

God's Wisdom and Ways

January 20, 2019

What we perceive by sight and intellect is very often the diametric opposite of God's perception and wisdom:

- *true and false*
- *good and evil*
- *success and failure*
- *wisdom and foolishness*
- *possible and impossible*

1 Samuel 16:6-7 ESV

6 When they came, he looked on Eliab and thought, "Surely the LORD's anointed is before him."

7 But the LORD said to Samuel, "Do not look on his appearance or on the height of his stature, because I have rejected him. For the LORD sees not as man sees: man looks on the outward appearance, but the LORD looks on the heart."

2 Kings 6:15-17 ESV

15 When the servant of the man of God rose early in the morning and went out, behold, an army with horses and chariots was all around the city. And the servant said, "Alas, my master! What shall we do?"

16 He said, "Do not be afraid, for those who are with us are more than those who are with them."

17 Then Elisha prayed and said, "O LORD, please open his eyes that he may see." So the LORD opened the eyes of the young man, and he saw, and behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha.

Isaiah 55:8-9 ESV

8 For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, declares the LORD.

9 For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts.

1 Corinthians 2:14 ESV

14 The natural person does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are folly to him, and he is not able to understand them because they are spiritually discerned.

James 4:4 ESV

4 You adulterous people! Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Therefore whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God.

1 John 2:15 ESV

15 Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him.

Romans 12:2 ESV

2 **Do not be conformed** (*syschēmatizō - to conform or fashion one's self to another's pattern*) **to this world, but be transformed** (*metamorphoō - transfigured, transformed*) **by the renewal** (*anakainōsis - to renovate*) **of your mind, that by testing** (*dokimazō - test, examine, prove, scrutinize*) **you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.**

God moves in ways which seem impossible and foolish to man, so that He receives all the credit and glory, because He shares His glory with no man.

Isaiah 41:17-20 ESV

17 **When the poor and needy seek water, and there is none, and their tongue is parched with thirst, I the LORD will answer them; I the God of Israel will not forsake them.**

18 **I will open rivers on the bare heights, and fountains in the midst of the valleys. I will make the wilderness a pool of water, and the dry land springs of water.**

19 **I will put in the wilderness the cedar, the acacia, the myrtle, and the olive. I will set in the desert the cypress, the plane and the pine together,**

20 **that they may see and know, may consider and understand together, that the hand of the LORD has done this, the Holy One of Israel has created it.**

Isaiah 42:6-9 ESV

6 **"I am the LORD; I have called you in righteousness; I will take you by the hand and keep you; I will give you as a covenant for the people, a light for the nations,**

7 **to open the eyes that are blind, to bring out the prisoners from the dungeon, from the prison those who sit in darkness.**

8 **I am the LORD; that is my name; my glory I give to no other, nor my praise to carved idols.**

9 **Behold, the former things have come to pass, and new things I now declare; before they spring forth I tell you of them."**

- *God is always faithful. As He has kept His Word in the past, so will He keep His Word in the future.*

Isaiah 43:16-19 ESV

16 **Thus says the LORD, who makes a way in the sea, a path in the mighty waters,**

17 **who brings forth chariot and horse, army and warrior; they lie down, they cannot rise, they are extinguished, quenched like a wick:**

18 **Remember not the former things, nor consider the things of old.**

19 **Behold, I am doing a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it? I will make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert.**

- *God is unlimited (infinite) in His ways and means. His power and creativity are never exhausted.*

The God of the Impossible...By Design

Exodus 13:17-22 ESV

17 **When Pharaoh let the people go, God did not lead them by way of the land of the Philistines,**

although that was near. For God said, "Lest the people change their minds when they see war and return to Egypt."

18 But God led the people around by the way of the wilderness toward the Red Sea. And the people of Israel went up out of the land of Egypt equipped for battle.

19 Moses took the bones of Joseph with him, for Joseph had made the sons of Israel solemnly swear, saying, "God will surely visit you, and you shall carry up my bones with you from here."

20 And they moved on from Succoth and encamped at Etham, on the edge of the wilderness.

21 And the LORD went before them by day in a pillar of cloud to lead them along the way, and by night in a pillar of fire to give them light, that they might travel by day and by night.

22 The pillar of cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night did not depart from before the people.

Exodus 14:1-31 ESV

1 Then the LORD said to Moses,

2 "Tell the people of Israel to turn back and encamp in front of Pi-hahiroth, between Migdol and the sea, in front of Baal-zephon; you shall encamp facing it, by the sea.

3 For Pharaoh will say of the people of Israel, 'They are wandering in the land; the wilderness has shut them in.'

4 And I will harden Pharaoh's heart, and he will pursue them, and I will get glory over Pharaoh and all his host, and the Egyptians shall know that I am the LORD." And they did so.

5 When the king of Egypt was told that the people had fled, the mind of Pharaoh and his servants was changed toward the people, and they said, "What is this we have done, that we have let Israel go from serving us?"

