

## TOPIC X

### PREDESTINATION AND PREDETERMINATION

#### **Part III.**

#### Old Testament

There are many verses in the New Testament that reflect an Old Testament idea about predestination. These are mostly built around Abraham and his descendants as God had definitely predetermined that a plan of redemption must be set in place and do so before the foundation of the world. That plan involved a great deal of divine involvement so that His purpose would not be thwarted and He did so based on His knowing not only knowing what would happen beforehand but also on the character and actions of the people involved. In this God did not violate the free will of man but even used the evil of men to accomplish His purpose and bring Him glory as needed.

But as to actual salvation, the Bible states that the determination of this was based in the faith of the individual, not in a predetermined, set decree that did not allow for a free choice on the part of people, in my opinion. For example, we are told in Genesis 15:6 about Abraham, "Then he believed in the LORD; and He reckoned it to him as righteousness."

Paul reflects on this in Romans 4. Paul focuses on Abraham's faith as the reason for his justification and righteousness before God and not once is Abraham's faith noted as "predestined" and that Abraham had no choice. Nor is there any such argument about those who become heirs of the kingdom as verse 16 clearly states. Let's look at the entire passage.

1: "What then shall we say that Abraham, our forefather according to the flesh, has found? 2: For if Abraham was justified by works, he has something to boast about, but not before God.<sup>1</sup> 3: For what does the Scripture say? "ABRAHAM BELIEVED GOD, AND IT WAS CREDITED TO HIM AS RIGHTEOUSNESS." 4: Now to the one who works, his wage is not credited as a favor, but as what is due. 5: But to the one who does not work, but believes in Him who justifies the

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<sup>1</sup> Calvin argues against this too. But then goes on to say that, due to this and man's inability to do good or even turn to God, predestination to salvation or damnation became necessary. A groundless and useless foundation for this doctrine.

ungodly, his faith is credited as righteousness, 6: just as David also speaks of the blessing on the man to whom God credits righteousness apart from works: 7: "BLESSED ARE THOSE WHOSE LAWLESS DEEDS HAVE BEEN FORGIVEN, AND WHOSE SINS HAVE BEEN COVERED. 8: "BLESSED IS THE MAN WHOSE SIN THE LORD WILL NOT TAKE INTO ACCOUNT." 9: Is this blessing then on the circumcised, or on the uncircumcised also? For we say, "FAITH WAS CREDITED TO ABRAHAM AS RIGHTEOUSNESS." 10: How then was it credited? While he was circumcised, or uncircumcised? Not while circumcised, but while uncircumcised; 11: and he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had while uncircumcised, so that he might be the father of all who believe without being circumcised, that righteousness might be credited to them, 12: and the father of circumcision to those who not only are of the circumcision, but who also follow in the steps of the faith of our father Abraham which he had while uncircumcised. 13: For the promise to Abraham or to his descendants that he would be heir of the world was not through the Law, but through the righteousness of faith. 14: For if those who are of the Law are heirs, faith is made void and the promise is nullified; 15: for the Law brings about wrath, but where there is no law, there also is no violation. 16: For this reason *it is* by faith, in order that *it may be* in accordance with grace, so that the promise will be guaranteed to all the descendants, not only to those who are of the Law, but also to those who are of the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all, 17: (as it is written, "A FATHER OF MANY NATIONS HAVE I MADE YOU") in the presence of Him whom he believed, *even* God, who gives life to the dead and calls into being that which does not exist. 18: In hope against hope he believed, so that he might become a father of many nations according to that which had been spoken, "SO SHALL YOUR DESCENDANTS BE." 19: Without becoming weak in faith he contemplated his own body, now as good as dead since he was about a hundred years old, and the deadness of Sarah's womb; 20: yet, with respect to the promise of God, he did not waver in unbelief but grew strong in faith, giving glory to God, 21: and being fully assured that what God had promised, He was able also to perform. 22: Therefore IT WAS ALSO CREDITED TO HIM AS RIGHTEOUSNESS. 23: Now not for his sake only was it written that it was credited to him, 24: but for our sake also, to whom it will be credited, *as those who believe in Him* who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead, 25: *He* who was delivered over because of our transgressions, and was raised because of our justification."

