

# The Bible Doctrine of Election

## THE CALVINISTIC THEORY

By JAMES PETIGRU BOYCE (1827-1888)

Founder and first president of the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary (Louisville); president of the Southern Baptist Convention 1872 — 1879, 1888. Boyce is regarded as one of the outstanding Baptist theologians of the nineteenth century.

own good pleasure.

2. PROOF. Whether we should believe this doctrine or not depends entirely upon whether it is taught in the Scriptures. We have no other possible way of knowing



J. P. BOYCE

1. THE THEORY STATED. The theory of Calvinists as to election is that God (not man) of his own purpose (in accordance with his will, and not from any obligation to man, nor because of any will of man), has from eternity (the period of God's action, not in time in which man acts), determined to save (not has actually saved, but simply determined so to do, and to save, not merely to confer gospel or church privileges upon) a definite number of mankind (not the whole race, nor indefinitely, merely some of them, nor indefinitely a certain proportionate part, but a definite number), as individuals (not the whole or part of the race, nor of a nation, nor of a church, nor of a class, as of believers or the pious; but individuals, not for or because of any merit or work of theirs, nor of any value to him of them (not for their good works, or their holiness or excellence, or their faith, or their spiritual sanctification, although the choice is to a salvation attained through faith and sanctification; nor for their value to him, though their salvation tends greatly to the manifested glory of his grace); but of his good pleasure (simply because he was pleased so to choose).

An analysis of the foregoing statement will show that this theory holds as to election, that: (1) It is an act of God, and not in any sense the result of the choice of the elect. (2) It has been with God an eternal purpose. (3) It is an election to salvation, and not to outward privileges. (4) This election, or choice, is one of individuals and not of classes. (5) It was made without respect to the action or merits of the persons elected. (6) It was made simply according to God's

anything upon the subject. We must therefore look to the Scriptures alone for the truth.

Before proceeding, however, with the direct proof that the doctrine of election, as stated above, is taught in the Scriptures, it should be remarked that the words *election* and *elect* are used in the Word of God in various senses. They sometimes signify a choice to office, whether made by man or God. Compare: Luke 16:13 (Christ's choice of the twelve apostles), Acts 1:21-26 (the selection of an apostle in the place of Judas), Acts 9:15 (Saul

as a chosen vessel), 1 Peter 2:3-6 (Christ spoken of as the cornerstone, elect, precious, etc.). They sometimes signify the choice of Israel to their peculiar national privilege of being the chosen, or separated, people of God: "The

God of this people Israel chose our fathers" (Acts 13:17). Again they are used of a choice of salvation made by an individual: "Mary hath chosen the good part which shall not be taken from her" (Luke 10:42).

But in a large majority of cases these words have reference to the choice of salvation either in the purpose of God or the act of choice by God.

We will now take up the proof that the words are used in this

last sense. Our aim will be to sustain, point by point, the doctrine of election as stated above.

(1) Election an act of God and not in any sense the result of the choice of the elect. The inquiry here is not an inquiry into the reason for the election, but simply as to the agent. The simple question now is, Does God choose the elect? We are not concerned at this point whether it is of His own purpose, or because He fore-

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## The Limited Atonement

(From the NEW PARK STREET PULPIT, Volume IV, pages 70, 71).

By CHARLES HADDON SPURGEON

(1834-1892)

Pastor, Metropolitan Tabernacle, London, England

Edited THE SWORD AND TROWEL; Author of THE TREASURY OF DAVID; AN EXPOSITION OF MATTHEW; THE SOUL WINNER; MORNING AND EVENING; LECTURES TO MY STUDENTS; numerous other works.

There are in the world many theories of atonement; but I can not see any atonement in anyone, except in this doctrine of substitution. Many divines say that Christ did something when He died that enabled God to be just, and yet the Justifier of the ungodly. What that something is they do not tell us. They believe in an atonement made for everybody; but then, their atonement is just this: They believe that Judas was atoned for just as much as Peter; they believe that the damned in Hell were as much an object of Jesus Christ's satisfaction as the saved in Heaven; and though they do not say it in proper words, yet they must mean

it, for it is a fair inference, that in the case of multitudes, Christ died in vain, for He died for them all, they say; and yet so inef-

fectual was His dying for them, that though He died for them they are damned afterward. Now, such an atonement I despise—I reject it. I may be called Antinomian or Calvinist for preaching a limited atonement; but I would rather believe a limited atonement that is efficacious for all men for whom it was intended, than an universal atonement that is not efficacious for anybody, except the will of man be joined with it.

Why, my brethren, if we were only so far atoned for by the death of Christ that any of us might afterward save himself, Christ's atonement were not worth a farthing, for there is no man of us who can save himself — no, not under the gospel; for if I am to be saved by faith, if that faith is to be my own act, unassisted by the Holy Spirit, I am as unable to save myself by faith as to save myself by good works. And after all, though men call this a limited atonement, it is as effectual as their own fallacious and rotten redemptions can pretend to be.

But do you know the limit of it? Christ hath bought a "multitude that no man can number." The limit of it is just this: He hath died for sinners; whoever in this congregation inwardly and sorrowfully knows himself to be a sinner, Christ died for him; whoever seeks Christ, shall know Christ died for him; for our sense of need of Christ, and our seeking after Christ, are infallible proofs that Christ died for us. And, mark, here is something substantial.

The Arminian says Christ died for him; and then, poor man, he has but small consolation therefrom, for he says, "Ah! Christ died for me; that does not prove much. It only proves I may be saved if I mind what I am after. I may perhaps forget myself, I may run into sin and I may perish. Christ has done a good deal for me, but not quite enough, unless I do something."

But the man who receives the Bible as it is, he says, "Christ died for me, then my eternal life is sure. I know," says he, "Christ can not be punished in a man's stead, and the man be punished

(Continued on page 8, column 4)



C. H. Spurgeon

## GOD'S SOVEREIGNTY EXHIBITED

By ALEXANDER CARSON (1776-1884)

Author of BAPTISM IN ITS MODE AND SUBJECTS; HISTORY OF PROVIDENCE; THE ATONEMENT and other works.

