

to pass. God foreknows as actual what He has foreordained. Whatever does not exist, or whatever will not come into existence or whatever is only possible, cannot be known as actual. Only that which is or will be actual can be known as a certainty.

Since things in the world do not exist or happen without God's preservation or government, and since all things are preserved and governed by God, and since all of God's act or preservation and government were planned before the first act of creation, then God has foreordained either to efficiently cause certain things, or to permit certain things. His inclusion in His Plan of actual things that He will either cause or permit renders all events certain. And yet He is not the author of sin. He causes all good; He permits all sin.

A scriptural paradigm of this conception is found in Acts 2:23, where Peter says, "this Man, delivered up by the predetermined plan and foreknowledge of God, you nailed to a cross by the hands of godless men and put Him to death." God, by His predetermined Plan, permitted evil men to nail Jesus to a cross. Although God foreordained His Son's death before the foundation of the world, and therefore foreknew that His Son would die in this manner, yet the responsibility for the evil rested on the perpetrators, not on God.

Because God has chosen to efficiently bring about certain things and to permit certain things, and has included them all in His great Plan, therefore He foreknew all things. If He hadn't decided what things to actually cause and what things to actually permit, then all things would still be in the realm of possibility, and could not be known as certainly future. Even God cannot know as actual, things that are only possible. But if He decides to bring them out of the realm of possibility and to make them actual by including them in His Plan, then He can know them as actual. In this way God's foreknowledge may be seen to depend on the foreordination of His all-inclusive Plan.

d. Implications of God's infinite knowledge (omniscience)

- (1) God knew that, after He created human beings, they would fall from their original state, and experience much sin, suffering, and sorrow. Yet He decided to go ahead in spite of this knowledge.
- (2) God knew that, if human beings were to be saved from their sins and the terrible results of their sins, it would cost Him a great deal. Yet He decided to send the Son to become incarnate and to live a perfect life and die a sacrificial death.
- (3) God knew the end of history from the very beginning, as well as every detail of every real circumstance that would come into the lives of His redeemed people. He knew this as actual because He ordained it as such. And having determined to cause all good things and permit all evil things, He determined that He would work all things together so that they would bring Him glory and bring His redeemed people good.