

The Scripturally Cognitive Aspects of Probabilities

by Pastor George D. Cutler

Grace Gospel Church

Many have referred to the occurrences that are manifested in the time capsule as probabilities, which are classified as events or circumstances that are probable (most likely to occur). In scientific terminology, probabilities are defined as the ratio of the number of outcomes in an exhaustive set of equally likely outcomes that produce a given event to the total number of possible outcomes or simply stated, the chance that a given event will occur. The study of probabilities engenders the logical relation between statements such that evidence confirming one confirms the other to some degree. Scriptural analyzation of the quantitative aspects of probabilities invariably induces scrutiny in the distinguishing of component parts from a different perspective, namely analyzing the cognitive aspects of such. They are herein categorized twofold. The first category of the cognitive meaning of probability is that it essentially reflects the amount of information available about possible events. The second probability's cognitive aspect category is what the significance of the authentication of probability essentially is.

The first consideration must be the expounding of the relationship between humanly calculated probabilities and the level of information available about the subject of the probability analysis. Hence the analysis proceeds by considering certain examples illustrating that feature of probability in the Scriptures. Humans are essentially limited to the perception of images and occurrences that are visibly present before them, hence they are not privy to nor have knowledge of the composition of things beyond that. Thus, their estimates of things, of necessity, will be at the level of their greatest anticipation of probabilities. Obviously, their object perception of likelihood will not at a high level of consistency duplicate what actually transpires due to something that has no relation to the subject of the probability estimation. Essentially, those things that actually manifest are due to the levels of information subjectively possessed by God who determined such. Because limited pre-knowledge of the manifestations of life has been previously consigned, humans are compelled to assume what are subjectively relevant in life's possible events as equally probable.

In particular, human's inability to project transparencies confine probabilities to little more than speculation. There is vivid documentation in the Kingdom Gospel of this observation: In Matthew 6:20-24, Jesus states, "Treasure not up to yourselves treasures on the Earth, where moth and rust disfigure and where thieves break through and steal but treasure up to yourselves treasures in Heaven; where neither moth nor rust do disfigure and where thieves do not break through nor steal; for where your treasure is, there will be also your heart. The lamp of the body is the eye, if, therefore, your eye may be perfect, all your body shall be enlightened but if your eye may be evil, all your body shall be dark; if, therefore, the light that (is) in you is darkness ...the darkness, how great! None is able to serve two lords, for either he will hate the one and love the other or he will hold to the one and despise the other; you are not able to serve God and Mammon. Because of this I say to you, be not anxious for your life, what you may eat and what you may drink, nor for your body what you may put on. Is not the life more than the nourishment and the body than the clothing? Look to the fowls of the Heavens for they do not sow nor reap nor gather into storehouses and your heavenly Father does nourish them; are not you much better than they? And who of you being anxious, is able to add to his age one cubit? And about clothing, why are you anxious? consider well the lilies of the field; how they grow? They do not labor nor do they spin and I say to you that not even Solomon in all his glory was arrayed as one of these. And if the herb of the field, that to-day is and to-morrow is cast to the furnace, God does so clothe ...not much more you, O you of little faith? Therefore you may not be anxious, saying, what may we eat? or what may we drink? or what may we put round? For all these do the nations seek for, for your heavenly Father does know that you have need of all these; but seek first the reign of God and His righteousness and all these shall be added to you. Be not therefore anxious for the morrow, for the morrow shall be anxious for its own things; sufficient for the day (is) the evil of it."

Corroboratively, this passage illustrates a very important property of the calculated probability. It reflects mankind's minuscule level of knowledge about the subject of living upon the Earth. If humans possessed full knowledge about life, they would know exactly in advance the outcome of a test. So instead of probabilities, they could deal with certainties. A situation in which one has full knowledge of certain events only evident when such have actually occurred. Questions regarding the probabilities of events are rendered absolutely meaningless in situations such as these. However, after such occurrences transpire, questions regarding probabilities of these events becomes moot. Of course the Scriptures still calculate the probability of events but they do so only necessarily in the depiction of human manifestoes testifying that an event has not yet actually occurred.

