must respond to every person and yet keep the entire universe under control. Make no mistake, God is capable, because He is omnipotent. But He is also sovereign. God is independent of everything and everyone else. He works out His purposes. Romans 8:29-30, "*for those whom He foreknew He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son...and those He also called...and those He also justified...and those He also glorified.*" God is fully fore-knowing.

1- God has never had to learn anything. As God, He already, always, knows all things. In advance. He is omniscient. Isaiah 40 says "*Who has measured the Spirit of the LORD, or what man has shown God his counsel? Whom did God consult and who made Him understand? The LORD is the everlasting God, the Creator, His understanding is unsearchable.*" God doesn't have to peer through the mists of time to see what will happen. He knows. Psalm 139 says "*O LORD, You have searched me and known me, You discern my thoughts from afar; even before a word is on my tongue, You know it altogether. In Your book were written, every one of them, the days that were formed for me, when as yet there were none.*" God's perfect knowledge knows what you will do and say before you do. The psalm closes with "*Search me, O God, and know my heart; try me and know my thoughts; see if there be any grievous way in me.*" This is not to enlighten God, but to reveal to the psalmist himself what God already knows. God doesn't have to wait for you to be born to know anything about you. He knows everything completely beforehand. Because God is also infinite and eternal. His perspective is not limited by time and space. Ours is finite and constrained. That's why our knowledge or actions can never over-rule His. He is God.

2- God knows and fore-knows everything perfectly, based on the attributes of His infinite divine being. If God does not already know all about all things, how could He be God? If something could happen or exist that He did not already know about, how could He be God? Because He is God, He already always perfectly and completely knows all things. God has never had to look into the future and learn any new information. He, and His knowledge, is already perfect, infinite, eternal, all-inclusive, exhaustive, intimate. Theologian RC Sproul affirms, "God knows both the micro- and macro-dimensions of the entire universe. He numbers the very hairs of our heads. Not only does He know what we will do before we do it, He knows all the options we could have chosen at the moment. He knows all contingencies. Yet God's knowledge of contingencies is not itself contingent. His fore-knowledge is perfect and absolute. He is not a Great Chess Player who must wait to see what we will do. He knows absolutely what we will do before we do it. Before a word is even formed on our lips, He knows it altogether." Contingent means possible but uncertain. But that's from our perspective. God does not take chances. He is in control.

3- God's fore-knowledge is not merely fore-see. Many people jump to conclusions about God's fore-knowledge because our only frame of reference is our own finite life. What we know comes only from learning. Someone said education is what you get when you read the fine print; experience is what you get when you don't. We make plans based on our prediction of future occurrences, because of what has been observed in the past. But God is infinite, and exists outside our time-space continuum. He is above and beyond us in every respect. In Job 38 God asks "*who is this that hides counsel by words without knowledge? Where were you when I created?*" God dismisses chapters 3-37 as mere uninformed chatter. In 42:3 Job confesses, "*I have uttered what I did not understand, things too wonderful for me, that I did not know.*" We are like Job when we presume to have God all figured out, fitting inside our little box.

Don't mistakenly define foreknowledge as mere foresight. Don't imagine that "God looks down corridors of time to learn what will happen, and therefore knows what will happen, and then determines that it shall indeed happen." This postulation is both non-sensical and un-Scriptural, per God's nature and revelation. God is always and fully all of His attributes. We can distinguish them but God is not divided or dependent. When we better understand His fore-knowledge, we better worship Him. Coming up: we'll see how God's fully fore-knowing is also forever fore-loving. He works out His perfect plan for His people!