

Does God Know and Control the Future? Isaiah 46

Introduction

"Open Theism"	"Classical Theism"
God doesn't know all the future	God knows all the future
God doesn't control all the future	God controls all the future
Some trials we face are out of God's control.	Every trial we face is wisely and lovingly purposed by God to bring us great good.

How is God different from idols? (vv.1-7)

Idols need to be carried.

But God carries us like a father carries his son or daughter.

If we are trusting Christ, then at every moment God is carrying us — with loving affection, powerful support.

But this also means God is carrying us towards some future — so —

Does God know and control the future to which He is carrying us? (vv.8-11)

God knows every detail of the future (10a).

God controls every detail of the future (10b).

We can see this by what God did in foretelling and bringing about Cyrus' future (11).

What is the future to which God carries His people? (vv.12-13)

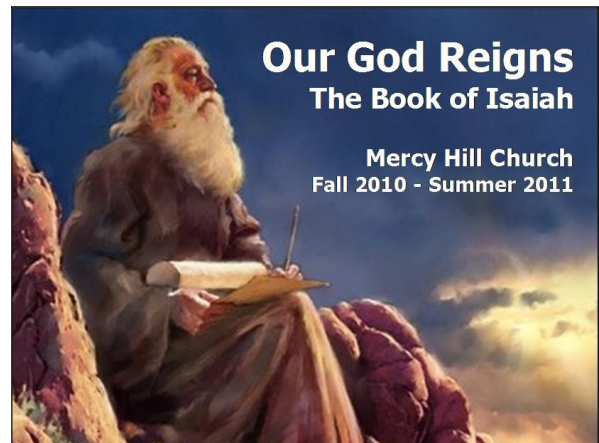
The future is salvation — more of God Himself now and forever.

This means that every trial is wisely and lovingly purposed by God to bring us the great good of even more of Him.

So be strong. Rest in God's love. Trust His purposes.

What about Suzanne?

A letter from a woman who was left in an even more difficult place.



HOME GROUP DISCUSSION OF SUNDAY'S TEACHING

(Sometimes in our home groups we talk about Sunday's teaching, so we can work together on responding to God's Word — asking questions, sharing insights, talking together.)

What was the Holy Spirit saying to you Sunday through this passage?

What questions, ideas, objections, encouragements did you come away with?

Before Sunday's teaching, did you believe that God knew every detail of the future? Did you believe that God controlled every detail of the future? Why or why not?

If God controls every detail of the future, doesn't that mean we are just robots? (My answer is "no," because the same Bible also says that we are not robots — we make real, authentic decisions. But what do you think?)

How does it help you to think that God carries you at every moment of your life?

What trials are you going through right now? What brings you comfort, thinking that God did not know this would happen, or thinking that God has wisely and lovingly purposed this to bring you more of Himself?

Is it good news to think that every trial will bring you more of Himself? Why or why not?

What's your take-away from this message? What are you going to do differently? When? How?

Share prayer requests that come up in the discussion, jot them down below, and pray for each other.