(The following from LIFE AND WRITINGS OF CARSON, Volume II, pages 159-163).

In the reading of the Scriptures nothing strikes us more forcibly than the sovereignty of Jehovah. Almighty power is, without doubt, in all things exercised in wisdom and justice. But the ways of God are too deep for us; we cannot fathom them. He gives no account of His matters; and in innumerable instances His conduct is not only utterly beyond the grasp of our conception, but is the very reverse of what we would expect. Every page of Scripture is written with this impression deeply marked on it. The book of God is everywhere stamped with the seal of sovereignty.

Man Hates Sovereignty

This is the more striking, as there is nothing more displeasing to the mind of man. The fanatic is still bolder than the philosopher in blaspheming this attribute; and the sanctified raver, (Continued on page 6, column 4)

fectual was His dying for them, that though He died for them they are damned afterward.

Why, my brethren, if we were only so far atoned for by the

A SPECIAL ISSUE ON THE SOVEREIGNTY OF GOD

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## The Foreordination And Foreknowledge Of God

By AUGUSTUS H. STRONG (1836-1921)

President, Rochester Theological Seminary; Author, SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY; other works.

Foreknowledge implies fixity, and fixity implies decree. From eternity God foresaw all the events of the universe as fixed and certain. This fixity and certainty could not have had its ground either in blind fate or in the variable wills of men, since neither of these had an existence. It could have had its ground in nothing outside the divine mind, for in eternity nothing existed besides the divine mind. But for this fixity there must have been a cause; if anything in the future was fixed, something must have fixed it. This fixity could have had its ground only in the plan and purpose of God. In fine, if God foresaw the future as certain, it must have been because there was something in Himself which made it certain; or, in other words, because He had decreed it.

We object therefore to the statement of E. G. Robinson, Christian Theology, 74 — "God's knowledge and God's purposes both being eternal, one cannot be conceived as the ground of the other, nor can either be predicated to the exclusion of the other as the cause of things, but, correlative and eternal, they must be coequal quantities in thought."

We reply that while decree does not chronologically precede, it does logically precede, foreknowledge. Foreknowledge is not of possible events, but of what is certain to be. The certainty of future events which He foreknew could have had its ground only in His decree, since He alone existed to be the ground and explana-

tion of this certainty. Events were fixed only because God had fixed them. Shedd, Dogmatic Theology, 1:397—"An event must be made certain, before it can be known as a certain event." (Turretin Inst. Theol. loc. 3, quæst. 12, 18).

Decreeing creation implies decreeing the foreseen results of creation. To meet the objection that God might have foreseen the events of the universe, not be-



AUGUSTUS HOPKINS STRONG

cause He had decreed each one, but only because He had decreed to create the universe, institute its laws, we may put the argument in another form. In eternity there could have been no cause of the future existence of the universe, outside of God Himself, since no being existed but God Himself.

In eternity God foresaw that the creation of the world and the institution of its laws would make certain its actual history even to the most insignificant details. But God decreed to create (Continued on page 8, column 5)

## TEN QUESTIONS ON THE DOCTRINE OF ELECTION

1. What is the meaning of the word "election"?

It means choice. In fact, the words "chose" and "chosen" are used interchangeably with the words "elect" and "election" in the Scriptures, when referring to this doctrine. The word "election" is used in the Scriptures six times, "elected" once, and "elect" twenty times. Roughly looking through a concordance, we find that the word "chosen" is used at least twenty-one times in reference to the doctrine of election. So the word "election" simply means choice.

2. I would like for you to list the Scriptures which teach that God elected individuals to salvation before the world began. (Continued on page 3, column 4)



# ELECTION

By J. M. PENDLETON  
(1811-1891)

Outstanding Baptist Scholar of the late 19th Century; Author of *CHURCH MANUAL*, *CHRISTIAN DOCTRINES*, *DISTINCTIVE BAPTIST PRINCIPLES*, etc.

While there is nothing in predestination which forbids its use in the sense of the foreordination of all events, it is commonly employed with reference to human beings. It comprehends the purpose of election, and also, as will be shown, the purpose of "reprobation," as it has been called, which, as has been well said, "is nothing more than withholding from some the grace which is imparted to others." These two purposes may be expressed thusly:

"That God chose in Christ certain persons of the fallen race of Adam, before the foundation of the world, unto eternal glory, according to his own purpose and grace, without regard to their foreseen faith and good works, or any conditions performed by them;" and that from the rest of mankind He withheld His grace and left them to dishonor and the just punishment of their sins.

The ideas brought to view in this statement need and deserve expansion. I may therefore say—

## 1. Election Is Personal

The choice exercised is a choice of persons. It is a choice of persons as distinguished from nations. The Jews were in one sense an elect nation, but their election from among the nations had no special reference to eternal life, to which persons are elected; and in addition to this, they were the only elect nation the world ever saw. But to see that election is not national, we need only turn to Revelation 5:9:

"And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof; for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation."

Here we are plainly taught that salvation is not national deliverance, but that the saved are redeemed out of every nation. An eclectic operation is referred to—persons selected out of nations. The theory of national election cannot be maintained as the doctrine of the New Testament.

Election is not only personal as distinguished from national, but it is of individuals as distinguished from individuals. The line of discrimination runs between persons. When Paul says in Romans 16:13, "Salute Rufus, chosen in the Lord," the reference must be to personal election, as also when he writes to the members of the Thessalonian church,

"God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation." — II Thess. 2:13.

