

EAST CAMBRIDGE CHURCH OF CHRIST

"A first century church in the 21st century"

Bible Reading Plan

Week 31

- Jonah; *Mat 11-12*
- 2Kg 13-14; 2Chr 25; Ps 53
- Amos 1-3; *Mat 13*
- Amos 4-6; Ps 55; *Mat 14*
- Amos 7-9; *Mat 15*

Leading Services

Announcements: Mike V.

Morning:

Song Leader: Zack V.

Opening Prayer: Richard L.

Lord's Table: Larry L.

Asst By:

Closing Prayer: Brock G.

Evening:

Song Leader: Ron V.

Opening Prayer: Larry L.

Closing Prayer: Brock G.

Scripture Reading: Tony Y.
(Zechariah 9.1-8)

Sermons

AM: The Blood of Christ
PM: Praying for Guidance



Foreknowledge

First Peter is one of the passages in New Testament Scripture which speak of "the foreknowledge of God". The writer of the epistle there explains that God made people "elect" according to His foreknowledge (v. 2). The word "foreknowledge" refers to the knowledge of an event before it happens. It is predicated on its verbal form "to foreknow" which comes from the Greek *proginosko*. This Greek term is compounded of "*pro*" which means "before" and signifying "to know".

The "elect" were the Christians living in the regions the Apostle Peter mentions in verse 1. These regions were Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia. The use of the term "elect", which means "chosen", by Peter served to underscore the importance of Christians. It is not the idea of individual predestination that is being expressed here.

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The foreknowledge of God

An old creed said that “God from all eternity predestinated certain men and angels to be saved and foreordained that other men and angels will be lost and the number is so fixed that it can neither be increased or diminished”. Nothing could be further from the truth. God did not have a previous eternal purpose of choosing some for paradise and others for hell. Neither did He make the saved in such a way that they are disposed to receive the grace of salvation whether they want it or not.

What is rather true is that God determined from eternity the way people would become His chosen ones in the Christian age. They would be those found “in Christ” (Ephesians 1:3-6). To be in Christ is to be baptized in water and thus have one’s past sins washed away by the blood of Christ on the basis of faith in Him (Acts 22:16). Consequently, all those who have got into Christ are set aside to serve God (vv. 5; 9). They enjoy special privileges their sonship to God confers on them. They are therefore expected of God to have a lifestyle different from that of the people of the world. God said, “Be ye holy; for I am holy.” (v. 16).

Foreknowledge is one aspect of omniscience, a quality exclusive to Deity (Isaiah 45:1-13; Acts 15:18). God is able to know anything ahead of time. Hence, God knew beforehand that He would bring His Son into the world “when the fulness of the time was come” (Galatians 4:4). He also knew, according to Peter, that some of the inhabitants in the areas of Asia Minor mentioned above would respond to Jesus’ gospel message of salvation. He, for this reason, had the prophet Isaiah say that the word of the Lord “shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it.” (Isaiah 55:11) Made some seven hundred years before Christ was born, this prediction is applied to the gospel message by the Apostle Peter (1 Peter 1:25).

Here is something fascinating about God’s prediction. It is accurate. When God makes a prediction, you can write it down because it will come to pass come what may. God is not like the weatherman who in the evening informs us of a bright and sunny day on the morrow, but we sometimes wake up to a wet and gloomy weather. Then, we should be moved to take God’s promises seriously, including the one concerning eternal life. The promise of life eternal will one day become a reality. So, no matter how much suffering we may encounter on the Christian journey, let us hold on to God’s promise and rejoice. The example of the Christians Peter wrote to should be for us a source of motivation. Their faith was “tried with fire”, yet they rejoiced “with joy unspeakable” (v. 7). “Rejoice in the Lord always. Again I will say, rejoice!” the Apostle Paul urged Christians in Philippians 4:4.

- Constant Coulibaly