

GOD'S PREDETERMINED PURPOSE VERSUS MAN'S FREE WILL

Firm Foundation Chapter 22

by
Doug Woolley
3/7/89

How Do They Coincide?

God has a predetermined plan and purpose for the universe which is certain to come about. As individuals in the Kingdom of God, we each have a specific call and ministry that God desires for us to fulfill, but we can either choose to fulfill it or to not fulfill it. **"Even though God's plans for the universe certainly succeed, an individual may still reject God's plan for his part in it."** "He does not ordain which particular individuals will accept His plan for them in His Kingdom." We each have a free will to choose what we want to do. God does not want our relationship with Him to be based on "force", but based on love. Therefore, He gives us a choice.

Although we have the freedom of choice, we do not have the freedom of "consequence". **Deut. 30:11-20** says that God has given Israel (and us) a choice: life and prosperity or death and adversity. If we choose life, then we will live in blessing; but, if we choose death, then we will be under a curse. God always has a plan for us, but we have a free will to choose our path. However, we do not have the option to choose our consequence.

Rebekah and Judas

It was ordained by God for Isaac to have a wife by which he could have children. It was God's will for Rebekah to marry Isaac, but she had a choice, and **Rebekah chose to do God's will and be Isaac's wife**. As a result of Rebekah's choice, she was blessed with a nation coming forth from her.

On the other hand, **Judas was called to the ministry and apostleship, but he turned aside and did not do God's will**. He forfeited the blessing he could have received.

The Nation of Israel

In the Old Testament, **1 Samuel 8** records the nation of Israel crying out for Samuel to appoint them a king. It was God's **perfect will** for Himself to be their king. They chose to frustrate God's plan and purpose for themselves as a nation. "Israel missed God's perfect will for themselves as a nation and moved into His **permissive will**." His permissive will is **second best; It is when you will not hold out for God's perfect plan, yet God oversees the choice as "acceptable"**.

King Saul

Responding to the nation's plead, God chose Saul to be King over Israel. God gave Saul a choice: Serve the Lord or act wickedly and be swept away. Saul chose to disobey God, and God had to take away the kingdom from him and **give it to another**. God did not ordain the response that Saul made. Although it was God's desire for Saul to obey Him, Saul had a choice.

Why are There Periods of Heavy Testing?

God has a plan and a purpose for us to accomplish, but He does not ordain our response to it. In essence, He does not know what we will do until the moment occurs (yet God is beyond time). Therefore, **God often tests man to see what is in his heart-- to determine whether or not he will obey God (Duet. 8:2). "Through the way men react through trials, God determines faithfulness. It is required of a steward that he be found faithful,"** before God gives him particular responsibilities.