In the Grace Gospel, there is the Heavenly enlightened view depicted in the most fundamental manner conveyances entailing an array of instructions and directives addressed to the Grace Church concerning the lifestyles of God's people. In this regard the Greek verb *peripatou/sin* (**pehr•ee•paht•ees•een**) rendered "walk" denotes the manner of conduct and mannerism of living while moving through the course of this life. The transliteration of this word into English is utilized in realizing that all of creation existing in the sphere of time; is **peripatetic** (**per-uh-puh-TET-ik**). As an adjective, this word pertains to one walking about, traveling from place to place, i.e., an itinerant. As a noun, it depicts one who walks about, i.e., a pedestrian. The general inference is that all that exists in time is transitional, as a sojourner in route to a permanent state of possession. As this relates to the status of the child of God, it is documented in what is known as the **DOCTRINE OF PERIPATEOLOGY**, which is the study of the believer's walk or journey through time from one move to one's eternal destination.

There is a plethora of detailed information in the Scriptures delineating the purpose, plan and design of God as He manifestly correlates His will in the life of His elect's move through the elements of depraved creation concomitantly with the sphere of time. Unfortunately, there is the general practice of attempting to glean information in this regard from the Old Testament/Kingdom truth writings. These Earthly-covenantal (Promised Law, Kingdom) volumes of documentations present limited views of God's people moving through time strictly from the temporary vantage point of that which is seen by them. In essence, the supreme focus of light is outlaid in the Heavenly covenantal (Grace) volume of truth delineating the unlimited view of God's people firmly positioned in the Body of Christ. In this light, even as one sojourns through time, one's walk is informed by knowledge from the eternal vantage point of that which is unseen in time, yet confidentially perceived in eternity.

It is strictly in this vein that The Apostle Paul exhorts the saints at Ephesus in stating (Greek Text), therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, exhort you to walk worthily of the calling with which you were called (Ephesians 4:1). Paul very succinctly expresses the structure of God's principles workings in the lives of His people in Philippians 3:20-21 wherein He states (Greek Text), "For our place of citizenship is in Heaven, from which also we eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, who will change the body of our lowly state to conform to the body of His glory, according to the workings whereby He is able to subject all things to Himself." The antecedent verses (Philippians 3:10-19) chronicle stimulus forming the basis for the conveyance of this expression. Note in verse ten, Paul's usage of the Greek phrase *tou/ gnw/nai auvto.n* (**t gno•neh ahf•ton**) literally rendered "to know Him" or unto the end that I may have knowledge of Him, as the particular (conjunctive) infinitive expresses his desire to know Christ, both intellectually and experientially through his daily walk. Paul makes this statement in defining his passion for abiding in the excellent knowledge of Christ while demeaning all the humanly perceived sacrifices that he had been caused to exchange for it (Philippians 3:8).

Verse ten delineates Paul's, as well as all of God's people supreme purpose in life, i.e., to have an intimate interpersonal relationship with (in) Christ. Here he expresses this close empirical relationship with Christ three-fold: The power of His resurrection, The fellowship of His sufferings and Being conformed to (identified with) His death. Thus, those who are believers in Christ have the privilege of being perfectly identified with Him in this three-fold aspect. In this sense, note that the Greek present participle *summorfizo,menoj* (**seem•mor•phee•zo•mehn•os**) translated "being conformed," is in the passive voice, expressing the Holy Spirit's role in molding and shaping conformity to the will of God. Hence what progressively manifested is that the Spirit of God actualizes the depiction of this conformance in daily lives (1 Corinthians 4:12). The first phrase in Philippians 3:11 *ei; pwj* (**ee pos**) is translated "if by any means," as