I Corinthians 1:21, "For since in the wisdom of God the world through its wisdom did not *come to know* God, God was well-pleased through the foolishness of the message preached to save **those who believe.**"

Galatians 3:22, "But the Scripture has shut up everyone under sin, so that the promise by faith in Jesus Christ might be given to **those who believe.**

Then, John 3:14-17,

14: "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up; 15: so that **whoever believes** will in Him have eternal life. 16: "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that **whoever believes in Him** shall not perish, but have eternal life. 17: "For God did not send the Son into the world to judge the world, but that the world might be saved through Him."

"So that" in verse 15 is "Hina" in the Greek and sets up a purpose clause and Means, "In order that." "Whoever" in verses 15 and 16 is the simple Greek word, "pas" meaning "all" or "everyone."

In verse 17, the word "judge" is "krin-oh" meaning to make a "determination" or "decision." This stands in opposition that a decision has already been made. The Calvinist would say, "Of course it has, that is why Jesus didn't come to do so." This of course, is foolishness in that there is no need to say anything of the sort if the decision had already been made. That's like going to an adoption agency to adopt a child having already made the decision as to what child you will adopt. Then telling the agency you haven't made the decision yet and whatever child wishes to be adopted you will adopt. This puts God in the position of being a trickster and a cruel master. So a child says he wishes he could be adopted but God says, "I'm sorry, but I didn't choose you ahead of time, so no." "Huh?"

David Berkowitz - "Son of Sam" who killed six victims and wounded seven others by 1977. He confessed to all of them, and claimed to have been obeying the orders of a [demon](#), manifested in the form of a dog ("Harvey") who belonged to his neighbor ("Sam"). Despite his explanation, Berkowitz was found mentally competent and incarcerated in state prison for [murder](#). In the course of further police investigation, Berkowitz was also implicated in many unsolved [arsons](#) in the city.

So the way the Calvinists have to put this was that God predestined Berkowitz to kill and wound all these people before Berkowitz one day was converted to Christianity. So God, though predestining Berkowitz to salvation could not prevent him from murdering all these people and wounding others prior to his conversion? So is this who God really is? The people he killed were not believers as far as we know so God's statement that He is not willing that any should perish must be a lie also.

Stories and ponderings over these types of things are ample if one subscribes to Calvinism. Shall we mention the holocaust? Probably not.

Let's continue.

The "elect" of God.

Here, Calvin makes a case that only those predestined to eternal life are "the elect" of God and therefore the only ones He calls to Himself. The "elect" are those whom God chose to be saved from before the foundation of the world. The Greek word translated "elect" (ek-lek-tohs) occurs 24 times in the Bible, all in the New Testament.<sup>2</sup> It is also translated "chosen" or "choice." The root word is "ek-leg-oh" or "ek-leg-oh-mai" and stems from the compound of, "ek" - "out of" and "le-goh", "to say", "to call", or "to tell." It is close to "ka-leh-oh" or "klay-tohs" meaning "to call" but without the "ek" prefix.

So "to call out" would be the most accurate meaning. Calvin uses the term "elect" to define those whom God predestined to salvation before the foundation of the world. But the word does not necessarily have that connotation.

For example, Romans 8:33, "Who will bring a charge against God's elect? God is the one who justifies;..." This follows upon 28-32 that states that the "elect" or "called out ones" are those God foreknew would come to faith.

In Colossians 3:12 we read, "So, as those who have been **chosen** (ek-lek-tohs) of

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<sup>2</sup> Three times the translation "elect" is found in Matthew 24:22, 24, 31 and in the exact duplicate text in Mark 13: 20, 22, 27; Luke 18:7; 23:35 (where it is translated "Chosen One" in most versions); and Romans 8:33. Five total references where it is translated "elect" in the NASB. The Greek word is also translated "chosen" or "choice" in Acts 9:15; Romans 9:11; 11:5, 7, 29; I Thessalonians 1:4 and II Peter 1:10.