6 So he made ready his chariot and took his army with him,

7 and took six hundred chosen chariots and all the other chariots of Egypt with officers over all of them.

8 And the LORD hardened the heart of Pharaoh king of Egypt, and he pursued the people of Israel while the people of Israel were going out defiantly.

9 The Egyptians pursued them, all Pharaoh's horses and chariots and his horsemen and his army, and overtook them encamped at the sea, by Pi-hahiroth, in front of Baal-zephon.

10 When Pharaoh drew near, the people of Israel lifted up their eyes, and behold, the Egyptians were marching after them, and they feared greatly. And the people of Israel cried out to the LORD.

- *They were slaves, not soldiers (enslaved by Egypt for 400 years)*
- *They were pinned in by the Red Sea*

11 They said to Moses, "Is it because there are no graves in Egypt that you have taken us away to die in the wilderness? What have you done to us in bringing us out of Egypt?"

12 Is not this what we said to you in Egypt: 'Leave us alone that we may serve the Egyptians'? For it would have been better for us to serve the Egyptians than to die in the wilderness."

13 And Moses said to the people, "Fear not, stand firm, and see the salvation of the LORD, which he will work for you today. For the Egyptians whom you see today, you shall never see again.

14 The LORD will fight for you, and you have only to be silent."

15 The LORD said to Moses, "Why do you cry to me? Tell the people of Israel to go forward.

16 Lift up your staff, and stretch out your hand over the sea and divide it, that the people of Israel

may go through the sea on dry ground.

17 And I will harden the hearts of the Egyptians so that they shall go in after them, and I will get glory over Pharaoh and all his host, his chariots, and his horsemen.

18 And the Egyptians shall know that I am the LORD, when I have gotten glory over Pharaoh, his chariots, and his horsemen."

19 Then the angel of God who was going before the host of Israel moved and went behind them, and the pillar of cloud moved from before them and stood behind them,

20 coming between the host of Egypt and the host of Israel. And there was the cloud and the darkness. And it lit up the night without one coming near the other all night.

21 Then Moses stretched out his hand over the sea, and the LORD drove the sea back by a strong east wind all night and made the sea dry land, and the waters were divided.

22 And the people of Israel went into the midst of the sea on dry ground, the waters being a wall to them on their right hand and on their left.

23 The Egyptians pursued and went in after them into the midst of the sea, all Pharaoh's horses, his chariots, and his horsemen.

24 And in the morning watch the LORD in the pillar of fire and of cloud looked down on the Egyptian forces and threw the Egyptian forces into a panic,

25 clogging their chariot wheels so that they drove heavily. And the Egyptians said, "Let us flee from before Israel, for the LORD fights for them against the Egyptians."

26 Then the LORD said to Moses, "Stretch out your hand over the sea, that the water may come back upon the Egyptians, upon their chariots, and upon their horsemen."

27 So Moses stretched out his hand over the sea, and the sea returned to its normal course when the morning appeared. And as the Egyptians fled into it, the LORD threw the Egyptians into the midst of the sea.

28 The waters returned and covered the chariots and the horsemen; of all the host of Pharaoh that had followed them into the sea, not one of them remained.

29 But the people of Israel walked on dry ground through the sea, the waters being a wall to them on their right hand and on their left.

30 Thus the LORD saved Israel that day from the hand of the Egyptians, and Israel saw the Egyptians dead on the seashore.

31 Israel saw the great power that the LORD used against the Egyptians, so the people feared the LORD, and they believed in the LORD and in his servant Moses.

The Wisdom of God

- *The nation of Israel was born by an impotent Abraham and barren Sarah.*
- *Israel was saved from famine and extinction by a slave and prison inmate (Joseph).*
- *2.4 million Jews were miraculously delivered from Egypt, the most powerful nation in the world.*
- *2.4 million Jews were supernaturally fed and sustained in the wilderness where there was no food or water.*
- *The army of Israel was saved from Goliath by a shepherd boy with a sling.*
- *Israel's Messiah was not a soldier and never commanded an army; never held a position in government; had no earthly wealth, property, status or rank; hated and crucified by his own people; was mocked, tortured and crucified in public disgrace on a cross.*

The Foolishness of the Cross

1 Corinthians 1:18-31 ESV

18 For the word of the cross is folly to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.

19 For it is written, "I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and the discernment of the discerning I will thwart."

20 Where is the one who is wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the debater of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world?

21 For since, in the wisdom of God, the world did not know God through wisdom, it pleased God through the folly of what we preach to save those who believe.

22 For Jews demand signs and Greeks seek wisdom,

23 but we preach Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and folly to Gentiles,

24 but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God.

25 For the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men.

26 For consider your calling, brothers: not many of you were wise according to worldly standards, not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth.

27 But God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise; God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong;

28 God chose what is low and despised in the world, even things that are not, to bring to nothing things that are,

29 so that no human being might boast in the presence of God.

30 And because of him you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God, righteousness and sanctification and redemption,

31 so that, as it is written, "Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord."