

# A Golden Chain? – Part 3

Since the 'chain of events' here described concerns all the LORD God foreknew, we need to return to the statement made earlier where it was briefly mentioned:

*Here we start with "whom he did foreknow" which is to say those known before. Now, there is much to state about this, but for now we shall leave it with simply "knowing beforehand" which is a portion of what is stated in "whom he did foreknow" and is certainly applicable here.*

Though the "foreknow" that was addressed earlier could be applied to any and all individuals on the earth as the LORD God does know everyone that would ever be conceived, in the context of the passage and by the specific statement "For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son. . ." it applies only to those who are born again. However, there is that "portion" of foreknow which I did not address which resides outside of any context and applies only to a certain class, or set of individuals which the Scripture describes as being "in Christ" and not "in Adam." The reason it is expressly applied is due to the particular meaning of the words "know" and "knew" as they are used by the LORD to address those who have obeyed the gospel. As we are told in Matthew, Chapter 7, when the Lord Jesus Christ delivered the Sermon on the Mount, there is a 'knowing' that is not simply 'knowing about,' but a personal, intimate knowledge of, and fellowship with, another person:

Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart

from me, ye that work iniquity. (*Matthew 7:21-23*)

Here, the Lord Jesus Christ instructs those hearing Him that it is not a matter of "good" or powerful works that gain one entrance into heaven. Rather, it is that one is personally known of or by the Lord Jesus Christ. This concept of "knowing" which is having a personal relationship with, is further reinforced in several other places in Scripture:

Howbeit then, when ye knew not God, ye did service unto them which by nature are no gods. But now, after that ye have known God, or rather are known of God, how turn ye again to the weak and beggarly elements, whereunto ye desire again to be in bondage? (*Galatians 4:8-9*)

Now as touching things offered unto idols, we know that we all have knowledge. Knowledge puffeth up, but charity edifieth. And if any man think that he knoweth any thing, he knoweth nothing yet as he ought to know. But if any man love God, the same is known of him. (*I Corinthians 8:1-3*)

Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me. If ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also: and from henceforth ye know him, and have seen him. Philip saith unto him, Lord, shew us the Father, and it sufficeth us. Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Shew us the Father? (*John 14:6-9*)

For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people: And they shall not teach every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest. For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I

remember no more. (*Hebrews 8:10-12*)

. . . But let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I am the LORD which exercise lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness, in the earth: for in these things I delight, saith the LORD. (*Jeremiah 9:24*)

Thus, knowing the LORD, and being known by the LORD is the hallmark and defining feature of a born-again child of God. No matter how much one may claim to serve the LORD, no matter what works they do, without being known of God personally, the claims of having fellowship with Him are not true, and thus those persons are dead in trespasses and sins. There is no way to come to knowing God, and being known of Him, except in faith and in repentance, believing in the Lord Jesus Christ for your salvation. This belief must be from the heart, voluntarily of one's own free will. Nothing less is acceptable to the LORD God.

Therefore, we now go back and examine verse 29 and what it states again to look at the other part of "foreknow," which is that personal relationship with Him, and see what the LORD means by that:

For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. (*Romans 8:29*)

Before continuing, we must understand that the LORD God sees all time, all at once. And differentiates every point in time, from every other point in time. Thus, from eternity past to eternity future, the LORD God is present there, even as He is present here and now. The perspective of the LORD God is that all time is present, and yet there is a past, present and future. The LORD God is the author and master of time as He initiated time, and will, as the Scripture states, end time at a certain point:

And the angel which I saw stand upon the sea and upon the earth lifted up his hand to heaven, And sware by him that liveth for ever and ever, who created heaven, and the things that therein are, and the earth, and the things that therein are, and the sea, and the things which are therein, that there should be time no longer: But in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound, the mystery of God should be finished, as he hath declared to his servants the prophets. (*Revelation 10:5-7*)

And we are shown that from before time, the LORD was there:

Come ye near unto me, hear ye this; I have not spoken in secret from the beginning; from the time that it was, there am I: and now the Lord GOD, and his Spirit, hath sent me. (*Isaiah 48:16*)

And this is confirmed by other Scripture as well, as Proverbs speaks of wisdom personified:

The LORD possessed me in the beginning of his way, before his works of old. I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was. (*Proverbs 8:22-23*)

So it is when foreknowledge is spoken of, it is done so for two reasons:

*1. We cannot mentally digest the concept and idea of all time being "present" time.*

