

# God Eternal

## Revelation 1:8

“I am the Alpha and the Omega,” says the Lord God, “who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty.”

## Psalm 90:2

Before the mountains were brought forth,  
or ever you had formed the earth and the world,  
*from everlasting to everlasting* you are God.

## God is unlimited by time – he is eternal

- only by negation can we understand eternity

## Human beings are time-bound creatures

- cannot change ‘the past’ | memory fades
- no access to ‘the future’ | only speculate
- we live perpetually in ‘the present’

## But God is above time

- there is no past or future for God
- all time is vividly ‘present’ for God

## 2 Peter 3:8

With the Lord one day is as a thousand years,  
and a thousand years as one day.

## If time is a river, God is observer on mountaintop

## Human beings will never be ‘eternal’ creatures

- “eternal life” means life never-ending
- as finite creatures, always be bound by time
- always experience time sequentially
- in New Creation, time stretch into future forever

## God can see all time – past and future forevermore

- this is impossible for us to understand
- in New Earth, we will constantly change and grow because we always experience time sequentially
- but b/c God experiences all time simultaneously, God is unchanging and all-knowing

## Implications

**(1) God’s forgiveness encompasses all future sins**

**(2) There is no ‘Plan B.’ We are always right in middle of God’s good and wise plan for us.**

**(3) God’s eternalness means we are predestined**

## Ephesians 1:3-6

<sup>3</sup> Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, <sup>4</sup> even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. In love <sup>5</sup> he predestined us for adoption through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will, <sup>6</sup> to the praise of his glorious grace, with which he has blessed us in the Beloved.

**(4) Wait, if time is already written, are we fated?**

## Exodus 8:15

But when Pharaoh saw that there was a respite, he hardened his heart and would not listen to them, as the LORD had said.

## Exodus 9:12

But the LORD hardened the heart of Pharaoh, and he did not listen to them, as the LORD had spoken to Moses.

## Notes

### Looking at God's incommunicable attributes – “none like him”

- transcendence and immanence
- God is far above us in glory, power and majesty

### God is “infinite” – without bounds or limits

- unlimited by time

### Revelation 1:8

“I am the Alpha and the Omega,” says the Lord God, “who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty.”

### Alpha and Omega are beginning and ending Greek letters of alphabet

- God is present in all time periods – past, present and future
- more than that, God has no beginning and no end – not confined to time

**Psalm 90:2** Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever you had formed the earth and the world,  
*from everlasting to everlasting* you are God.

### Before creation of world – God is “everlasting to everlasting”

- Hebrew *olam* – forever, everlasting; time without end
- God is unbound by time – God is “eternal”

### Eternal is a philosophical concept

- no equivalent word in Hebrew or Greek – “ages” or “everlasting” | *olam, aion*
- eternal – unlimited by time, above time
- we have no idea what that truly means
- only understand by *negation* – what it is not

### Human beings are time-bound creatures

- cannot change ‘the past’ (our memory progressively fades)
- no access to ‘the future’ (we can forecast, project, but we cannot know | no access to future)
- we live perpetually in ‘the present’ | we can only act on the present
- we experience time sequentially – moment by moment

### But God is above time

- there is no past or future for God | not limited by a timeline
- he can act on all time periods – therefore, all time is “present” for God
- God doesn't experience time like finite creatures – he has to “remember” the past
- there is no “past” for God | the past and the future is happening right now before God
- therefore, all time is vividly ‘present’ for God
  - sees and experiences all time simultaneously, as an ever constant present

## **2 Peter 3:8**

With the Lord one day is as a thousand years,  
and a thousand years as one day.

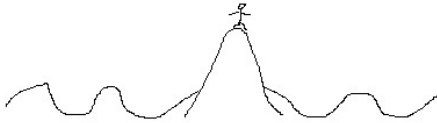
### **“A thousand years is as one day”**

- God doesn't feel the passage of time | doesn't experience time sequentially
- great expanses of time is a daunting experience
- but God doesn't have to “wait” – “a thousand years is as one day”

### **“One day is as a thousand years”**

- because all time is ever present before God, each second stretches into infinity
- God is looking at and experiencing each moment in time forever

### **Illustration – if time is a river, God is an observer on a mountaintop**



- we are floating down the river | we cannot see beyond the next bend
- but God as the observer on a mountain, can see all parts of the river
- and at all parts of the river, we can see God looking down at us

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### **Human beings will never be ‘eternal’ creatures**

- in Scripture, “eternal life” means life never-ending
- as finite creatures, always be bound by time | always be “in time”
- always experience time sequentially
- in New Creation – time stretch into the future forever

### **God can see all time – past and the future forevermore**

- time will stretch into the future without end
  - after a billion years, it will be just like we've begun
  - time will never end, but God has full access to infinite timeline
- this is impossible for us to understand

### **In New Heavens and New Earth, we will constantly change and grow**

- because we always experience time sequentially
- we will never cease to learn and develop and create and grow

### **But because God experiences all time simultaneously**

- God never “learns” or “grows”
- therefore, God is unchanging | his unchanging is connected to his eternalness
- and God is all-knowing

## Implications

### **(1) God's forgiveness encompasses all future sins**

- God sees your entire life stretched out before him
  - in fact, God knows us more deeply than we know ourselves
  - knows our complete past ('childhood amnesia'), and our entire future | birth and death
- God's grace and forgiveness encompasses your entire life—all your deeds
- we are constantly shocked and dismayed by depths of our wretchedness | constantly surprised!

### **(2) There is no 'Plan B.' We are always right in middle of God's good and wise plan for us.**

- "oh no, I've made a terrible mistake! Now I'm out of God's plan for me."
- for God, all time is "present", and therefore, the future is already written
- therefore, we are never "off-plan" but always in the middle of God's plan
  - his plan includes our mistakes and sins | "we meant it for evil, but God means it for good"

### **(3) God's eternalness means we are predestined**

#### **Ephesians 1:3-6**

<sup>3</sup> Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, <sup>4</sup> even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. In love <sup>5</sup> he predestined us for adoption through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will, <sup>6</sup> to the praise of his glorious grace, with which he has blessed us in the Beloved.

#### **"He chose us in him before the foundation of the world"**

- before God created the world and time, he chose us, that we would be eternally his
- "Open Theism" says that God doesn't know the future – therefore, future is undetermined
- but classical theology – God has ordained all things | all time is already written
- "predestined" means God pre-determined, pre-decided for us
- ultimate decision in salvation is God's, not ours

### **(4) Wait, if time is already written, are we fated?**

- this is paradox of "double agency"
- God is totally in charge of history (he ordains everything that comes to pass) AND human beings have self-agency and are not robots, but fully responsible for their moral actions

**Exodus 8:15** But when Pharaoh saw that there was a respite, he hardened his heart and would not listen to them, as the LORD had said.

**Exodus 9:12** But the LORD hardened the heart of Pharaoh, and he did not listen to them, as the LORD had spoken to Moses.

**Mystery – Pharaoh hardened his own heart AND God hardened Pharaoh's heart**

### **Illustration – think experience reading a novel**

- villainous character full of evil and cruelty
- “ah, but author wrote the character, therefore I’m really mad at the author”
- no, you’re still mad at the character | because within story, characters are responsible
- and yet you know the author ultimately wrote the story
  
- and yet this illustration is inadequate
- because God is far greater than any human author
- and we are far more real than any fictional character