may also be rendered “if somehow, if in any way or if possible.” This is not intended to construe a sense possibility or probability but it focuses on God’s designed processes or means for the accomplishment of I will. This is corroborated by the phrase *katanth,sw eivj th.n evxana,stasin th.n evk nekrw/n* (**kaht•ahn•dee•ees teen ehx•ahn•ahs•tahs•een teen ehk nehk•ron**) rendered “I might attain unto the out-resurrection” more specifically, the out from the dead.” Here the Greek verb *katanth,sw* (**kaht•ahn•dee•so**) rendered “might attain,” depicts the manifestation of Paul’s ultimate goal, which in essence was God’s prescribed means for him “to come to”, reach and arrive at the designated objective as the determinative decreed plan rather than the mere function of probabilism.

Here it is important to comprehend this cogitation in light of the prior context, as the focus is on spiritual identifying via the maturing of the mind. In this view, designated ones are conforming via the daily working out aspect, in testimony to the eternal perfect confirmation of all who are in Christ, which is in every way, the total work of God (Philippians 2:13). In essence, this manifestation of participation is depicted in our faith/experiential identification with Christ. Further testimony of God’s course for His people is given in the exegesis of Philippians 3:12 (from the Greek Text), “Not that I have already obtained or already have been made perfect but I pursue, if also I may lay hold upon that for which I was laid hold of by Christ Jesus.” Note that the opening phrase of this verse, *Ouvc ofti h;dh e;labon h' h;dh tetelei,wmai* (**Ookh ot•ee ee•th eh•lah•von ee ee•thee teh•tehl•ee•o•meh**) is rendered “not that I have already obtained or already have been made perfect,” in expressly stating that the continuous mode encompassing God’s process for growing engenders conformity to His purpose and will.

The Greek verb *katanth,sw* (**kaht•ahn•dee•so**) rendered “attain,” in verse 11 refers to experientially reach out. Verse 12’s conveyances of *e;labon* (**eh•lah•von**) rendered “obtained” and *tetelei,wmai* (**teh•tehl•ee•o•meh**) rendered “have been made perfect,” denote that none have received or acquired experientially a full knowledge of Christ in reference to full identification or conformity and none have been fully matured or reached their end of final destiny. This is evidenced by the Greek particle *Ouvc* (**Ookh**) rendered “not” and the adverbs *h;dh* (**ee•thee**) rendered “already.” Observe that the focus of the conveyance is on spiritual maturity rather than one’s status in Christ by the expression “I already,” as an assessment of progression toward a desired end, of which no one ever realizes in the sphere of time.

Hence, such reflection levels of knowledge about the subject of life is the ubiquitous (existing or being everywhere at the same time, thus constantly encountered), hence the essential feature of probabilities from the viewpoint of its cognitive essence. What is thought about the possession of the full knowledge of possible outcomes are for the most part definitively consigned to what seems to be equally probable. Few none possess such knowledge! Mainly, the assumptions of the equal probability of either heads or tails or the equal probability of each of plausible outcomes of a trial is due to limited knowledge about the actual properties of the situation; hence, the adage, “nothing is exact or perfect.” Therefore, it is construed that tests and trials, as with a coin, either heads or tails may have a slightly better chance of occurring. Likewise, hope in some facets of life is mostly skewed that certain things may have a slightly better chance to favor upward rather than downward.

Humanly subjected tests of probabilities conducted by someone in 1921 documented a coin that was tossed 24,000 times, in which heads occurred 12,012 times and tails 11,988 times. Generally speaking, the slight difference between the occurrences of heads and tails exhibits the unreliability that can be expected in a large sequence of truly random tests. On the other hand, it cannot be excluded that the described results were due, at least partially, to a certain imperfection in the coin used or in the possibility that the procedures employed were flawed. Since there is no reliable knowledge of the particular subtle imperfections of a given coin, it would have to be postulated that the almost equal probabilities of the test should not be construed as confident forecasts of all possible outcomes. This illustrates that there are no exact physiological methods for knowing all possible outcomes. There are many situations in which it is perceived that there is such knowledge. Such cases never existence of some supposedly probable events that are actually possible and cannot simply be ruled out.