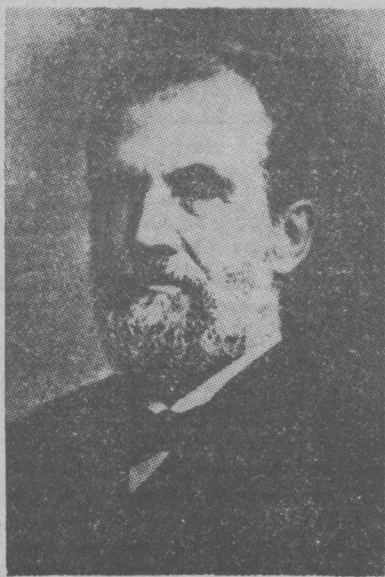
Peter, in writing to the "strangers scattered abroad," addressing them as "elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father," must have meant personal election.

If it is said that the election of some is the rejection of others, it may be remarked: Rejection is a term needlessly strong, and it is preferable to say that God has left others as they were. The decree of election leaves them where they would have been had there been no election of any. No injustice is done them. The truth is, election is injustice to none, while it is an unspeakable blessing to some. It takes a multitude which no man can number, but which God can number, out of the fallen race of Adam, and raises them up to hope and Heaven.

## II. Election Is Eternal

In proof of this, the following passages may be quoted:

"According as he hath chosen us in him BEFORE THE FOUN-



JAMES MADISON PENDLETON

DATION OF THE WORLD, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love." — Ephesians 1:4.

"Who hath saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus BEFORE THE WORLD BEGAN." — II Timothy 1:9.

"God hath FROM THE BEGINNING chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth." — II Thess. 2:13.

After what has been said concerning the eternity of God, and the consequent eternity of His purposes, it is not necessary to enlarge on a point so plain as that His election of His people is from eternity. Election, being inseparable from the divine purposes, is as eternal as they. As it has to do with eternal life, it is eternal, as going back to the unbeginning past and forward to the unending future.

## III. Election Was Not In View of Foreseen Faith And Good Works

There are some who make faith and good works the ground of election. That is, they suppose that God elected His people because He foresaw their faith and good works. This view transposes cause and effect, for it makes election dependent on faith and good works, whereas faith and good works are scripturally dependent on election. When we read, "chosen . . . that we should be holy," it is obvious that the election is not because of holiness, but in order to holiness.

The purpose of election contemplates the sanctification of the elect, and therefore regards them as sinners needing sanctification. The same truth is suggested by the words,

"For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son." — Romans 8:29.

Here evidently the predestination, including election, did not find its basis or reason in the conformity of the predestinated to the image of Christ, but the conformity is the result of the predestination.

As to the much-controverted passage in Acts 13:48. "And as

many as were ordained to eternal life believed," the only natural interpretation is that they believed because of their ordination to eternal life. The Arminian view is without foundation in the Word of God; for election is the source, the only source, whence spring faith, holiness, and good works.

## IV. The Purpose of Election Is Irreversible

This is the only view of the matter that is worthy of God. Changeable purposes would detract from His glory as an infinitely perfect Being. The purpose of election is not arbitrary, is not without reason. God does nothing without reason, but the reason or reasons of His action, He is not always pleased to reveal. Why He chose some persons to eternal life in preference to others, we do not know. But if the reasons of His choice were satisfactory to Him when the choice was made, they will be satisfactory forever, unless better reasons should present themselves to His mind — a supposition which the perfection of His character does not for a moment tolerate.

In short, there can be no philosophic belief that God will reverse His purpose of election, and the Scriptures confirm the teachings of sound philosophy.

Jesus says of His disciples, "And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand." — John 10:28, 29.

Here the security of believers is strongly asserted; but whence arises the security? Chiefly from the fact the Father gave them to the Son in the purpose of election. If, however, the purpose is reversible, there is no security.

We are also taught that "God, willing more abundantly to show unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath; that by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation." — Hebrews 6:17, 18.

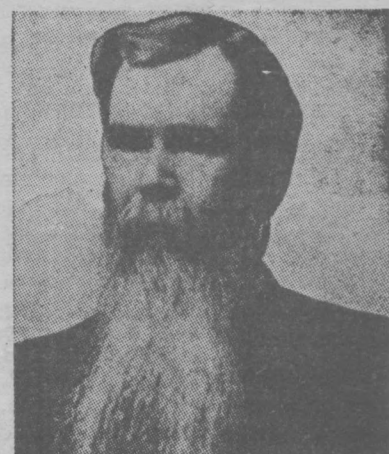
The "strong consolation" grows out of the immutability of the divine counsel, which is confirmed by an oath; and the purpose of election, being included in the divine counsel, is as immutable as the counsel itself. It is not necessary to enlarge. Surely the purpose of election is irreversible.

## V. Election and Means

It is well at this point to answer an objection that is often made to the doctrine of predestination. It is said that while the economy of Nature and grace illustrates the use of means, predestination renders their use unnecessary. Why unnecessary? Because the objector supposes a predestinated end will be accomplished without means.

There is nothing, however, to justify such a supposition. We can find nothing in the realm of Nature to countenance it. God said to Noah, "While the earth remain-

## B. H. CARROLL'S REMARKS ON PREDESTINATION AND ELECTION



B. H. CARROLL (1843-1914) — Founder and First President of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary

The last clause of verse 48, which reads thusly: "As many as were ordained to eternal life, believed," needs some explanation.

When I was a young fellow and had not imbibed the doctrine of predestination, I wanted that to read, "And as many as believed were ordained to eternal life." Perhaps that is the way you want to interpret it.

Brother Broadus said, "Let the Scripture mean what it wants to mean," and you let that passage stand — ordination to precede eternal life. Ordination to eternal life takes place in eternity.

Paul, in Romans 8, gives us the order. Many modern people do not believe it. We seldom ever hear anybody preach a sermon on it. I heard a strong preacher once say, "I just can't believe it." Romans 8:29 reads, "For whom he did foreknow, he also foreordained to be conformed to the image of his Son . . . and whom he foreordained, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified."

Justification comes at believing. So unless that passage reads, "As many as were ordained to eternal life, believed," it would break Paul's chain all to pieces.