*We simply cannot conceive of something being at once: past, present and future. We were created to exist within a frame of time, and cannot operate outside of that. We are simply mentally not able to comprehend it. We would mentally go "off the deep end" trying to grasp what we perceived.*

*2. Physical creation demands time.*

*It is impossible for physical events to occur, except in a framework wherein time delineates and defines those events.*

*Since the LORD God brought into existence the physical law that no two objects can occupy the same space at the same time, time is essential for the physical creation to operate, else everything would remain exactly as it was when created.*

Hence, though in eternity past, the LORD God saw everything that is happening right now – in relation to physical creation, it was yet to happen. Moreover, since no soul that descended from Adam had come into existence as yet, and even Adam himself was yet to be created, all that is spoken of here is classed as “foreknowledge” and from the perspective of creation and events in creation, it is indeed foreknowledge. However, in the heart and mind of the LORD God, He sees (saw) it as immediately present.

Thus, when it states “whom he did foreknow,” not only is it speaking of simply knowing beforehand, but it is relating to us that the LORD God knew those who would be saved in eternity past as if they were in existence at that time. In sum, He had personal intimate knowledge of their souls. This then, reinforces the understanding that verses 29 and 30 of Chapter 8 do not address anyone who would not receive the Lord Jesus Christ as Saviour, but confirms that the sequence of events which follows, applies to believers only.

Now, being assured the context is specifically and only believers, we must further examine whether this is a sequence of salvation, or simply relating to the believer what is happening in their life as they “work out their own salvation” while living on this earth. Thus, to begin this examination we must set forth the sequence as it is, and see if the rest of Scripture bears out that this is actually the sequence of salvation, or it is indeed the process that occurs as the born-again child of God is increasingly conformed to the image of the Saviour. That sequence is as follows:

*Foreknowledge*

*Predestination*  
*Called*  
*Justified*  
*Glorified*

However, again we must understand yet another crucial issue before continuing forward as it bears heavily upon the very existence of not only Chapter 8, and the specific passage in question, but upon the existence of Chapters 5, 6, and 7 as well:

Being born-again in Christ is a brand new experience wherein the believer has no previous experience and has no understanding of what to expect. This is why the newly born-again believer is referred to as a “babe” meaning baby, as we are told in Hebrews, Chapter 5:

For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat. For every one that useth milk is unskilful in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe. But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil. (*Hebrews 5:12-14*)

Knowing all this, it is entirely proper to consider the following question which is now posed:

*If the events of the new believer's condition are not clarified and explained, do you think it could and would cause considerable disconcert and unease at certain events that inevitably occur in the life of that individual?*

I should say the answer is a resounding “YES!”

The reason for that is confirmed in the following passage from Hebrews, which is only necessary to relate, if, and only if,

one must be both comforted about events that occur, and taught the “why” of their occurrence:

Ye have not yet resisted unto blood, striving against sin. And ye have forgotten the exhortation which speaketh unto you as unto children, My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him: For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not? But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons. Furthermore we have had fathers of our flesh which corrected us, and we gave them reverence: shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live? For they verily for a few days chastened us after their own pleasure; but he for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness. Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby. Wherefore lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees; And make straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way; but let it rather be healed. (*Hebrews 12:4-13*)

And again this view of born-again believers as children is reinforced:

For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings. For both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one: for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren, Saying, I will declare thy name unto my brethren, in the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee. And again, I will put my trust in him. And again, Behold I and the children which God hath given me. (*Hebrews 2:10-13*)

Which also is confirmed in the passage from Isaiah:

For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. (*Isaiah 9:6*)

And again by the Lord Jesus Christ Himself after His resurrection:

Simon Peter saith unto them, I go a fishing. They say unto him, We also go with thee. They went forth, and entered into a ship immediately; and that night they caught nothing. But when the morning was now come, Jesus stood on the shore: but the disciples knew not that it was Jesus. Then Jesus saith unto them, Children, have ye any meat? They answered him, No. And he said unto them, Cast the net on the right side of the ship, and ye shall find. They cast therefore, and now they were not able to draw it for the multitude of fishes. (*John 21:3-6*)

Hence, we should understand that we are little children in need of much instruction so we do not wander away or become discouraged, but are led in the right way and encouraged to "make straight paths for your feet." These things should then give us a far better understanding of why Romans, Chapters 5 through 8 exist, and why they are structured in the particular manner they are.

*To be continued . . .*