

THE ATTRIBUTES OF GOD

LESSON TWO:

Read Daniel 2:21-22

THE KNOWLEDGE OF GOD

INTRODUCTION

God is omniscient, which means He knows everything: everything possible, everything actual; all events, and all creatures, of the past, the present, and the future.

God is perfectly acquainted with every detail in the life of every being in Heaven, Earth, and Hell. (*Daniel 2:22 - He revealeth the deep and secret things: he knoweth what is in the darkness, and the light dwelleth with him.*) Nothing escapes the notice of God, neither can anything be hidden from Him. Nothing is forgotten by God.

His knowledge is perfect knowledge, complete, whole, not lacking, all-inclusive, without error or omission. We may well agree with the Psalmist when he said, “*Such*

knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high, I cannot attain unto it” Psalm 139:6.

The writer of Hebrews said this about the knowledge of God, “*Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight: but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do” Hebrews 4:13.* Such a wondrous, omniscient, and mighty God “*with whom we have to do.*”

THE KNOWLEDGE OF GOD IS PERFECT

The perfect knowledge of God is exemplified and illustrated in every prophecy recorded in His Word. In the Old Testament, there are numerous predictions concerning the course of history for Israel that were fulfilled in their minutest detail. In the Old Testament, there are also numerous prophecies concerning Jesus Christ, that were also fulfilled down to the tiniest detail.

Such prophecies could only have been given by a perfect all-knowing, all-powerful God. So, with this knowledge, we can rest assured that the remaining unfulfilled prophecies in the Bible, such as the Rapture, the Judgment Seat of Christ, the Tribulation, the return of Christ, the Millennial Kingdom, and the Great White Throne Judgment will all surely come to pass just as predicted and will fulfill every last detail revealed about them in Scripture.

The Omniscience of God Defies Our Comprehension

We know very little, and while we are in this world, we will probably not even turn the first page on the book of

knowledge. How impossible it is then to take in the idea of the universal knowledge of God. The word omniscience comes from two Latin words, *omnis*, signifying all, and *scientia*, signifying knowledge.

God is a perfect spirit and has perfect knowledge. The term denotes the infinite intelligence and knowledge of God.

“God’s knowledge is universal. It is unlimited in space, time, or quantity... This is the characteristic of His knowledge corresponding to His immensity, eternity, and plenitude, and implied in them. God’s knowledge as universal is also His knowledge of all that is possible in any imaginable universe.”¹

GOD KNOWS ALL THINGS POSSIBLE

The definition of God’s knowledge also includes the fact that God knows all things possible. This is because there are some instances in the Bible in which God gives information about events that might happen but that does not actually happen.

Turn with me to I Samuel 23:11-13

When David was fleeing Saul, he rescued the city of Keilah from the Philistines and then stayed there for a time. He decided to ask God whether Saul would come to Keilah to attack him and, if Saul came, whether the men of Keilah would surrender him into Saul’s hand. David said:

¹ (Harris, 1896)

“Will the men of Keilah deliver me up into his hand? will Saul come down, as thy servant hath heard? O Lord God of Israel, I beseech thee, tell thy servant. And the Lord said, He will come down. Then said David, Will the men of Keilah deliver me and my men into the hand of Saul? And the Lord said, They will deliver thee up. Then David and his men, which were about six hundred, arose and departed out of Keilah, and went whithersoever they could go. And it was told Saul that David was escaped from Keilah; and he forbore to go forth.” I Samuel 23:11-13.

So, we see here that God knows even possible outcomes that don't actually happen. David said, “God, if I stay in Keilah, will these men get me and my men? Will they turn us over to Saul?” And God said “Yes. If you stay there, those men will turn you over to Saul. Saul will come down to get you there.” And so, David decides to leave, and that situation never happened.

But this teaches us that God knows even the possibilities of future actions that never actually take place. He knows if you choose to turn left on that street, exactly what will happen.

He knows if you choose to turn right on that street, exactly what will happen. Whether we turn left or right, God already knows the outcome. God holds the future in His hands.

Similarly, Jesus could state that Tyre and Sidon would have repented if Jesus' miracles had been done there in former days (**Matthew 11:21**).