Settle it in your mind that salvation commences with God, and not man. — (Pages 279, 280, *Commentary On Acts.*)

What is election? Choice toward individuals. When was this choice made? Before the world was. As we were not there then, in whom was it made? In Christ. To what end? That we should be holy and without blemish in love. He blessed us at that time in foreordination. What does that mean? To decree beforehand. Concerning whom? The particular individuals that were elected. Unto what? Unto adoption as sons. Through whom? Through Jesus Christ. According to what? According to the good pleasure of His will. To what end? To the praise of the glory of His grace. (page 79, *Commentary on Ephesians*).

eth, seed-time and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease." — Genesis 8:22.

The object in view requires me to refer only to "harvest" as included among the purposes of God. It will not be denied that God has decreed the production of harvests while the earth remains; but has He decreed the production of miraculous harvests, that is, harvests without the sowing of seed? Manifestly not. "Seed-time" is mentioned as before "harvest," and clearly preparatory to it. No harvest is predestinated apart from seed-sowing. The means are appointed equally with the end.

Let the nations practically adopt the philosophy of the objection under consideration—namely that predestination supersedes the use of means — and what must follow? Universal starvation. But we need not anticipate this worldwide calamity, for men exercise common sense on every subject except that of religion.

## An Illustration of This Truth

Paul's voyage to Rome is often referred to as illustration of the connection between means and ends. The apostle had been as-

sured by an angel of God that of the two hundred and seventy-six persons on board the ship, not one should be lost. But when he saw that "the shipmen were about to flee out of the ship," he "said to the centurion and to the soldiers, Except these abide in the ship ye cannot be saved."

The safe deliverance of all on board the storm-tossed vessel was the predestinated event, but it could not be accomplished unless the "shipmen" remained in their position and performed their duty. Thus in the natural world, on the land and on the sea, we see that means are predestinated as well as ends, and that ends cannot be accomplished without the use of means.

How is it in the realm of grace? The principle is the same, showing the God of Nature to be the God of grace.

## God's Eternal "Chain"

"Moreover, whom he did predestinate, them he also called; and whom he called, them he also justified; and whom he justified, them he also glorified." — Romans 8:30.

In this verse we have, if I may call it, a golden chain of four links, and this chain reaches from eternity to eternity. The first link is predestination, and the last glorification, while the two intervening links are calling and justification. The first link has no connection with the last, except through the intermediate links. That is to say, there is no way in which the purpose of God in predestination can reach its end in glorification, if calling and justification do not take place. But calling and justification are inseparable from "repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ."

Repentance and faith, then, not to name other things, are means through which the purpose of God in election is accomplished. (Editor's note: Repentance and faith are termed by Arminians to be "conditions" of salvation. This is (Continued on page 8, column 2)

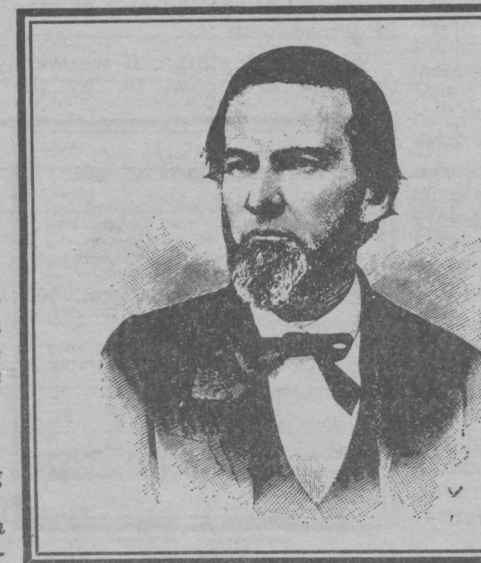
## Broadus' Comment on Election

JOHN A. BROADUS (1827-1895)

Author of *COMMENTARY ON MATTHEW*; *SERMONS AND ADDRESSES*; *JESUS OF NAZARETH*; *HARMONY OF THE GOSPELS*; and other books.

Famous Baptist Theologian; Taught at Southern Seminary, Louisville

"From the divine side, we see that the Scriptures teach an eternal election of men to eternal life simply out of God's good pleasure." (Commentary on Matthew, page 450).





# 'Faith of Our Fathers, Living Still'

## BAPTIST CONFESSIONS AND STATEMENTS OF FAITH REGARDING THE DOCTRINES OF GRACE



### The Testimonies of Outstanding Baptists Of The Past

(As quoted in A SYSTEMATIC STUDY  
OF BIBLE DOCTRINE by T. P. Simmons.)

**J. W. Porter**, eminent preacher,  
editor, author, and scholar:

"1. Election took place in eternity. 2. It was an individual election. 3. It was based wholly on the good pleasure of God, and not on the foreseen merit of the elect" (From a letter to the author).

**John Clark**, founder of the first Baptist church in America:

"Election is the decree of God, of His free love, grace, and mercy, choosing some men to faith, holiness, and eternal life, for the praise of His glorious mercy."

**R. A. Venable** (1849-1933), president, Mississippi College, Clarke College:

"I cannot agree with them (Methodists) as to the doctrine of election and predestination. They hold that God's election unto salvation was based upon His foreknowledge; that God foreknew that some would believe and as many as He knew would believe He elected to salvation. The sovereign will of God had nothing to do in deciding His electing grace. This I believe to be contrary both to reason and revelation." (Why Baptist and Not Methodist, in Baptist Why and Why Not, p. 123, published by Baptist Sunday School Board, Nashville, Tenn.).

**Robert Watts**, Belfast, Ire., in articles written at the request of T. T. Eaton and published in the Western Recorder during Eaton's editorship, and later published in book form by the Baptist Book Concern:

"On behalf of Calvinism it can be claimed that it is the doctrinal system deduced from the Scriptures."