God, holy and beloved, put on a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience;..."

"Called out" has a different connotation than "pre-picked before creation in my opinion. But this is prefaced with Colossians 1:2-8,

2: "To the saints and faithful brethren in Christ *who are* at Colossae: Grace to you and peace from God our Father. 3: We give thanks to God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, praying always for you, 4: since we heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and the love which you have for all the saints; 5: because of the hope laid up for you in heaven, of which you previously heard in the word of truth, the gospel 6: which has come to you, just as in all the world also it is constantly bearing fruit and increasing, even as *it has been doing* in you also since the day you heard *of it* and understood the grace of God in truth; 7: just as you learned *it* from Epaphras, our beloved fellow bond-servant, who is a faithful servant of Christ on our behalf, 8: and he also informed us of your love in the Spirit...."

And, 3:5-11,

5: "Therefore consider the members of your earthly body as dead to immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and greed, which amounts to idolatry. 6: For it is because of these things that the wrath of God will come upon the sons of disobedience, 7: and in them you also once walked, when you were living in them. 8: But now you also, put them all aside: anger, wrath, malice, slander, *and* abusive speech from your mouth. 9: Do not lie to one another, since you laid aside the old self with its *evil* practices, 10: and have put on the new self who is being renewed to a true knowledge according to the image of the One who created him-- 11: *a renewal* in which there is no *distinction between* Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave and freeman, but Christ is all, and in all. "So, as those who have been **chosen** (ek-lek-tohs - "called out") of God, holy and beloved, put on a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience;..."

And, making clear Paul is still speaking to those of faith, the saints, and chosen of God. Chosen in what way? For what? Remember that question sounds different if we ask, "Called out in what way?" "For what?" At the beginning of verse 12 we have the English "so." In the Greek the word is "oon" meaning that what is about to be said is based on what has just been said.

What has just been said describes their journey from non-believers to believers and the struggles and inconsistencies, yet progress and accomplishments they have made. He also urges them to set aside all the things associated with the old self. They have put on the new self and that was by faith in the gospel (1:3-6).

These are the ones Paul is calling the "elect" or "called out ones." Peter says it this way,

I Peter 1:1-5, "Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, To those who reside as aliens, scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, who are **chosen** (called out) 2: according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, by the sanctifying work of the Spirit, to obey Jesus Christ and be sprinkled with His blood: May grace and peace be yours in the fullest measure. 3: Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His great mercy has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, 4: to *obtain* an inheritance *which is* imperishable and undefiled and will not fade away, reserved in heaven for you, 5: who are protected by the power of God through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time."

So, as in Romans 8:28-33, the "chosen" are those whom God foreknew. Calvin's argument is that predestination resulted in foreknowledge. Paul and Peter say that foreknowledge resulted in predestination.

Now, II Timothy 2:8-10 could be summoned in Calvin's defense.

8: Remember Jesus Christ, risen from the dead, descendant of David, according to my gospel, 9: for which I suffer hardship even to imprisonment as a criminal; but the word of God is not imprisoned. 10: For this reason I endure all things for the sake of those who are **chosen**, so that they also may obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus *and with it* eternal glory."

The "chosen" could be defined anyway one with an axe to grind wishes to define it. Add to it chapter 1:8-11 and, with a cursory glance at this passage, one could pronounce that Calvin might have a valid argument. Here the word is "ka-leh-oh" translated "called." Here are those verses,

8: "Therefore do not be ashamed of the testimony of our Lord or of me His prisoner, but join with *me* in suffering for the gospel according to the power of God, 9: who has saved us and **called** us with a holy **calling**, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace which was granted us in

Christ Jesus from all eternity, 10: but now has been revealed by the appearing of our Savior Christ Jesus, who abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel, 11: for which I was appointed a preacher and an apostle and a teacher."