Also, Jesus said in **Matthew 11:23** “*And thou, Capernaum, which art exalted unto heaven, shalt be brought down to hell: for if the mighty works, which have been done in thee, had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day.*”

Elisha made a statement along these lines in **II Kings 13:19** “*And the man of God was wroth with him, and said, Thou shouldest have smitten five or six times; then hadst thou smitten Syria till thou hadst consumed it: whereas now thou shalt smite Syria but thrice.*”

This fact about God is amazing. That God knows all things that even could have possibly taken place, think of all the different variables that would have to go into that knowledge.

Think of all the variables that would have to go into just one day, then multiply that by the world's population, 8 billion, and factor in how all those variables will interconnect with each other and affect each other. It's just mind-blowing to try to consider.

He knows what would have happened if you had chosen a different college; if you had moved to a different location; if you had not accepted that job; if you had bought the other car; the list can go on and on. God knows all that would have happened in all these different what-if scenarios. This fact is mind-blowing to contemplate.

POINT OF DISCUSSION:

CONCERNING THE OMNISCIENCE OF GOD

***How does the omniscience of God make you feel?

***What effects should the knowledge of the omniscience of God have on our day to day lives?

***How does the knowledge of God's omniscience affect our faith?

What a glorious God we serve. The apprehension of His omniscience, if we ever could fully apprehend it this side of Heaven, should cause us to bow in adoration to Him. Yet we seem to meditate on this so little in our day-to-day walk in this life.

TWO APPROACHES TO KNOWING GOD

There are two ways to approach God:

- Theologically
- Experientially

You can know God experientially and not know much about theology. When we first get saved many of us know God, by the fact of our salvation, but we may not know

much about God. We may know very little doctrine, but we have experienced Him personally and have begun a personal relationship with Him.

On the other hand, it is possible to know much about God theologically and yet never know Him experientially. We may have a lot of head knowledge about God. We may even understand many deep aspects of doctrine and yet not truly know God.

We need to know God in both ways: experientially (we need to have a personal relationship with Him as our Lord and Savior) and we also need to know Him theologically as well.

The more you know about God theologically the better you can grow to know Him experientially. The purpose of studying bible doctrine, the purpose of studying the attributes of God is to lead us to see and know God better and deeper.

GOD'S UNDERSTANDING IS LIMITLESS

Psalm 147:5 "Great is our Lord, and of great power: his understanding is infinite."

God's understanding is limitless. God has declared in His Word that He is omniscient, that He knows everything, without any limit or qualification of any kind to His knowledge. The human mind finds this hard to comprehend, especially when we consider how much there is to know and how little of it, we actually do know.

ILLUSTRATION:

Ralph Waldo Emerson said, for example: “*That if a man were to start reading books in the British Library on the day he was born and read day and night for seventy years, without taking time to eat or sleep, he would only be able to read a small section of the books in that collection.*”

Now compare the knowledge in the British Library to the vast infinite knowledge of God, it is just incomprehensible.

GOD KNOWS EVERYTHING IN THE REALM OF HUMAN EXPERIENCE – There is not a city, not a town, not a church, not a house, nor a business, on which the eye of God is not fixed.

There is not a single emotion or impulse which He does not know. “*He knows every occurrence or adventure, involving joy or sorrow, pain or pleasure, adversity or prosperity, success or failure, victory or defeat.*”² God knows:

- Man’s deeds and actions. (***Psalm 139:2-3*** - *Thou knowest my downsitting and mine uprising, thou understandest my thought afar off. Thou compasses my path and my lying down, and art acquainted with all my ways.*)
- Man’s words. (***Psalm 139:4*** - *For there is not a word in my tongue, but, lo, O Lord, thou knowest it altogether.*)

² (Bancroft, 1996)

- Man's thoughts and imaginations. (*Pslam 139:1-2* - *O lord, thou hast searched me, and known me. Thou knowest my downsitting and mine uprising, thou understandest my thought afar off.*)
- Man's sorrows. (*Exodus 3:7* - *And the Lord said, I have surely seen the affliction of my people which are in Egypt, and have heard their cry by reason of their taskmasters; for I know their sorrows;*)

God's knowledge reaches from everlasting to everlasting, comprehending all things in all places to the minutest detail. "*When we consider the great God who knows all there is to know with perfection of knowledge, we stagger under that. The weight of truth is too much for our minds.*"³