And further, in speaking of the Arminian notion that election is based on foreseen faith:

"Is it not manifest that it takes the government of His moral

2 Thess. 2:13: "God chose you from the beginning unto salvation."

(2) *Election and eternal purpose or choice, on God's part.* Another important fact to be shown is the eternity of election in opposition to the idea that it was in time. The proof on this point is two fold. There are passages which show that the election took place before existence in this world or before the world began, and there are those which actually declare that it was eternal. Between the two classes of passages there is really, however, very little difference, as from the nature of the case, what took place before time must have been in eternity, and besides, the object of proof of an eternal election is simply to show that it was not dependent on human action, but simply on the will of God alone.

a. Those which show that the election took place before man's existence, or before the world began:

Jer. 1:5: "Before I formed thee in the belly, I knew thee, and before thou camest forth out of the womb, I sanctified thee."

Matt. 25:34: "Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."

Eph. 1:4: "Even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world."

2 Thess. 2:13: "But we are bound to give thanks to God always for you, brethren, beloved of the Lord, for that God chose you from the beginning unto sal-



"Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away."—Matthew 24:35

agent out of the hands of God? should be holy.' See Eph. 1:4." and does it not represent Him as occupying the position of a mere spectator, whose line of action is determined by the creatures of His hand" (Sovereignty of God, pp. 63, 128).

**J. B. Moody**, author of more than forty books, when ninety-five years old, said:

"Election to salvation is sovereign, eternal, unconditional, with predestinated means and agencies to secure the betrothal of a bride to become the Lamb's wife, vicariously redeemed" (The Plan and Way of Salvation, p. 5).

**D. F. Estes**, in "New Testament Theology," p. 180:

"Upon what this divine choice depends we have no basis for assertion, but we note that the divine choice is never made to depend on a previous choice of God by men, but is made to anticipate their action."

**D. B. Ford**, in comment on Rom. 8:29:

"That . . . election . . . does not depend on God's foreknowledge of our faith or goodness is also evident from the declaration of the . . . apostle, that we are chosen in Christ 'before the foundation of the world that we

**Alvah Hovey**, general editor of the above commentary, as quoted by Strong:

"The Scriptures forbid us to find the reasons for election in the moral action of man before the new birth, and refer us merely to the sovereign will and mercy of God, that is, they teach the doctrine of personal election" (Systematic Theology, p. 427).

**E. C. Dargan** in "The Doctrines of Our Faith," page 128:

"Are there conditions to God's choice? Does He choose because he foresees that men will repent, or on the condition of faith? No; in choosing men to save men God is sovereign, free, untrammelled, gracious; acting on His own initiative."

**A. H. Strong**, in "Systematic Theology," page 427:

"Election is that eternal act of God, by which in His sovereign pleasure, and on account of no foreseen merit in them, He chooses certain of the number of sinful men to be recipients of the special grace of His Spirit, and so to be made voluntary partakers of Christ's salvation."

written in the book of life from the foundation of the world, when they beheld the beast how that he was, and is not, and shall come."

Referring to the adherents of the Lamb as persons "with him," it is said in verse 14, "They . . . that are with him are called and chosen and faithful."

Rev. 21:27: "And there shall in no wise enter into it anything unclean or he that maketh an abomination and a lie; but only (Continued on page 4, column 3)

### Ten Questions

(Continued from Page 1)

Romans 8:29, 30; Ephesians 1:4; II Thessalonians 2:13; II Timothy 1:9; and Revelation 17:8. These are the basic Scriptures.

3. **How can you reconcile election with "whosoever will"?**

It is very simple. If God had not elected individuals to salvation, no one would have ever responded to "whosoever will." Only the elect, by God-given grace, respond to this call. Jesus said that none would come, except those to whom God gave the will to come (John 6:44,65). Men do not come to God of the natural will. But the elect come to God since God works in them both to will and to do of His good pleasure. (John 1:13; Romans 9:16; Philippians 2:13).

4. **I think that election is too mysterious to be understood. Do you not agree with me? If so, why do you preach election?**

That election is mysterious we do not deny. And we hasten to (Continued on page 4)

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### Bible Doctrine of Election

(Continued from page one)  
sees that they will believe, or for any other reason. The sole question now is, Is the election an act of God? The fact on this point would appear more clearly if we were to exchange the common word *choice* or *chosen* with the equivalent word *elect*. The following passages are sufficient, though the examples are far more numerous.

John 13:18: "I know whom I have chosen."

John 15:16: "Ye did not choose me but I chose you" (not to their offices as apostles but) "that ye should go and bear fruit."

Rom. 8:33: "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's chosen ones?"

Rom. 9:15: "I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy."

Eph. 1:4: "Even as he chose us in him."

Eph. 1:11: "Having been foreordained according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his will."



# ELECTION CONSISTENT

By ANDREW FULLER  
(1754-1815)

Fuller "held the rope" for missionary William Carey. He was the author of a number of doctrinal and practical works.

(The following from Fuller's **COMPLETE WORKS**, pages 341, 342).



ANDREW FULLER

The doctrine of election, as it is taught in the Scriptures, is of humbling and holy tendency. The whole difference between the saved and the lost being ascribed to sovereign grace, the pride of man is abased.

Upon every other principle, it is the sinner that makes himself to differ; and who must, therefore, find whereof to glory. We may allow ourselves to be unable to repent and believe without the aids of the Holy Spirit; but while we maintain that these aids are afforded to sinners in common, and that faith, instead of being "the gift of God," is the effect of our having improved the help afforded, while others neglected it, if we think we do not ascribe the very turning point of salvation to our own virtue, we greatly deceive ourselves.

But election, while it places no bar in the way of any man which would not have been there without it, resolves the salvation of the saved into mere grace: "and if of grace, then it is no more of works; otherwise grace is no more grace." Such a view of things tends to humble us in the dust. It is frequently the last point which a sinner yields to God; it is the giving up of every other claim and ground of hope from his own good endeavors, and falling into the arms of sovereign mercy. And having here found rest to his soul, he will not be less, but more attentive to the means of salvation than he was before. His endeavors will be more ardent, and directed to a better end. Then he was trying to serve himself; now he will serve the Lord.

