

ELECTION, PREDESTINATION AND FOREKNOWLEDGE

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Jean Calvin and Calvinists believe in predestination by which they mean that before the foundation of the world, God chose who was going to be saved and who He was going to allow to be lost in eternal damnation.

If that is so, then God is not a God of love, mercy or righteousness. Furthermore, it contradicts the New Testament teaching that whosoever calls upon the Name of the Lord shall be saved. Whosoever means anybody and the Bible teaches that salvation is free to all men and women.

Calvinists state that God is Sovereign and therefore has the right to elect or chose who is going to be saved. One certainly does not question the Sovereignty of God but His love and mercy should not be questioned either.

Jacob Arminius emphasised that man has freewill to chose or elect whether he becomes a Christian or not. But it was not man that took the imitative as to salvation. It was God's will and plan. No one would have ever been saved had God not so loved the world and sent the Lord Jesus to affect that salvation.

The question of election and choice is given some significance at times in the Bible.

Christ was chosen from eternity past for the work of man's redemption Isaiah 42.1

Good angels were chosen 1 Timothy 5.21

Israel was God's chosen people to reveal to the world the blessings God had for all nations Isaiah 65.9

It is obvious that God, in His sovereign will, choose individuals for specific purposes. He chose Jacob in preference to Esau and, from a human point of view, that seems unfair. But let us apply the foreknowledge of God. We read that Esau became a fornicator and was very profane. You may say he was driven to it and was cheated out of his birthright and he did seek repentance with tears. But it would that his heart was not right.

God chose Ruth to be an ancestor of Christ. God chose Rahab, a common prostitute, for the benefit of Israel (Joshua 2). God choose David to be king yet he was wayward, at one time a mercenary, feigned madness, seduced another man's wife and had her husband killed and, in his final years, angered God by numbering Israel.

Christians are called the elect of God (1 Thessalonians 1.4). 2 Peter 1.10 says that Christians must be careful to make their election sure.

Where predestination is propagated, Calvinism falls down because of what we read in Ephesians 1 verse 4, God hath chosen you from before the foundation of the world that we should be holy, blameless and with love. This refers to the character God wants from Christians. These are the attributes of the whosoever who have accepted Christ as Saviour. It does not mean chosen or elected for salvation.

The overwhelming evidence comes from 1 Peter 1 verses 1 and 2 where it reads, "to strangers, elect according to the foreknowledge of God."

That is it... the foreknowledge of God.

Romans 8, 29 reads, "For whom He did foreknow He also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son."

God knew who were to accept His salvation. That is His foreknowledge. He knew beforehand. And His will for them is that they be conformed to be like the Lord Jesus.

Predestination has to do with what happens after conversion and it has to do with conformity to Christ which is His Will for all who accept Him as Saviour.

God is not unjust or indiscriminate. We read that He is no respecter of persons (Acts 10.34). He does not have favourites as someone has said.

He is sovereign. He knows the end from the beginning. He knows everyone who is to be saved next year and from every continent. This is Divine foreknowledge.

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