ILLUSTRATION:

When Sir Isaac Newton, the great English scientist, was an old man, someone said to him, "*Dr. Newton, you must have a tremendous store of knowledge.*" He responded, "*I remind myself of a little boy walking along the seashore picking up shells. The boy has a handful of shells in his little hands, but all around him is the vast seashore stretching all directions as far as the eye can see. All that I know is simply a handful of seashells, but the vast universe of God is filled with knowledge that I do not possess.*"⁴

³ (Tozer, 2007)

⁴ (Tozer, 2007)

NOTHING CAN BE CONCEALED FROM GOD

It is a solemn fact to consider: nothing, absolutely nothing, can be concealed from God. *“For I know the things that come into your mind, every one of them” Ezekiel 11:5c.* Though God is invisible to us, we are not so to Him. *“Neither the darkness of night, the closest of curtains, nor the deepest dungeon can hide any sinner from the eyes of Omniscience.”*⁵

ILLUSTRATION:

No one witnessed Cain murder his brother, but the all-seeing, all-knowing God witnessed his crime. Sarah may have laughed derisively at God in the concealment of her tent, but that laugh was heard by Jehovah.

Achan took what he was not supposed to and hid it in his tent, but God brought it to light for all to see. David planned much and was very careful to cover up and hide his sin, but the all-seeing God sent one of his servants to say to him, *“Thou art the man!”*⁶

And to the writer of these words and the reader and the listener, God tells us equally, *“be sure your sin will find you out” Numbers 32:23.*

GOD KNOWS THE UNSAVED

⁵ (Pink, 1975)

⁶ II Samuel 12:7

Turn with me to II Peter 3:8-10

God knows if you are saved or not. God knows all those that have accepted Him as Savior and God knows all those who have not. God knows the unsaved by name, just as He does the saved.

God wants all to come to repentance and be saved. (***II Peter 3:8-10** - But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up.)*

- Are we prepared for when the Lord comes?
- Are we prepared to meet our Savior?

The Bible tells us we need to make sure of our salvation. The Lord knows if you are really saved, He knows if you just made a profession of faith or if you really are saved. If you are having any doubts about salvation, why don't you get that settled today? (***II Peter 1:10** - Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall:)*

GOD KNOWS YOUR SECRET SIN

*“In the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ according to my gospel.” **Romans 2:16***

*“For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil.” **Ecclesiastes 12:14***

*“Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts: and then shall every man have praise of God.” **I Corinthians 4:5***

*“For there is nothing covered, that shall not be revealed; neither hid, that shall not be known. Therefore whatsoever ye have spoken in darkness shall be heard in the light; and that which ye have spoken in the ear in closets shall be proclaimed upon the housetops.” **Luke 12:2-3***

*“He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy.” **Proverbs 28:13***

A person with a secret sin can get away with it for a while, and he will enjoy it for a while (**Hebrews 11:25**). But one person knows about it from the beginning and witnesses it as you commit it, and that is God.

God knows your excuses, God knows your real reasons for it, and He knows how you have concealed it from everyone but Him. Jesus has taught repeatedly that secret sin, concealed from everyone else's view, carries the very same

guilt as sin that manifests itself in the worst forms of ungodly behavior.

Those who hate others are as guilty as those who act out on their hatred; those who indulge in private lusts are just as culpable as actual adulterers (*Matthew 5:21-30*).

So, Christians should not think of secret sins as somehow less serious and more respectable than the sins everyone sees. Secret sin is especially abhorrent to the Lord, here are three reasons why:

- (1) Because God sees the heart, He sees it with the filth of the secret sin.
- (2) Because sin in the mind is the fruit of the same moral failures that produce the acts of sin associated with those thoughts.
- (3) Because hidden sin involves the compounding sin of hypocrisy. Those who sin secretly actually intensify their guilt, because they add the sin of hypocrisy to their offense.