## Election and Means

But if election be viewed in certain connexions, it will cease to be a doctrine according to godliness. If faith and works foreseen be connected with it as the effects, the interests of sobriety, righteousness, and godliness are relinquished. If we take our views of this great subject with simplicity from the word of God, we shall consider it, like other Divine purposes, not as a rule of conduct to us, but to Himself. We shall agonize through life that we may at last enter in at the strait gate, no less than if all was in itself uncertain. Nay, more so: for as Paul's assuring the mariners that there "should be

no loss of any man's life" would, if believed, inspire them with hope; so our being predestinated to be conformed to the image of Christ furnishes encouragement to be pressing on towards the mark. And as they were told, nevertheless, that except certain means were used they "could not be saved," so we can have no evidence of our "election to salvation," but as being the subjects of "sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth."

Thus, while the blessing itself is an antidote to despair, the means connected with it are a preservative from presumption. In short, we shall view the doctrine of election in much the same light as we do other Divine appointments concerning our lot in the present life. We are given to believe that what we enjoy in this life is so ordered by the will of God, and so much the effect of providence, that there is no ground whatever of boasting in any creature; yet we do not on this account neglect to plough or sow, or pursue the good and avoid the evil.

## Believe the Word; Fret Not About "Consistency"

A "fleshy mind" may ask, How can these things be? How can predestination be made to comport with human agency and accountability? But a truly humble Christian, finding both in the Bible, will believe both, though he may be unable fully to conceive of their consistency! and will find in the one a motive to depend upon God, and in the other a caution against slothfulness and a presumptuous neglect of duty.

A Christian minister also, if he takes his views simply from the Scriptures, will find nothing in this doctrine to hinder the free use of warnings, invitations, and persuasions, either to the converted or to the unconverted. Not that he will found his hopes of success on the pliability of the

human mind; but on the power and grace of God, who, while he prophesieth to the dry bones as he is commanded, is known to inspire many with the breath of life.

Thus, while the apostle, in the ninth, tenth, and eleventh chapters of his Epistle to the Romans, traces the Divine sovereignty in his calling some from among the Jews, and leaving the greater part of them to perish in unbelief; he nevertheless, so long as they were in the world, was deeply concerned for them. Even in his preaching to the Gentiles he had an eye to them, "if by any means he might provoke to emulation them that were his flesh, and might save some of them." And though he taught believers from among them to ascribe their salvation entirely to electing grace, and spoke of the rest as being blinded, yet he represents that blindness as being their own fault, to which they were judicially given up of God, Romans 11:7-10.

## Bible Doctrine of Election

(Continued from page 3)  
they which are written in the Lamb's book of life."

b. The passages which distinctly declare that this, which may be thus inferred to have been an eternal election, is really such:

Eph. 3:11: "According to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord."

2 Tim. 1:9: "Who saved us, and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before times eternal."

(3) Election to salvation, and not to mere external privileges. The next point to be proved is that this is an election to salvation, and not to mere external privileges. This is proved by such passages as the following:

John 10:26: "Ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep." Verse 27: "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me."

Rom. 8:28-30: "We know that to them that love God all things work together for good, even to them that are called according to his purpose." Paul now proceeds to tell who these are. "For whom he foreknew he also foreordained to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the first-born among many brethren: and whom he foreordained, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified." This passage shows that foreknowledge foreordination to holiness, calling, justification, and a state of glory, are inseparably connected, and hence that the election from which they proceed is to salvation.

Eph. 1:4-9: This passage speaks of our being chosen before the foundation of the world, "That we should be holy and without blemish before him in love: having foreordained us unto adoption as sons through Jesus Christ unto himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of the glory of his grace, which he freely bestowed on us in the Beloved: in whom we have our redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace, which he made to abound toward us in all wisdom and prudence, having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he purposed in him."

2 Thess. 2:13: After referring to others who were to have the same outward privileges, but upon whom God would send strong delusion, the apostle says in this verse, "For we are bound to give thanks to God always for you, brethren, beloved of the Lord, for that God chose you from the

## A Few Remarks By An Old Writer On God's Distinguishing Grace

By ABRAHAM BOOTH  
(1734-1806)

Author of a number of books. The following excerpts are from his famous **REIGN OF GRACE** (pages 55-63).

The doctrine of election, or, which is the same thing, the doctrine of distinguishing grace, is now very much exploded. It is generally deemed unworthy of serious notice, by the learned and philosophic gentlemen of the present age. Though it cannot be denied to have made a considerable figure in those systems of divinity that were adopted by men of eminence for piety and learning in former ages; and particularly by our first reformers from Popery; yet now it is ranked by many, among the rash opinions of a credulous antiquity. It is cashiered, as a doctrine abhorrent from reason, and as at eternal war with the moral perfections of God. It is consigned over to oblivion, as worthy of no more regard than the bold inquiries and wild conclusions, the laborious trifling and learned lumber, of the ancient, doting, Popish schoolmen. It is also traduced as a declared enemy to practical piety, and as highly injurious to the comfort and hope of mankind. This being the case, we need not wonder that it is now become quite unfashionable.

But what is the reason of this tragical outcry against it? If I be not greatly deceived, it is as follows. This doctrine lays the axe at the root of all our boasted moral excellence. This doctrine, in its native consequences, demolishes every subterfuge of human pride; as it leaves not the shadow of a difference between one man and another, why the Deity should regard and save this person rather than that; but teaches all who know and all who embrace it, to rest in that memorable maxim; **Even so, Father, FOR SO IT SEEMED GOOD IN THY SIGHT;** resolving the whole into divine grace and divine sovereignty. Without paying the least compliment to the learning, sagacity or character of any who dare to arraign the divine conduct it repels their insolence in the following blunt manner; **Nay but O Man! who art thou that repliest against God?**

It further teaches that as unmerited kindness and sovereign favour began the work of salvation so the same grace must carry it on and complete the vast design: while the Most High, ever jealous of his honour, is determined to have all the glory. Other reasons might be mentioned; but these may suffice to show, that the spirit of independence which is natural to man, and reigns in the unregenerate, must be fired with resentment by such an attack upon it. Hence the few notaries of this unpopular doctrine must expect reproach and ridicule, if not something more severe, to attend the profession of a tenet so unpolite.

