

INTRODUCTION

THE HOLINESS OF GOD DEMANDED IT THE FOREKNOWLEDGE OF GOD DETERMINED IT THE SOVEREIGNTY OF GOD DIRECTED IT

Please remember, from a mere human perspective, it appeared as if men were in complete control of the events of Christ's Passion Week; that Jesus was merely subject to man's evil schemes. But nothing could be further from the truth. Note the following:

[Pilate said to Jesus]: "Do you not know that I have power to crucify You, and power to release You?" Jesus answered and said, "You could have no power at all against Me unless it had been give you from above." (John 19:10b-11a)

At least six times in the Book of John, John either mentions or actually records the words of Jesus when in reference to His death, He said, "My hour [or time] has not yet come" (Jhn. 2:4; 7:6, 8, 30; 8:20; 13:1).

Even at His arrest in Gethsemane, Jesus freely gave Himself over to His accusers when He asked them twice, "Whom are you seeking?" Their response was, "Jesus of Nazareth." To which Jesus answered, "I am He" (See Jhn. 18:1-11). Matthew also records the words of Jesus during His arrest: "Have you come out as against a robber, with swords and clubs to take Me? I sat daily with you, teaching in the temple, and you did not seize Me?" (Matt. 26:55).

Both Matthew and Mark mention the fact that the chief priests, scribes, and elders plotted to take Jesus by deception and kill Him. "But they said, 'Not during the feast, lest there be an uproar [a riot] among the people'" (Matt. 26:3-5; Mrk. 14:1, 2). *But the time they most wanted to avoid was the time God had chosen.* While all those Passover lambs were being slain in the temple that day, "Christ, our Passover, was sacrificed for us" (1 Cor. 5:7b). He shed His blood and gave His life for the sins of the world. He truly is, "The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world" (Jhn. 1:29b).

It is as Jesus said of Himself, "I lay down my life that I may take it again. No one takes it from Me, but I lay it down of Myself" (Jhn. 10:17b-18a). He freely and voluntarily laid down His life for the sins of the world.

This now brings us to our next point. Over-and-over, the OT prophets called Israel and Judah to repentance. God constantly reminded them that if they didn't repent of their idolatry, immorality, and empty religion, He would bring judgment upon them and scatter them among the Gentile nations (nations of other gods, religions, languages, customs, and cultures).

In Isaiah 55, God, in His patience and love, once again gave them opportunity to repent. He once again offered them forgiveness when He said:

“Seek the LORD while He may be found,
Call upon Him while He is near.
Let the wicked *forsake his way*,
And the unrighteous man [*forsake*] *his thoughts*;
Let him return to the LORD,
And He will have mercy on him;
And to our God,
For He will abundantly pardon.”
—Isa. 55:6-7 (italics added)

According to Isaiah 55:2, the things of this world cannot and will not satisfy the spiritual thirst and hunger of man. The Lord asked:

“Why do you spend money for what is not bread,
And your wages for what does not satisfy?”

The salvation that God offers is without money and without price (55:1-2).

“Ho! [an exclamation expressing surprise, or to attract attention]
Everyone who thirsts,
Come to the waters;
And you who have no money,
Come, buy and eat.
Yes, come buy wine and milk
Without money and without price.

Because God Himself would pay the price for man’s sin, the price *would* be fully paid, and *is now* fully paid. Such lasting and fulfilling abundance can only come through faith in the Suffering Servant’s sacrifice and His substitutionary death on the cross (Isa. 53).

How can this be? It appears to be a contradiction! It sounds too good to be true! So God responds to our unbelief when He says:

“For My thoughts are not your thoughts [so forsake your thoughts, v.7],
Nor are your ways My ways,” says the LORD [so forsake your ways, v. 7].
“For as the heavens are higher than the earth,
So are My ways higher than your ways,
And my thoughts [higher] than your thoughts.”

—Isa. 55:8-9

There is a heaven-wide difference between the ways and thoughts of God and the despairing thoughts of men. If salvation were *devised by man*, then it would be of works. But salvation is *designed by God*, and is therefore by faith. So when it comes to the *Cause Of The Cross*,

THE WISDOM OF GOD DESIGNED IT

“God alone is wise,” Paul writes in 1 Tim. 1:17. In reference to the wisdom of God, Tozer writes:

Wisdom, among other things, is the ability to devise perfect ends and to achieve those ends by the most perfect means. It sees the end from the beginning, so there can be no need to guess or conjecture. Wisdom sees everything in focus, each in proper relation to all, and is thus able to work toward predestined goals with flawless precision.

(A. W. Tozer, *The Knowledge Of God*).

God is infinite wisdom. So it’s utterly foolish and futile for us to think we can somehow make improvements upon God and His plans. How can you improve the Infinite? How can you perfect Perfection?

Solomon wrote:

I know that whatever God does,
It shall be forever.
Nothing can be added to it,
And nothing taken from it.
God does it, that men should fear before Him.
—Eccl. 3:14

God does it that men may reverence Him. Know Him. Trust Him. Obey Him. Worship Him.