These assumptions assume that the entering of such knowledge as estimations, actually governs the percentage of guessing rates, which inevitably charts the probabilities of predictable encounters.

Supposedly, these possible types of points and locations are determinants more than they are estimates the probabilities of encounters. If there was factual reliability in these assumptions rather than mere speculations, then these postulations would not incur the problems of the demands of making adjustments even redacting what has been calculated to be as close to certainty as necessary. Quite often the calculated probabilities of certain events are due to the lack of information and hence prove to be an exaggerated number of supposedly possible events, of which many are actually impossibilities. One example of such greatly underestimated probability of an event is the alleged estimation of the probability of life's spontaneous emergence. These calculations in question are based on a number of arbitrary assumptions and deal with a situation whose details are largely unknown. Therefore in such calculations, the number of possible events is greatly exaggerated and all of them are assumed to be equally probable, which leads to the extremely erroneous values of calculated probabilities.

Actually, many of the allegedly possible paths of interactions may be impossible and those that are possible are by no means equally probable. Therefore (and for other reasons as well), the extremely small probabilities of life's spontaneous emergence must be viewed with the utmost discount of the unbridled forces of life. Of course, it is equally ample to cite examples of cases wherein insufficient knowledge of life's situations results not in an increased but rather in a decreased number of supposedly possible outcomes. Consider all the aspirations and appointments made that never materialize or manifest. When one arrives or discovers what seems to have been an entrance to the opposite of what was expected what was watched for or anticipated defies such entrances. All estimates of the probability of entrances to and exits from the opportunities and pitfalls of life respectively, inevitably run counter to the physicality of human rationalization. Estimations result from the assumptions of equal probability, which engender the products of choosing either what is thought to be likely or an array of perceived knowledge.

However, what if it is not factually known even what the estimated probability would emit? In every instance of human speculation, there is insufficient knowledge about possible outcomes, which leads to an increased estimated probability compared with what could be calculated with a thorough knowledge of the situation accounting for undeniable rather than merely possible outcomes. In consideration of the probable outcome of two described situations: one when the number of possible outcomes is assumed to be larger than it actually is and the other when the number of supposedly possible outcomes is less than the actual number of the actual outcomes. The analysis of them may result in two different types of judgments, leading either to an exaggerated or an underestimated probability for the event in question. In scrutinizing the other side of the probability's cognitive aspect, what is the real meaning of the probability's calculated value if it happens to be very small?

In the manifested trenchancies of the time capsule, consider first the situation when all possible outcomes are supposedly equally probable. Now assume that the probability of the event was calculated when there were a very large number of optional conclusions so that the probability of the event is actually categorized as very low. In this sense, such a result is interpreted as an indication that the event in question should be considered, to all intents and purposes, as practically impossible. Such an interpretation, in addition to being psychologically unattractive, has no basis even in probability theory. The actual meaning of that value of authentication is just that the event in question is one of equally probable events. If the event has not occurred, it simply means that some other event has occurred instead. Note that the alternative event had the same very low probability of occurring as the anticipated event. So why and how could the low probability event actually occur but the event that was diligently pursued, which had the same probability, could not occur?

An extremely low value for a calculated probability has no cognitive meaning in itself. Of natural necessity, whichever one of the possible events that actually occurred, had the same very low probability as others if it occurred nevertheless. Therefore based on its calculated very low probability, any assertions of the possibility of such events as the spontaneous emergence of life, have no merit. If the possibilities of events are actually not equally probable, which is a more realistic approach a very low calculated probability of an event has even less of a cognitive meaning since its calculations ignored the possible existence of preferential chains of outcomes; which could ensure a much higher probability for the event in question. A definitive course of life may produce in the minds of some an impression delineating that the concept of probability is really not very useful since its cognitive contents are very limited. This is exactly the intention depicting the application of maverick forces in the universe. When properly applied and if it is not expected

produce unrealistic predictions, the concept of probability may be a very potent tool for shedding light many problems in science and engineering. When applied improperly and if expected to be a magic bullet produce predictions, it often becomes misleading and a basis for a number of unfounded and sometimes ludicrous conclusions, not to mention frustrations. The real power of the properly calculated and interpreted probability is, however, not in the calculations of probability of this or that event. However, since it is indeed a limited value, the probability is at best utilized as an integrated process within the more sophisticated framework of the actualized and decreed purpose of God. .

