

The early life of Abraham.

Level flight established.

LEVEL FLIGHT ESTABLISHED

Genesis 12. 4-9

He does get started again.

Remember, there are 2 pilots on the flight deck.

A. THE LORD DID SOMETHING. Acts 7. 1-4

1. The Lord is The Initiator, the Prime Mover, The Cause behind our effect.

a. Example from the life of Joseph.

i. The immaturity of Joseph. Genesis 37.5-11

ii. The stupidity of his father, Jacob. Genesis 37.3

- iii. The jealousy of his brothers. Genesis 37.4,8,11
- iv. The uncertainty of circumstances.
Genesis 39.11-20; Genesis 40
- v. The sovereignty of the Lord - He sent Joseph
 - * Through Joseph. Genesis 45. 5-7; 50.19-20;
Psalm 105.23-24,37
 - * To Joseph. Psalm 105.17 - 18 AV margin.
- 2. He removed a problem Abram could do nothing about. Genesis 11. 32; Acts 7.4 *"After the death of..."*
- 3. He may have spoken to Abram again. Genesis 12.1
- 4. He may have let him get fed up with Haran.
Romans 1. 24, 26, 28
- 5. And so, an impossible situation is changed..by God

B. BUT WHAT ABOUT THE WILL OF GOD?

1. The Pre-ordained will of God.

Galatians 4.4; John 13.1; Acts 2.1; Acts 17.31

LET'S TAKE SOME TIME OUT AND THINK ABOUT GOD.

A. THE ESSENTIALS OF GOD'S NATURE.

1. Declarations about God's nature: God / The Lord is

- a. Metaphorical - non literal. The nature of God's actions.
- b. Metaphysical - non physical. The nature of God's existence.
- c. Moral - literal. The nature of God's moral attributes.

C. THE ESSENCE OF GOD'S MORAL NATURE.

“Is there one aspect of God’s moral nature that is basic to all the others? Is there one essential that is fundamental to the divine DNA?”

The contenders: John 4.24: God is spirit.
1 John 1.5 God is light
1 John 4.8,16 God is love

I would choose “God is love” in preference to “God is spirit” or “God is light” as the foundational truth of God’s **moral** nature for 5 reasons:

1. When viewed through the lens of linguistics.

- a. Remember our 3 categories: Metaphysical, metaphorical and moral.
- b. “God is spirit” is primarily metaphysical - re. God’s existence... “everlasting”, “immortal”, “invisible”
- c. “God is light” is primarily metaphorical - re. God’s actions... “consuming fire”, “warrior”, “rock”.
- d. “God is love” is primarily moral - re. God’s literal, moral character.

Stanley Grenz: "Love is the fundamental, divine attribute. Love is not merely one attribute of God among many. Rather "God is love" is the foundational, ontological statement that we can declare concerning the divine essence."

2. When viewed through the lens of language.

a. A quick reminder about grammar.

i. A noun - the name of a person, object or place.

ii. An adjective - adds information about / describes a noun.

iii. A verb - an action word that defines what a noun does.

b. In the statement "God is love", "Love" is a **noun!!!**

c. "Love" is a literal noun.

*John Wesley: "It is never written "God is justice" or "God is truth" - although, of course, He is just and He is truthful in all His ways - but it **is** written "God is love".*

3. When viewed through the lens of logic.

“Almost all the statements about God’s character do not relate to anything He could have been doing before creation ie when only God existed”.

4. When viewed through the lens of the Lord Jesus.

- a. What people experienced. **John 1.14, 16-18**
- b. What the Lord Jesus expressed. **John 3.16; 1 John 3.16, 4.8-9**
- c. What the church extended. **2 Corinthians 13.14**

5. When viewed through the lens of logical explanation and prediction.

- a. In science the more foundational a principle is, the more things, often unexpected, it explains and predicts.

i. Example of two basic laws.

Force (F) = Mass (M) x Acceleration (A)

Force (F) = G x Mass_I x Mass₂ / Distance apart²

ii. Some things they explain / predict.

b. Similarly, the more foundational our view of the moral DNA of God, the more things it will predict and explain.

NOW BACK TO EXAMINATION OF WILL OF GOD

B. BUT WHAT ABOUT THE WILL OF GOD?

1. The Pre-ordained will of God.

Galatians 4.4; John 13.1; Acts 2.1; Acts 17.31

2. The Preferred will of God.

Luke 13.34; Luke 7.30; 1 Timothy 2.4; 2 Peter 3.9

a. What God would prefer in an ideal world.

b. But we are not living in an ideal world.

3. The Permissive will of God. Job 1. 6-12; Luke 22.31-32.

a. Whenever we sin.

b. We are not alone in the universe.

How do we reconcile 2 and 3 with 1 above?

a. It is a paradox which we cannot understand.

b. It is a paradox which we can understand.

c. We say some things, but not all things are pre-ordained because **GOD** chose it to be so!!!

4. The Proactive will of God? John 9.1-3

“As he went along, he saw a man blind from birth. His disciples asked him, “Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, **that** he was born blind?” “Neither this man nor his parents sinned,” said Jesus, “but this happened **so that** the work of God might be displayed in his life.”

Often the question we need to ask is not “whose fault is this?” .. or “What is the pre-ordained purpose of this?” but rather “How can I work with God so that something good, God honouring and man blessing comes out of this?”

Romans 8.28

- i. KJV translation: “We know that **all things** work together for good.....”
- ii. Many other, modern translations, like NIV: “We know that **in all things, God works** for the good of those who love Him.....”
- iii. Even more wonderful possibility. NIV margin “We know that in all things, **God works together with those who love Him**, to bring about what is good”.

B. ABRAHAM DID SOMETHING. 12.4

1. Obedience is essential.

a. The content of his obedience.

i. Knowing not doing is common. James 1.22ff

ii. Knowing not doing can be catastrophic. Luke 6.46 - 49

b. The context of his obedience.

i. Not saved by obedience. Ephesians 2.8-9

ii. True faith leads to obedience. Hebrews 11.8

iii. Obedience often needs faith.

2. Obedience is exciting !!!!!

- a. The Lord reappeared to Abram. 12.7
- b. The Lord reassured Abram. 12.7
- c. The Lord revealed new truth to Abram. 12.7
- d. Abram really worshipped the Lord again. 12.7-8

3. Obedience is effective.

- a. Often there is a time lag.
- b. Satan is: “quick fix”; God: “delayed gratification”
- c. The little finger and the pulley
- d. Could you run a marathon right now?
- e. SUMO MAN “It is simple but not easy!!”
- f. Dr. John Hunter: “For this, I have Jesus”.