## "Fruits" Not the Cause of Election

Faith in Christ and holy obedience are represented by the unerring Spirit as the fruits and effects of election: they cannot, therefore, be considered as the cause without absurdity in reason, and a contradiction to divine revelation. For it is written; **As many as were ordained to**

eternal life, believed — He hath chosen us—that we might be holy. They believed because they were ordained to eternal life; not ordained to eternal life, because it was foreseen they would believe. They were chosen, not because they were or ever would be holy; but that they might be so.

Those and those only, partake of faith, who are called by divine grace; but such only are called to faith and holiness, who were predestinated to be conformed to the image of Christ. For whom he did predestinate, them he also called.

Again: The chosen of God are the sheep of Christ. None but those who are so denominated believe on Him, according to his own declaration; **Ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep.** By which we are taught, that believing in Him does not make us sheep, or give us a right to the character; but is an evidence that we were so considered in the sight of God, and given into the hands of the great Shepherd to be saved by him.

Once more: God hath called us with an holy calling, not according to, not in consideration of our works, whether part or future; but according to His own purpose and grace, which he purposed in Christ Jesus before the world began. If, then, we are not called according to our works or worthiness but according to the everlasting purpose, and free distinguishing grace of Him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will; much less is it to be supposed, that we were chosen according to them, or in any foresight of them.

To illustrate the truth and confirm the argument, it may be further observed, that faith and holiness, in the method of grace, occupy a middle station. They are neither the foundation, nor the topstone, in the spiritual building. Though inseparably connected with election, they are neither its cause nor its consummation. That is sovereign grace; this infinite glory. Faith and holiness are, as one observes, what stalks and branches are to a root; by which the vegetable juices ascend, to produce and ripen the principal fruit. **By grace ye are saved THROUGH faith—chosen to salvation THROUGH sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth.**

Consequently, they are no more the cause of election, than the means necessary to attain any valuable end are the cause of appointing that end; than which nothing can be supposed more absurd. Besides, if men were foreseen as possessed of faith and holiness, prior to their election, and independent of it, it is hard to conceive what occasion there was for their being elected. There could be no necessity for it to secure their final happiness. For the Judge of all the earth must do it: and eternal misery was never designed to be the portion of any who believe and are holy; for peace and salvation are inseparably joined to such a state, and to such characters. To have ordained those to happiness and glory that were foreseen to be thus qualified, would, therefore, have been altogether unnecessary.

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## Ten Questions

(Continued from page 3)

add that so is the rest of the Word of God and the doctrines therein to the natural man.

But that election cannot be understood so far as the Scriptures teach, we deny. If we have the Spirit of God, we can understand the doctrine because it is revealed throughout the Bible. The thing about election that cannot be understood is why God elected such ungodly, wretched sinners to salvation when they deserved Hell. The only thing we can say to this is that it pleased God to do so. We preach election because it is taught in the Bible and because from it we draw the blessings of God.

5. What about II Peter 3:9 which says that God is not willing that any should perish?

II Peter 3:9 does not say that. Let us read it in full:

"The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is long-suffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance."

Peter is not writing here to ev-

erybody. And what he says about the Lord's not being willing that any should perish, does not refer to everybody. He plainly says that God's long-suffering is to "US-WARD." Who are the "us-ward," you ask. Well, read I Peter 1:2 and II Peter 3:1, and you will find that Peter wrote both of his epistles to the elect of God. Peter is answering here the scorners who were mocking the Christian's hope of the second coming of Christ. The scorners were saying, "Where is the promise of His coming?" etc. (v. 4). The reason Peter gives that the Lord has not come yet is that He is long-suffering to His elect and is not willing that any of them should perish, but that all of them should come to repentance. To say that God is not willing that anyone in the world should perish reveals total ignorance as to the attributes of God on the part of the individual who says so. For if God does not perform His will, then it proves that He is not sovereign and omnipotent and it makes His will subject to man's will. God's will, and not man's will, is sovereign. And since there are people who die and go to Hell, it is evident

(Continued on page 8)

beginning unto salvation" etc.

I Peter 5:10: "The God of all grace who called you unto his eternal glory in Christ," etc. Here the apostle is speaking of that effectual calling, which is the result of election, and tells us that it is a call unto eternal glory.

(4) An election of individuals and not of classes. This position needs to be explained. It is not denied that the elect that are to

(Continued on page 5, column 1)



## Chosen, Redeemed and Called

By JOHN GILL  
(1697-1771)

Pastored the church later pastored by C. H. Spurgeon; wrote a Commentary on the whole Bible in six large volumes; also a Body of Divinity and numerous other writings.

Augustus Toplady said of him: "If any one man can be supposed to have trod the whole circle of human learning it was Gill."



John Gill

The subjects of effectual vocation, they whom God calls by His grace to His eternal glory (I Pet. 5:10) are those who are chosen: "Whom He did predestinate, them He also called" (Rom. 8:30). Election and vocation are of equal extent. The objects are the same, neither more nor fewer. They that were chosen from eternity, are called in time; and they that are called in time, were chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world. The "vessels of mercy, afore prepared unto glory" are explained and described by such whom God hath called; not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles (9:23-24). They are such who are in Christ, and secured in Him; for they are called according to the grace given them in Christ Jesus before the world began. And as grace was given them so early, they themselves, in some sense, must then have a being in Him; which they have through being chosen in Him, and thereby coming into His hands, they are secured and preserved in Him, in consequence of which they are called by grace.

Thus stands the order of things as put by the apostle Jude (V. 1). "To them that are sanctified by God the Father"; that is set apart by Him in eternal election; "and preserved in Christ Jesus"; being put into His hands by that act of grace; "and called" in virtue of the foregoing acts of grace. They are such who are redeemed by Christ; vocation follows redemption, and is the certain consequent of it: "I have redeemed

thee: I have called thee by thy name; thou art Mine" (Isa. 43:1).

