

Scriptures and Doctrine :: foreknowledge, free will

foreknowledge, free will, on: 2004/2/20 11:35

Here's what I get from reading the many posts on this site. God created the universe with the foreknowledge that the devil would defect and cause people to sin. Foreknowledge that humans would cause much pain and suffering to each other. Foreknowledge that some people would not repent. Foreknowledge that these people would go to eternal hell where they would be tormented forever.

People don't choose to come to God, because their hearts are made of stone. We depend upon God to call us to Him. And apparently some people just aren't called or refuse to respond. But God made them in the first place knowing the outcome before it happened.

Forgive me on this one, but this does not seem like a loving God. It seems like a loving, all powerful God could have made a perfect world without a devil, without terrible pain and suffering, without sending people to eternal torment. In a way, if God created the devil knowing he would cause people to sin and that some would not repent, God is in some way responsible for their predicament and they are blameless.

This is what you get when you apply human logic to God. But somehow, all of this must be WRONG, because God cannot be in league with the devil. A house divided cannot stand.

I believe we have free will and that the outcome of our lives is up to us. This goes against God foreordaining us to any particular outcome in life, and against God having foreknowledge at all. (Because if He had this foreknowledge when He created us, we do not have free will and were created for a specific outcome.) Does this make sense?

Jake

Re: foreknowledge, free will - posted by philologos (), on: 2004/2/20 13:33

Jake writes This is what you get when you apply human logic to God. But somehow, all of this must be WRONG, because God cannot be in league with the devil. A house divided cannot stand.

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Hi Jake

It makes sense to me, but then I don't believe lots of those things that you think I believe. This is what you get when you apply your logic but to the wrong facts, but we've been there before I think.

Do you believe in the devil, Jake? What do you think is going to happen to him?

Re: foreknowledge, free will - posted by InTheLight (), on: 2004/2/20 14:25

Quote:
 -----Forgive me on this one, but this does not seem like a loving God. It seems like a loving, all powerful God could have made a perfect world without a devil, without terrible pain and suffering, without sending people to eternal torment.

God knew how evil we were going to be when He created us. Yet He loved us enough to still give us a choice in what to do. I know that this has always been hard for me to understand. Why would He give us a choice if He knew we would mess it up and choose evil? I think I'm beginning to understand now, I think it is because we are made in His image. He gave us our emotions, intellect, etc... What does man strive for more than anything else? Freedom! The problem is that we look in all the wrong places. True freedom comes from having a relationship with God. Instead of turning to God we turn to our own desires and of course our selfish desires overlap each other and then our evil nature takes over and we have

problems.

I know that's a bit simplistic but that is basically what happens. The more people try to be happy and free the worse things get. But praise God! In His mercy He has given us true freedom, and paradoxically it comes when we surrender all our rights to Him! I daily find myself agreeing with the Apostle, "Oh the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and the knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past tracing out!"

In Christ,

Ron

Re: - posted by crsschk (), on: 2004/2/20 16:22

Alright I am just gullible enough to attempt this.
Probably more of an out working than a statement, more questions than answers.

Quote:
-----It seems like a loving, all powerful God could have made a perfect world without a devil, without terrible pain and suffering, without sending people to eternal torment.

I think it really shows the love of God in the way He goes about things.

Assuming that Lucifer and the angels were created before human kind it appears that what Ron (ITL) said is true, they had freedom, up to a point along with choice. The old 'if you love something set it free'.
What did God originally create?
Was not everything, good?
Including Lucifer?
And then He fouled it all up by giving us this freedom?

I need to briefly interject something here.
Where did we ever get the idea that God owes us an explanation? That in itself is possibly telling I am guessing.

But He did give us some clues in scripture.
Apparently God is not some cruel dictator, forcing Himself on His hapless creatures, creating a bunch of robots that just wind up and go. I think Ron (Philologos) once said that the greatest power God gave to us was the power to say no to God.

Now it gets tricky. Is evil 'inherent' in that one word answer, "no"? Does evil have to 'be', by the possibility of saying "no". In other words isn't it 'self fulfilling' that by being 'free' the possibility would have to be 'free' from something and what else could it be other than being controlled (like robots).

So the only way God could be 'evil' (from our perspective) is if He held us in a controlled way, without any freedom, which He hasn't done. Even though He has set some limits.

Is it not interesting that "the knowledge of good and evil" what we now have, was apparently not for us to know originally?
The results of which we now live with, struggle with and even pose the question we are attempting to grasp?

God cannot be the author of evil regardless of when He 'knew it' (He is timeless), the possibility sprang forth out of the love He gave to us as creatures that can still turn around and spit in His face, so to speak.

If you're the Creator I guess you get to set up the playing field and make the rules. The best the players can do is to stay out of the 'sin bin'. (that's hockey lingo for the penalty box)

Thank God, He is and I am not.

No desire to usurp His throne anymore.

He has from the beginning shown that He wants the best for His creatures, but we don't want to listen to Him.

"The root of all sin is the suspicion that God is not good."

Oswald Chambers

Ron is right:

Quote:
-----"Oh the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and the knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past tracing out!"

Also 'sending' I believe is the wrong term, 'arriving' might be better.

Re: - posted by Danielcourtney (), on: 2004/2/20 16:30

We must remember that God is God and He can do what He wants when He wants to do it. Without our permission. He is either sovereign, or He is not there is no in-between. Surely God is a God of love, the Bible says this, but it also says He is a consuming fire(Heb. 12:29). He doesn't have to do the things we want Him to do just so He will look like a loving God. His one act of even remotely considering a human being proves He is a loving God. We must remember that our salvation is not God's number one priority, His glory(Him being glorified) is number one on His list.

Re: - posted by philologos (), on: 2004/2/20 22:43

Of course, only an all powerful, all knowing, sovereign God would have dared to give the power of choice to creatures.

Re: Philologos reply on foreknowledge, free will, on: 2004/2/23 4:59

Ron asked:

"Do you believe in the devil, Jake?"

Well, to paraphrase a recent resident of 1600 Pennsylvania avenue, it depends upon the definition of the word "believe." If by this word you mean something parallel to my belief in Jesus or God, well, the answer is NO. I don't contemplate, daily revisit, or pray about the existence of the devil.

On the other hand, there is a force that seeks to interrupt our beliefs and actions for good. I have often noticed that on beginning a meditation or prayer, there is some seemingly innocuous noise or interruption that needs to be ignored, that I wouldn't have noticed otherwise. I think there is a force that tries to lead people to do evil.

But is this force corporate and extant? I don't think so. It is transitory and ephemeral; if you ignore it, it goes away, meekly. The problem is that people pay attention, because it is opportunistic.

In the end I believe the devil's greatest accomplishment is getting people to believe it is real, because in the end of times, when all things are restored to their rightful place, we will not even remember there was a devil, and in reality there will not have been one, just human stupidity and greed.

This is probably a confusing explanation but it's the best I can do.

Jake

Re: Jake - posted by Danielcourtney (), on: 2004/2/23 23:57

Jake, man get saved. Stop with the opinions and the senseless chatter and get saved.

danielcourtney

Re:, on: 2004/2/24 9:48

Thanks for the advice.