As one scrutinizes the covenant writings of the Grace Gospel, it is of note that its content are never laden with the conditions for accomplishments but the goals for achievements that are produced by the Holy Spirit according to God's design. In this sense, no one is ever presumed to be perfect or construed to be fully mature but all are encouraged, as the phrase *diw,kw de. eiv kai. katala,bw(evfV w-| kai. katelh,mfqhn u`)*, **Cristou/ ÍvIhsou/D (thee•o•ko theh eek eh kaht•ahl•ah•vo, ehph o keh kaht•ehl•eemph•theen ee•Khrees•too (Ee•ee•soo)** rendered "but I pursue, if also I may lay hold upon that for which I was laid hold by Christ (Jesus)," positively affirms that one identifies with, "grasp, seize and apprehends that for which one has (in the eternal sphere) been laid hold of, grasped and seized in the sphere of Christ. This manifestation process is conveyed grammatically by the use of the passive voice; that the Lord causes the development and progression of identification, as it is the Lord who has "laid hold of " or "grasped" designated ones for His given purposes. Hence, this is the demonstrative evidence depicting the sovereignty of God as the forerunner and enabling force of identification in Christ.

The practical manifestation of the progressive development of this identification is conveyed in Philippians 3:13 (from the Greek Text), "Brethren I do not count myself to have laid hold but one thing, on the one hand forgetting the things behind and on the other hand reaching out to the things before." Note how this verse addresses the issue of the manifestation of human imperfections, in that some of God's people unfortunately abide in this illusionary mindset. In combating the false teaching of sinless perfection, Paul expresses his personal testimony as an example utilizing the phrase *evgw. evmauto.n ouv logi,zomai kateilhfe,nai (eh•ehm•ahf•ton oo loy•ee•zom•eh kaht•eel•ee•pneh•neh)* rendered "I do not count myself to have laid hold." Literally the statement is *evgw. evmauto.n (eh•go ehm•ahf•ton)* rendered "I myself," do not count to have laid hold." In other words, as far as Paul himself was concerned, he states that he does not *logi,zomai (loy•ee•zom•eh)* rendered "count, consider, assess or regard himself, *kateilhfe,nai (kaht•eel•ee•pneh•neh)* rendered "to have laid hold," i.e., he had not acquired or attained that for which Christ had laid hold of him.

In contrast of seeking to assess perfection unto himself (as some do), Paul states, *e/n de (e theh)* rendered "but one (thing)," as his focus is namely "forgetting the things behind and reaching out to the things before." Note the grammatical construction of the Greek particle *me.n (meh)* followed by the *de (the)* as they transcribe the inference, "on the one hand forgetting the things behind and on the other hand reaching out to the things before." The converger is *evpilanqano,menoj (ehp•ee•lahn•thahn•om•eh•nos)* rendered "forgetting," disregarding and obliterating the things *ovpi,sw (op•ees•o)* rendered "behind" henceforth *"evpekteino,menoj (ehp•ehk•tee•nom•eh•nos)* rendered "reaching out" thereof to the things *e;mprosqen (ehm•pros•thehn)* rendered "in front."

