

Foreordained Salvation – First Peter 1:18-21

I. Introduction:

- A. The Almighty God, Elohim, created the universe between six and ten thousand years ago.
1. And it goes without saying that God did not create Himself.
 2. A corollary to that point is that God has always been.
 3. The Lord God is eternal, not just in the sense of the future, but of the past as well.
 4. In Moses' song (*Deuteronomy 32*), God's law-giver repeats the words of the Lord, *"I lift up my hand to heaven, and say, I live for ever."*
 5. And then, in speaking to Israel in the next chapter, Moses added, *"The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms..."*
 6. Jehovah, including the Lord Jesus, is the infinite *"I am."* He has always been and He will always be.
 7. Christ is the *"Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty."*
- B. What was this eternal God doing during the eternity preceding creation?
1. The very best of us little, finite, puny, creatures, tend to think everything revolves around us. It doesn't.
 2. And that question about God in eternity past makes us look outside the box, into a void where only the Lord is to be found.
 3. What was the Lord doing throughout eternity past? Only He has the answer.
 4. And it may be He was doing ten thousand things of which we are incapable of even imagining.
 5. But this one thing I know: before creation the Lord was planning the salvation of a few unworthy sinners.
 6. This I know for the Bible tells me so.
- C. Peter says, redemption through the blood of Christ was *"foreordained before the foundation of the world."*
1. That is a statement often denied and widely hated, but there it is in Biblical black and white.
 2. It is to be found in one fashion or another in every version of the Bible published these days.
 - a. It is not strictly a King James doctrine.
 3. It should not be called a fundamental Baptist doctrine, or even a sovereign grace doctrine.
 4. It should be a part of the theology of everyone who believes the Bible.
- D. Part of the reason this should be everyone's faith, is this is not the only verse to make that declaration.
1. There is a related statement in *II Timothy 1:9-10* – God *"hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began, but is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ..."*
 - a. Notice that this salvation was according to **God's purpose** and **grace**, not our own.
 - b. And it began before the world was created.
 2. Then Paul repeats himself and duplicates Peter's words in writing to *Titus (1:2-3)*.
 - a. *"Paul, a servant of God, and an apostle of Jesus Christ, according to the faith of God's elect, and the acknowledging of the truth which is after godliness. In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began; But hath in due times manifested his word through preaching..."*
 - b. Notice again, that salvation began before the world was created, six thousand years ago.
 3. In *Ephesians 3*, Paul says that the inclusion of Gentiles into God's plan to save *"which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ"*
 - a. *To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God,*
 - b. *According to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord."*
 4. And earlier in *Ephesians* Paul spoke of those whom God intended to save saying, *"according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world..."*

- E. What was God doing in that part of eternity which was prior to creation?
1. Among whatever else He was doing, He was planning, foreordaining and guaranteeing the salvation of those He had previously chosen to save.
 2. That leads to other important questions which I am not even going to raise this evening, because they are all unanswerable or even understandable by us.
 3. Questions like: *“Why?”*
- F. I have a very simple outline for a very complex subject, but I’m going to table it for a few minutes.
1. There is one little detail which needs to be addressed first. Maybe it is a major detail.
 2. I’d like you to consider the word *“foreordain.”*
 3. Christ was *“foreordained before the foundation of the world”* to become our Saviour.
 4. It is the Greek word *“proginosko.”* It is used by **Peter twice** and by **Paul three times**.
 5. The two occasions Peter uses the word are both here in **chapter 1**.
 6. In **verse 2** it is not translated *“foreordain,”* but, like most other occasions, it is rendered *“foreknow.”*
 7. The people to whom Peter was writing were *“elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father... unto salvation.”*
 8. Paul says in the **eighth chapter of Romans**: *“Whom (God) did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren.”*
 9. Moreover, looking into the future, *“them he foreknew... them he also glorified,”* bringing us all the way to the glorious end of their salvation.
- G. Most of the time *“proginosko”* is translated *“foreknow”* but in our verse it is *“foreordain.”* Why is that?
1. Isn’t it because **if God knows something** is going to take place, **that something is guaranteed?**
 2. Yes, God knows all potentialities and possibilities because He is omniscient – all knowing
 3. But when God **knows** a future reality, He knows it because it is something which He has ordained to come to pass.
 4. There is **no difference** between divine **foreknowledge** and divine **foreordination**. One demands the other.
- H. Of course, Jehovah is absolute sovereignty. He is King. He is in charge and does whatever He wants to do.
1. His control over all things might frighten some people, but I relish it.
 2. I know that the God who controls all things loves me.
 3. I know that because He has told me, and I believe Him.
 4. And He has given me faith to trust His promise to save me, increasing my love of the fact that He controls everything around me.
 5. A moment ago, I quoted **Romans 8:29**, but every verse in that chapter is precious.
 - a. And the verse immediately preceding **8:29** is particularly so:
 - b. *“And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.*
 - c. *For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his son.”*
- I. God’s foreknowledge is the same thing as His foreordination of that thing.
1. The Bible uses the same word to talk about both.
 2. The Lord foreknew of your repentance and faith because He foreordained them.
 3. This, in part, or generally speaking, is what Peter is teaching.
 4. And with that I’ll take you to my short and simple outline.

II. According to our scripture, **WHOM** did God the Father foreordain?

- A. We could talk about *“WHAT God has ordained,”* and we will in moment. But Peter refers to a person.
1. *“WHO verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times....”*
 2. That foreordained person was Christ Jesus, who shed His precious blood as a ransom for many.