POINT OF DISCUSSION:

CONCERNING THAT NOTHING CAN BE CONCEALED FROM GOD

***Knowing nothing can be hidden from God, how should this modify our actions and behavior?

***How can we apply this knowledge in our everyday lives, routines, and habits?

***How is secret sin even more egregious in the eyes of God?

GOD'S FOREKNOWLEDGE

God knows from all eternity what shall be to all eternity.
(*Acts 15:18 - Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world.*)

“God’s knowledge of the actual includes His eternal knowledge of the actions of free agents. The Bible teaches that God not only foreknows, but in many cases has foretold the actions of men; yet it recognizes the freedom and responsibility of the agents fulfilling the prophecies. And God is revealed in the Bible as not only foreknowing and foretelling the actions of free agents, but also as knowing what, under different circumstances, they would have done but never did.”⁷

God knows the whole plan of the ages and each man’s part in it. *“Having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself: That in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in him: In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being*

⁷ (Harris, 1896)

predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will: That we should be to the praise of his glory, who first trusted in Christ.” Ephesians 1:9-12.

God does foreknow everything that will happen in the world. God does ordain and determine certain events before they happen, and He does select certain individuals for specific tasks for His purposes.

People are saved by faith alone through the grace of God alone. People are kept eternally secure by the power of God. People make free will decisions to either accept or reject Christ as their Savior.

How the predestination aspects of God's character, how the sovereignty of God, and the free will aspects of our character work together we cannot know for sure or even explain adequately. We just have to accept by faith that they work together because the Bible teaches that they do.

GOD IS NEVER SURPRISED OR ASTONISHED, HE NEVER LEARNS ANYTHING

GOD KNOWS EVERYTHING EFFORTLESSLY. God never has to strain at something, He never says, “Oh, this is going to be a hard one!” God can easily do one thing as He does another.

God instantly and perfectly knows all things there is to know. He has known them from eternity past. This is why

God will never learn anything, there is absolutely nothing for Him to learn.

GOD NEVER LEARNS ANYTHING - God knows the end from the beginning, and He knew it forever before it happened. Long before we were born God knew what we would be doing this very moment. Before our great-grandparents were born, God knew everything they would ever do.

God knows everything all of our yet-unborn descendants will ever do. God knows all about us, He literally knows the number of every hair on our heads, and some of us don't make Him work too hard to know that number.

GOD IS NEVER SURPRISED – Has it ever occurred to you, that nothing occurs to God? God never gets astonished, astounded, or surprised because He knows everything already.

Nothing will ever be a surprise for Him, He will never forget a detail and then be surprised or reminded of it later. He will never need a minute to recall something He knows like we all do sometimes. He knows everything instantly, effortlessly, and perfectly.

If there was ever anything God could learn, it would mean He did not know it before. If He did not know it before, then He did not know everything. He did not possess perfect knowledge, and He had an imperfect grasp of all the facts.

And if all that was true, He would not be perfect and if He is not perfect, He could not be God, and if He were not a

perfect God, He could not have been a perfect and spotless Lamb that paid in full our sin debt on the cross, and if He did not pay in full our sin debt on the cross and raise victorious from the grave, we are believing in vain, “*And if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins. Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished. If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable*” **I Corinthians 15:17-19.**

You see if any attribute of God is removed from Him, He ceases completely to be God, and then we have no hope of salvation. We need God in all His glory and with all His attributes, complete and perfect or we are truly one eternally hopeless people. But praise God, He does have perfect, and complete knowledge of all things, Paul wrote of this in **Romans 11:33-36:**

“O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out! For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counsellor? Or who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again? For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: to whom be glory for ever. Amen.”

THERE IS COMFORT IN THE OMNISCIENCE OF GOD

The Omniscience of God should be a source of comfort to the believer. A.W. Tozer said this:

“It is great comfort to me that God knows instantly, effortlessly and perfectly all matter and all matters, all law and all laws, all space and all spaces, all principles and every principle, all minds, all spirits, and all souls. God knows all causes and all relations, all effects and all desires, all mysteries and all enigmas, all things unknown and hidden. There are no mysteries to God.”⁸

God knows His people, if you are saved God knows you, you have been adopted by Him, you have become His son or His daughter. A Christian is never lost, now that Christian may think he is lost on some backroad somewhere, but God knows exactly where all His children are at all times.

The Lord knows all about our lives, every detail.

- He knows about our family situations,
- He knows about our health concerns,
- He knows about our financial concerns,
- He knows about our employment concerns,
- He knows all about us and all about our cares.