However, one has to assume that verse 9 refers to "predestination" of the saved and lost. Paul's point, however, is that it is for the gospel Paul suffers and that he and other believers - especially Timothy ("us") have been saved, not because of their works, but according to His purpose and grace He purposed in Christ from before the world's creation. He places in order that God saved us then called us. Further, it is the preaching of the gospel that is the instrument that brings salvation. Paul noted this in Romans 1:16 and I Corinthians 1:18.

Paul also made the point that,

16: "For though I preach the gospel, I have nothing to glory of: for necessity is laid upon me; yea, woe is unto me, if I preach not the gospel! 17: For if I do this thing willingly, I have a reward: but if against my will, a dispensation *of the gospel* is committed unto me. 18: What is my reward then? *Verily* that, when I preach the gospel, I may make the gospel of Christ without charge, that I abuse not my power in the gospel. 19: For though I be free from all *men*, yet have I made myself servant unto all, that I might gain the more. 20: And unto the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might gain the Jews; to them that are under the law, as under the law, that I might gain them that are under the law; 21: To them that are without law, as without law, (being not without law to God, but under the law to Christ,) that I might gain them that are without law. 22: To the weak became I as weak, that I might gain the weak: I am made all things to all *men*, that I might by all means save some." I Corinthians 9:18-22

Seems like a lot of pain and suffering to go through if the decision has already been made. So II Timothy may at first be a support for Calvin's view, but 4:1-2 read,

1: 'I solemnly charge *you* in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and by His appearing and His kingdom: 2: preach the word; be ready in season *and* out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with great patience and instruction."

Overall, Paul has nothing to say, let alone add to or support Calvin's position.

Further, in addition, only the elect, he says, who have been predestined to salvation are infused with faith by the Holy Spirit. He writes,

"...only let us now understand that the only true faith is that which the Spirit of God seals on our hearts. Nay, the modest and teachable reader will find a sufficient reason in the promise contained in Isaiah, that all the children of the renovated Church "shall be taught of the Lord" ([Isa 54:13](#)). This singular privilege God bestows on his **elect** only, whom he separates from the rest of mankind."<sup>3</sup>

Let's look at that Isaiah passage,

Isaiah 54:5-14, 5: "For your husband is your Maker, Whose name is the LORD of hosts; And your Redeemer is the Holy One of Israel, Who is called the God of all the earth. 6: "For the LORD has called you, Like a wife forsaken and grieved in spirit, Even like a wife of *one's* youth when she is rejected," Says your God. 7: "For a brief moment I forsook you, But with great compassion I will gather you. 8: "In an outburst of anger I hid My face from you for a moment, But with everlasting lovingkindness I will have compassion on you," Says the LORD your Redeemer. 9: "For this is like the days of Noah to Me, When I swore that the waters of Noah Would not flood the earth again; So I have sworn that I will not be angry with you Nor will I rebuke you. 10: "For the mountains may be removed and the hills may shake, But My lovingkindness will not be removed from you, And My covenant of peace will not be shaken," Says the LORD who has compassion on you. 11: "O afflicted one, storm-tossed, *and* not comforted, Behold, I will set your stones in antimony, And your foundations I will lay in sapphires. 12: "Moreover, I will make your battlements of rubies, And your gates of crystal, And your entire wall of precious stones. 13: "All your sons will be taught of the LORD; And the well-being of your sons will be great. 14: "In righteousness you will be established; You will be far from oppression, for you will not fear; And from terror, for it will not come near you."

Calvin states that this teaches, "...that all the children of the renovated Church "shall be taught of the Lord" ([Isa 54:13](#)). This singular privilege God bestows on his **elect** only, whom he separates from the rest of mankind."

Is this really what this passage is about? Of course not.

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<sup>3</sup> Book 1, chapter 5, section 7, paragraph 2