3. God the Father knew that His Son would sacrifice Himself on Calvary, and therefore it was foreordained.
 4. Or is more accurate to say, God foreordained the sacrifice of Christ and therefore He foreknew all about it?
 5. Either way – or both ways – before the creation of Adam there was a plan in place to redeem that man – the first of all sinners – and then to redeem many of his descendants as well.
- B. Most theologians, of whatever soteriological stripe, don't have a major problem with **this** foreordination.
1. They like the fact that God had a plan in place to save sinners.
 - a. God the Father foreordained the sacrifice of Christ, and He foreordained that it would be sufficient.
 - b. Most thinking people like that kind of foreknowledge.
 2. But when it comes to the question of God's foreknowledge of the specific people He would eventually save, those theologians burst into tears, claiming that God has robbed them of their independence – or something similar to that.
 3. Again I point out that Peter describes the foreordination of the Saviour, but he does so with the same word he uses to describe the sinners the Lord foreknew and planned to save – *“proginosko.”*
- C. Who has the Lord foreordained? In this verse it is Christ Jesus, the Lamb of God.
1. But in **verse 2** as well as in other scriptures, the **who** of foreordination is **you** or **“ye.”**
 2. *“Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot: who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you, who by him to believe...”*
 3. Who has been foreordained? Christ Jesus, the Lamb of God.

III. To **WHAT** has Christ been foreordained?

- A. He was, from eternity, ordained to die as the final and perfect Passover Lamb.
1. Earlier, Peter referred to the salvation about which the prophets diligently enquired.
 2. He said that people like **Isaiah** spent time, *“searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ and the glory that should follow.”*
 3. All of those hundreds of **prophecies** to which we referred in an earlier lesson, **became possible** only because God had a **foreordained** plan.
 4. The Lord makes no mistakes, so when He prophesied something, that something was already set in stone.
 5. **Galatians 4:4** says, *“When the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.”*
 - a. At precisely what time did the fulness come?
 - b. It was the time that God the Father had foreordained.
- B. This verse says that Christ was foreordained to become the sacrifice sinners like us need.
1. But the truth is: every aspect of our salvation was foreordained before the foundation of the world.
 2. Furthermore, your physical birth was foreordained, and so was the birth of the person who shared with you the gospel.
 3. Your understanding of the gospel was foreordained and so was your faith in Christ.
 4. On and on we could go.
 5. But I admit that Peter's subject here is limited to Christ's sacrifice.

IV. He then tells us here **WHY** God foreordained the sacrifice of His Son.

- A. *“Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you, who by him to believe in God... that your faith and hope might be in God.”*
1. To what purpose was Christ's sacrifice foreordained?
 2. Again, I ask you to stop thinking that everything revolves around you.
 3. The foreordination of salvation was designed that God might be glorified by way of your faith and hope.

- B. Without a doubt the personal blessings of salvation are incalculable, no matter how you look at it.
1. We could talk about heavenly mansions, and the glories of the heavenly, eternal city.
 2. There will be fellowship with great saints: men and women of faith and charity and miraculous exploits.
 3. There will be all those people from **Hebrews 11**.
 4. We could talk about the blessings of all the different aspects of salvation: justification, propitiation, sanctification and so on.
 5. And, of course, there will be the eternal joy that we'll have with the Saviour Himself.
- C. But again, these are not the things, or the primary reason, why the Lord foreordained Jesus' sacrifice.
1. Rather it is that *"ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light" (I Peter 2:9).*
 2. *"This people have I formed for myself; they shall shew forth my praise" (Isaiah 43:21).*
 3. **Ephesians 1** – *"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ:

 - a. 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:
 - b. Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will,
 - c. To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved."*
- D. Salvation was completely and utterly foreordained in order that God would be glorified.
1. God permitted Satan to have access into Eden, so that God could be glorified over him.
 2. The Lord permitted Adam to sin, so that God would be glorified in the salvation of sinners.
 3. God foreordained that you be devastated by conviction, so that He would be glorified.
 4. Again, I could go on.
 5. But I'd prefer to that take this foreordination in one more slightly different direction.

V. Why? Christ was foreordained to be our Saviour to give us impetus to live holy lives before God.

- A. As I have said a couple times recently, we need to keep everything within its context.
1. And the context of these verses goes back to **verse 13**:
 2. *"Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ;*
 3. *As obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance:*
 4. *But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation;*
 5. *Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy.*
 6. *And if ye call on the Father, who without respect of persons judgeth according to every man's work, pass the time of your sojourning here in fear:*
 7. *Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things... but with the precious blood of Christ, who verily was foreordained..."*
- B. Peter's reference to God's foreordained plan of salvation was to remind us to spend our remaining earthly years in a way that the Lord can be glorified in us.
1. Yes, as Paul said in **Ephesians 2:7** the Lord saved us to glorify Him throughout the rest of eternity.
 - a. *"Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;)*
 - b. *And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus:*
 - c. *That in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus."*
 2. The future will give us unending opportunities to magnify our Saviour through praise and thanksgiving.

- C. But the truth is, the opportunities we have to do that **today**, may be **more important**.
1. After we have received the end of our salvation, we will be surrounded by holy angels and sinners saved by grace like ourselves.
 2. But today, we are in the midst of wickedness, surrounded by people who are in no condition to glorify God.
 3. Now is the time, now is the day when we need to be holy in all manner of conversation.
 4. This is the reason He hath called us, and this is the reason our Saviour was foreordained to save us.
 5. I should probably go on to other points, but I want to confine myself to Peter.
 6. Christ foreordained to save us that we might be holy to the glory of God.