The correct operation in this regard is conveyed in the exegesis of Philippians 3:14 (from the Greek Text) pursue the goal unto the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." In the preceding verse, the focus on forgetting the past and reaching forth to the future, this verse begins with the preposition *kata (kah•tah)* rendered "according as or according to," as it links that which transacts into the goal; which is identification with "the prize of the high calling of God." Note the Greek verb *diw,kw (thee•o•ko)* rendered "pursue" denotes one chasing after and pressing forward the *skopo.n (skop•on)* rendered "goal" or "mark." Here it must be clearly understood from the structure of this verse (14) that the goal in itself could not plausibly be the ultimate objective (prize) of the pursuance but the goal which is asserted in the process, which identifies with it. This is certified by the grammatical construction of this verse, as the Greek preposition *eivj(ees)* rendered "unto," is in the accusative case defining the direct object. In this sense, the goal is "unto the end" of the *brabei/on(vrahv•ee•on)* rendered "prize" of the high calling of God, as dictated by the genitive of possession, which clearly shows that the prize is owned and

possessed by the calling of God. Thus the prize is inherent as *a;nw (ahn•o)* literally rendered “above upward,” is translated “high,” which implicationally infers the usage of *klh,sewj (klee•seh•os)* rendered “calling” in a verbal manner. This suggests that the prize was activated concomitantly with the eternal call of God.

In this view, one must be vigilant to distinguish between what the Grace of God has accomplished in the eternal sphere and the Holy Spirit’s roll in depicting maturation in the sphere of time. On the one hand, one pursuing the goal (knowledge for the purpose of identification) via the Holy Spirit and on the other hand; the goal to which the goal identifies, i.e., the prize; belongs to the high calling of God. The source or provision of the high calling is exemplified in the final phrase of the verse, *evn Cristw| VThsou (ehn Khrees Ee•ee•soo)* rendered “in Christ Jesus.” This denotes that God’s high calling is in the sphere of Christ and the means of Christ (Philippians 3:14).

The pursuance or processes of life are summed up in the conveyance of Philippians 3:20 (from the Greek Text), “For our place of citizenship is in Heaven, from which also we eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ.” Here the Greek phrase *to. poli,teuma (to pol•eet•ehv•mah)* rendered “place of citizenship” strongly declares the state or place of abode to which members of the Body of Christ belong. Note the Greek verb *u’pa,rce (eep•ahr•khee)* rendered “is,” indicates that the place of the believer’s citizenship exists in the eternal heavenly sphere. The present tense infers that even as the child of God physically abides in the earthly domain, such ones actually reside or exist in the spiritual eternal sphere of the Heavenly. Thus the secured place of full rights and privileges of the Child of God are positioned according to the provisions of “the Heavenly in Christ Jesus” (Ephesians 1:3).

Identification in the spiritual realm characterizes designed functioning of the minds of God’s people, as distinguished from the masses of those continuously transfixed on the things of the Earth. This is the defining realization mode of one’s separation from the earthly multitude and the difference between the temporary-earthly-physical, as distinguished from the eternal-Heavenly-spiritual (Colossians 3:1-4; I Thessalonians 4:17). Thus the place where members of the Body of Christ’s true citizenship exist is presently and eternally “in Christ,” which is the actual identification of the Heavenly. The last phrase is *evx ou- kai. swth/ra avpekdeco,meqa ku,rion VThsou/n Cristo,n (ehx oo keh so•teer•ah ahp•ehk•thehkh•om•eh•thah kee•ree•on Ee•ee•soon Khrees•ton)* rendered “from which we eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ.” Particularly note that the Greek verb *avpekdeco,meqa (ahp•ehk•thehkh•om•eh•thah)* rendered “we eagerly wait,” is a triple compound word basically denoting those who are continuously and assiduously (exhibiting careful unremitting attention) looking for, anticipating and expecting the Savior-out-from Heaven (I Thessalonians 1:10). Even though the Greek noun, *swth/ra (so•teer•ah)* rendered “Savior” does not have a definite article preceding it, it is obvious that the reference is to *ku,rion VThsou/n Cristo,n (kee•ree•on Ee•ee•soon Khrees•ton)* rendered “the Lord Jesus Christ,” as He is the only Savior. Accordingly, the sole adduce to the manifestations of the occurrences of creation in the sphere of time is the documentation that engenders **The Scripturally Cognitive Aspects of Probabilities.**