

Before Creation God's Great Plan

Humans tend to think of time as all there has ever been, with no eternity before time began. Paul, however, is one of several inspired writers who tell us of God's planning, foreordaining, or predestining of all future events to create the universe, make people, and provide an eternal home for those who would love and serve Him. *"We speak God's wisdom in a mystery, the hidden wisdom which God predestined before the ages to our glory"* (1 Corinthians 2:7). Paul explained further to the Ephesians. *"He (God) chose us in Him (Christ) before the foundation of the world, that we would be holy and blameless before Him. In love He predestined us to adoption as sons through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the kind intention of His will"* (Ephesians 1:4-5). God viewed the history of people sinning, needing salvation, the sacrifice of His Son, the gospel of Christ, the destruction of His creation, and the heavenly home for the saved, all before creating any physical object. His vision became a great plan which He unfolded to people as time came and progressed.

The word Paul used is προορίζω, pronounced proorizō. Thayer defines it as "1) to predetermine, decide beforehand; 2) in the NT of God decreeing from eternity; 3) to foreordain, appoint beforehand." Strong's Dictionary adds, "to *limit in advance*." Therefore, the New Testament uses the terms predestine and predestination to refer to the planning and determining that God did before He began to create. In the message God gave Isaiah to deliver to the nations, God said of Himself, *"I, even I, am the LORD, And there is no savior besides Me. **It is I who have declared** and saved and proclaimed, And there was no strange god among you; So you are My witnesses," declares the LORD, "And I am God. **Even from eternity I am He**, And there is none who can deliver out of My hand; I act and who can reverse it?"* (Isaiah 43:11-13). All planning and directing God did before creation, He did with the perfect knowledge and wisdom that belongs to God alone.

Through Isaiah, He said, *"I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is no one like Me, Declaring the end from the beginning, And from ancient times things which have not been done, Saying, 'My purpose will be established, And I will accomplish all My good pleasure'"* (Isaiah 46:9-10). God's planning was so perfect that nothing is missing or any addition needed. As Almond Williams once said during a lecture, "God never had to ask, 'Where did that come from or apologize for omitting something,' for His great plan included everything." There is more in creation than humans will ever need to know.

In Solomon's writings, wisdom is personified and clearly with God before creation. *"The LORD possessed me at the beginning of His way, Before His works of old. From everlasting I was established, From the beginning, from the earliest times of the earth"* (Proverbs 8:22-23). The word "beginning" appears here in two places and is two slightly different words in the Hebrew text. The first carries the concept of "first fruits" of the first coming out, such as a birth. The second occurrence conveys that the new thing produced can be damaged or destroyed. So, the references are to the unshakable reality of the first actions in creation. He then shaped the material things that can be damaged and destroyed. The distinction is between eternal, spiritual things and the mortal, physical things. In all things, both in heaven and on earth, the wisdom of God can be seen and revered.

The Hebrew writer refers to material and immortal things this way. *"And His voice shook the earth then, but now He has promised, saying, 'Yet once more I will shake not only the earth, but also the heaven.' This expression, 'Yet once more,' denotes the removing of those things which can be shaken, as of created things, so that those things which cannot be shaken may remain. Therefore, since we receive a kingdom which cannot be shaken, let us show gratitude, by which we may offer to God an acceptable service with reverence and awe"* (Hebrews 12:26-28). With the physical senses, we discover the universe and everything within reach. With the wisdom found in God's word, contained in scripture, we investigate the wonders of the spiritual realm.

God's planning can also be seen in His questioning of Job in Job 38-41. God not only asks where Job was in the initial planning and creating the earth but who calculated the equations of building it. And once the calculations were complete, upon what bedrock were the pylons set and how was the first portion, the cornerstone, secured in place, (Job 38:4-6) *"Where were you when I laid the foundation of the earth? Tell Me, if you have understanding, **Who set its measurements?** Since you know. Or **who stretched the line on it?** **"On what were its bases sunk? Or who laid its cornerstone."*** Those questions must be answered today, and plans completed before permits are issued and construction can begin.

Can you see the planning and wisdom in creating the universe and God's plan for eternity?