

Romans Series

Lesson #94

March 21, 2013

Dean Bible Ministries

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The Epistle to the ROMANS

**Foreknowledge:
To Know Beforehand or To Lovingly Choose?
Romans 8:29**



Rom. 8:28, “And **we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose.”**

οἶδα oida

perf act indic 1 plur

“to know,” emphasizes more of an intuitive knowledge rather than an acquired knowledge; something generally understood and accepted as true; rather than “coming to know” the meaning of *ginosko*.

John 6:37, “All that the Father gives Me will come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will by no means cast out.”

John 6:44, “No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him; and I will raise him up at the last day.”

John 6:65, “And He said, ‘Therefore I have said to you that no one can come to Me unless it has been granted to him by My Father.’ ”

John 6:29, “Jesus answered and said to them, ‘This is the work of God, that you believe in Him whom He sent.’ ”

John 6:35, “And Jesus said to them, ‘I am the bread of life. He who comes to Me shall never hunger, and he who believes in Me shall never thirst.’ ”

John 6:40, “And this is the will of Him who sent Me, that everyone who sees the Son and believes in Him may have everlasting life; and I will raise him up at the last day.”

John 6:47, “Most assuredly, I say to you, he who believes in Me has everlasting life.”

John 6:64, “ ‘But there are some of you who do not believe.’ For Jesus knew from the beginning who they were who did not believe, and who would betray Him.”

John 6:39, “This is the will of the Father who sent Me, that of all He has given Me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up at the last day.”

John 17:1, “Jesus spoke these words, lifted up His eyes to heaven, and said: ‘Father, the hour has come. Glorify Your Son, that Your Son also may glorify You,

John 17:2, “ ‘as You have given Him authority over all flesh, that He should give eternal life to as many as You have given Him.’ ”

John 17:6, “I have manifested Your name to the men whom You have given Me out of the world. They were Yours, You gave them to Me, and they have kept Your word.”

John 17:9, “I pray for them. I do not pray for the world but for those whom You have given Me, for they are Yours.”

**Secondary
Meanings**

**Core
Semantic
Meaning
to draw, attract,
or drag**

**Of their will,
against their will**

John 6:44, “No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him; and I will raise him up at the last day.

John 6:45, “It is written in the prophets, ‘*And they shall all be taught by God.*’ Therefore everyone who has heard and learned from the Father comes to Me.”

Isa. 54:13, “All your children shall be taught by the LORD, and great shall be the peace of your children.”

Rom. 8:28, “And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose.

Rom. 8:29, “For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren.”

Moo, *Romans*;

In the six occurrences of these words in the New Testament, only two mean “know beforehand” (Acts 26:5, cited above, and 2 Pet. 3:17); the three others besides the occurrence in this text, all of which have God as their subject, mean not “know before”—in the sense of intellectual knowledge, or cognition—but “enter into relationship with before” or “choose, or determine, before” (Rom. 11:2; 1 Pet. 1:20; Acts 2:23; 1 Pet. 1:2). ... If, then, the word means “know intimately,” “have regard for,” this must be a knowledge or love that is unique to believers and that leads to their being predestined.

Thomas Schreiner, *Romans*

Some have argued that the verb προέγνω (proegnō, he foreknew) here should be defined only in terms of God's foreknowledge. That is, God predestined to salvation those whom he saw in advance would choose to be part of his redeemed community. This fits with Acts 26:5 and 2 Pet. 3:17, where the verb προγινώσκειν clearly means "to know beforehand." According to this understanding, predestination is not ultimately based on God's decision to save some. Instead, God has predestined to save those whom he foresaw would choose him. Such an interpretation is attractive in that it forestalls the impression that God arbitrarily saves some and not others. It is quite unlikely, however, that it accurately represents the meaning of προγινώσκειν when the reference is to God's foreknowledge.