POINT OF DISCUSSION:

***How does the fact that God knows all about us make you feel?

⁸ (Tozer, 2007)

***The fact that God knows all about our problems, how should this help us with them?

Maybe you are under some pressure and are worried and burdened with care and concerns. Well, the fact that God is perfect in knowledge should encourage us that He will bring us through it all just according to His will, nothing will be neglected by Him, and nothing will be overlooked.

He knows all about it, we just need to give it over to Him and accept the peace, the true peace for our life that can only come by Him and through our relationship with Him.

GOD KNOWS ALL ABOUT YOU

God made you just the way you are. He has given you all the abilities and talents you need to do the job you need to do. God has not given you more abilities than you need, nor has He not given you certain abilities that you do need. He has given you precisely what you need to have.

We can trust that an omniscient God knows what is best for us and knows exactly the abilities or lack thereof, talents or lack thereof, that we need in order to fulfill His will and His mission in our lives. God knows what is best for us now and in the future.

We can only see the here and now, while God sees what is best for us fifty years into the future. It only makes sense to trust Him for our daily walk, as well as for our eternity.

“He hath done all things well:” Mark 7:37b

Do you believe that? Do you believe that God is dealing with you right now, working in the situations of your life with perfect knowledge of them all?

Maybe you made a bad decision, or maybe you made a big mistake, well God can work with those, with His omniscience, and even use our mistakes, our bad decisions, and our bad actions, and work them out and make something profitable out of them for us and for Him.

God can take our mistakes polish our mistakes and use them to bring glory to Himself. Our God delights in second chances, He is the God of the second chance, “*And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose*” (**Romans 8:28**).

APPLICATION: How can we apply the knowledge of God being a God of the second chance to our life or perhaps the lives of others around us? How can we use this to encourage ourselves? How can we use this to encourage others? What can we learn from this?

ILLUSTRATION

“Though ye have lien among the pots, yet shall ye be as the wings of a dove covered with silver, and her feathers with yellow gold.” Psalm 68:13

Now what does this mean? It shows the picture of a poor dove that fell down among the old pottery and broken pots, the place where old junk is discarded and thrown away.

Perhaps someone shot an arrow, hit this little dove and she went tumbling down and landed there.

Maybe she was not flying and living as carefully as she should have been, maybe she made a one-time mistake and was a little careless and not paying attention, or maybe it just happened even though she was being vigilant in her flight to watch out for dangers.

At any rate, the result was the same, she went tumbling down and landed there in the garbage heap. She was not dead, but she was in bad shape.

So, she got some sunshine, and pecked a few seeds here and there, waiting for nature to heal her wing. One day the sun was bright and the other birds were up in the air, so she tried out her engines, revved up her motor, and off she went.

As she circled, someone cried out, “Oh, look at that beautiful dove, shining in the silver!” “Yes,” another said, “look as the gold along the edges on her wing.” She had just been down in the junk pile, but now she arose by the grace of God into the sunshine.

That was David’s way of saying that God can take anything, can take the poor wrecks of you and me, and can change us and make us into doves with wings of silver and gold, no matter our current situation.⁹

CONCLUSION

⁹ (Tozer, 2007)

The infinite knowledge of God should fill us all with pure amazement. How far above the wisest man the world has ever seen is God! None of us knows what a day may bring forth, but God knows with surety what will happen to all of us tomorrow in the minutest detail, and for an eternity of tomorrows He knows all that they will hold.

*“The infinite knowledge of God ought to fill us with holy awe.”*¹⁰ Nothing we have ever done, or will ever do, nothing we have ever said, or will ever say, this next one is the most convicting perhaps, nothing we have ever thought, or will ever think, has or will ever escape the cognizance of God, *“The eyes of the Lord are in every place, beholding the evil and the good”* **Proverbs 15:3**.

The omniscience of God is something we need to meditate on frequently. The knowledge of the infinite knowledge of God should fill us all with adoration, wonder, and worship for the altogether lovely and powerful all-knowing God. A.W. Pink said this regarding the comprehension of the omniscience of God:

*“The whole of my life stood open to His view from the beginning. He foresaw my every fall, my every sin, my every backsliding; yet, nevertheless, fixed His heart upon me. Oh, how the realization of this should bow me in wonder and worship before Him!”*¹¹

Do you bow in wonder and worship of the Lord?

¹⁰ (Pink, 1975)

¹¹ (Pink, 1975)

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