The background of the term should be located in the Old Testament, where for God “to know” (יָדָע, yāda‘) refers to his covenantal love in which he sets his affection on those whom he has chosen (cf. Gen. 18:19; Exod. 33:17; 1 Sam. 2:12; Ps. 18:43; Prov. 9:10; Jer. 1:5; Hos. 13:5; Amos 3:2). The parallel terms “consecrate” and “appoint” in Jer. 1:5 are noteworthy, for the text is not merely saying that God “foresaw” that Jeremiah would serve as a prophet. The point is that God had lovingly chosen him to be a prophet before he was born. Similarly, in Amos 3:2 God’s knowledge of Israel in contrast to that of the rest of the nations can scarcely be cognitional, for Yahweh had full knowledge of all nations of the earth. The intention of the text is to say that Yahweh had set his covenantal love only upon Israel.

Palmer, et al; *The Five Points of Calvinism*

When the Bible speaks of God knowing particular individuals, it often means that He has special regard for them, that they are the objects of His affection and concern.

Liddell, Scott, Jones. *Greek English Lexicon*

- 1. —know, perceive, learn, or understand beforehand, prognosticate, foreknow, learn things in advance.**
- 2. judge beforehand**

BDAG

① To know beforehand or in advance, have foreknowledge (of) τί something.

② Choose beforehand τινά someone Rom. 8:29.

Rom. 9–11; 1 Pet. 1:20.

—Know from time past Acts 26:5.

Moulton, Milligan:

To “foreknow,” “know previously”; Notes that Hort thinks 1 Pet. 1:20 means to designate before.

Zodhiates

To perceive or recognize beforehand, know previously, take into account or specially consider beforehand, to grant prior acknowledgement or recognition to someone, to foreknow.

(I) Used of mere prescience, to know before (Acts 26:5; 2 Pet. 3:17).

(II) Used of God's eternal counsel it includes all that He has considered and purposed to do prior to human history. In the language of Scripture, something foreknown is not simply that which God was aware of prior to a certain point. Rather, it is presented as that which God gave prior consent to, that which received His favorable or special recognition. Hence, this term is reserved for those matters which God favorably, deliberately and freely chose and ordained.

NIDNTT: “The corresponding noun prognōsis (attested as a medical technical term since Hippocrates) denotes the foreknowledge which makes it possible to predict the future.”

Acts 26:5, “They knew me [knew beforehand] from the first, if they were willing to testify, that according to the strictest sect of our religion I lived a Pharisee.”

Rom. 8:29, “For whom He foreknew [knew beforehand], He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren.”

Rom. 11:2, “God has not cast away His people whom He foreknew [knew beforehand]. Or do you not know what the Scripture says of Elijah, how he pleads with God against Israel, saying,”

1 Pet. 1:20, “He indeed was foreordained [known beforehand] before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you.”

2 Pet. 3:17, “You therefore, beloved, since you know this beforehand, beware lest you also fall from your own steadfastness, being led away with the error of the wicked;”

Acts 2:23, “Him, being delivered by the determined purpose and foreknowledge of God, you have taken by lawless hands, have crucified, and put to death;”

1 Pet. 1:2, “elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, in sanctification of the Spirit, for obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace to you and peace be multiplied.”

Acts 26:5, “They knew me [knew beforehand] from the first, if they were willing to testify, that according to the strictest sect of our religion I lived a Pharisee.”

Heb. 6:9, “But, beloved, we are convinced of better things concerning you, and things that accompany salvation, though we are speaking in this way.”

1 Pet. 1:20, “He indeed was foreordained [known beforehand] before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you.” [NKJV]

1 Pet. 1:20, “He was chosen before the creation of the world, but was revealed in these last times for your sake.” [NIV]

NASB; NET have “foreknown”

1 Pet. 1:18, “knowing that you were not redeemed with corruptible things, like silver or gold, from your aimless conduct received by tradition from your fathers,

1 Pet. 1:19, “but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot

1 Pet. 1:20, “He indeed was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you”

2 Pet. 3:17, “You therefore, beloved, since you know this beforehand, beware lest you also fall from your own steadfastness, being led away with the error of the wicked;”