Election, redemption, and vocation, are of the same persons. Those whom God has chosen in Christ are redeemed by Christ, and who are chosen and redeemed are, sooner or later, called; and the reason of their being called is because they are redeemed. "I will hiss for them, and gather them for I have redeemed them" (Zech. 10:8). Those that are called are for the most part either the meanest, or the vilest among men, the meanest as to their outward circumstances. "Not many mighty, not many noble are called." And the meanest as to their internal capacities; "Not many wise men after the flesh." The things of the gospel and of the grace of God, are "hid from the wise and prudent, and revealed unto babes" (I Cor. 1:26; James 2:5; Mat. 11:25). And oftentimes some of the worst and vilest of sinners are called by grace; publicans and harlots went into the kingdom of God when scribes and pharisees did not; attended the ministry of the Word, and were called by it, when they were not. Christ came, as He says, "not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance" (Matt. 9:13; I Cor. 6:11).

### Bible Doctrine of Election

(Continued from page 4)

be true believers, and that true believers are the elect. The character of the elect does not, therefore, enter into this question. The issue is simply, Does God choose all who shall believe? and are they as such his elect? or, Does he choose his elect, and will they, as such, believe? Is belief the result of God's election, or is God's election the result of man's faith? Upon this point the proof is very clear:

Acts 14:48: "As many as were ordained to eternal life believed." This is a historical statement made subsequent to the event, not by man's knowledge, but by inspiration.

Eph. 1:4, 5: "Even as he chose us in him . . . having foreordained us unto adoption as sons."

2 Thess. 2:13: "But we are bound to give thanks to God alway for you, brethren, beloved of the Lord, for that God chose you from the beginning unto salvation in sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth." Here the choice is made to salvation, and the means to salvation, sanctification and faith are indicated, no prerequisite or means being stated as to election. It is not as believers that they are elected, but as elected, that they are saved.

Rom. 8:29: "Whom he foreknew he also foreordained to be conformed to the image of his Son." The foreknowledge here is of persons, not of personal acts, not of those whose faith he foreknew, nor, as would be essential to their theory, is it of the class of believers as such. The Arminian theory would require the substitution of the words "as believers," or "you as believers," instead of those which are used. It is not, therefore, to the class of believers, but to individuals,

that election refers. But, it may be asked, does it not refer to them in that character? Did not God choose those whose faith he foresaw? This will be fully answered before this discussion is closed.

(5) *Without respect to the action or merits of the persons elected.* This is merely a negative form of the same fact stated by the next point affirmatively. It is better therefore, to unite this with the succeeding one, which is,

(6) *Simply according to God's own good pleasure.* The last point to be noticed in this theory is that the election was made through the mere good pleasure of God. Of course it is not meant that God acted arbitrarily or capriciously in electing certain persons out of the universal ruin to make them objects of his special constraining grace. God never acts without good and sufficient reasons. And if God had seen fit to tell us why he chose some, with the purpose that whatever the rest might do, these at least should certainly be brought to salvation, we should, doubtless magnify and extol his wisdom in so electing. But he has not seen fit thus to explain. He has acted of his own sovereign will, according to his own good pleasure. One thing we do know, he has not made the election because of any action or merits of the persons elected. He has made it because, as sovereign, he had the right so to make it, and because, for reasons satisfactory to himself, it was his good pleasure to do so.

Several classes of passages may be cited in proof of this point. Some of these simply affirm a choice by God's sovereign will; others, while asserting this, also deny merit in those elected; and still others represent the fact of sovereignty by asserting a choice

of such persons as would not ordinarily be chosen. The following are some of the passages which prove these points:

a. Such as simply assert sovereign will. Such are Matt. 24:40-41 and Luke 17:33-36. These declare the sovereign choice of God by showing such choice exercised as to persons in the same situation, so that the one shall be taken and the other left; "two men on one bed"; "two women grinding at the mill"; "two men shall be in the field"; one of each shall be taken and the other left.

John 3:3-8: Regeneration is here spoken of as essential to entrance into the kingdom of God. This precedes any act on which election is said by any to depend. Yet the sovereignty of God in this is declared in verse 8: "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the voice thereof, but knowest not whence it cometh, and whither it goeth; so is every one that is born of the Spirit."

John 6:37, 39, 44, 64, 65: "All that which the Father giveth me shall come unto me . . . This is the will of him that sent me, that of all that which he hath given me I should lose nothing . . . No man can come to me except the Father which sent me draw him . . . Jesus knew from the beginning who they were that believed not, and who it was that should betray him. And he said, For this cause have I said unto you, that no man can come unto me, except it be given unto him of the Father."

John 15:16: "Ye did not choose me, but I chose you, and appointed you, that ye should go and bear fruit." The object to be attained cannot be the cause.

John 17:2: "As thou gavest him authority over all flesh, that whatsoever thou hast given him to them he should give eternal life." (See also verse 6-12).

Acts 22:14: Ananias says to Paul, "The God of our fathers hath appointed thee to know his will."

Eph. 1:5: In the fourth verse having referred to God's choice of us before the foundation of the world, he says in this fifth verse: "Having foreordained us unto adoption as sons through Jesus Christ unto himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of the glory of his grace." In verse 11 we are said to be predestinated to our inheritance "according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his will."

James 1:18: "Of his own will he brought us forth by the word of truth."

b. Such as deny merit in the persons elected as well as assert the sovereign choice of God. Ezek. 36:32: In this passage after describing the blessings connected with the new dispensation and the gift of the Spirit and the new heart which he would give them, —gifts which the Calvinistic theory regards as the result of election, but which the Arminian maintains to be its cause,—God adds: "Not for your sakes do I this, saith the Lord God, be it known unto you: be ashamed and confounded for your ways, O house of Israel."

John 1:11-13: "He came unto his own, and they that were his own received him not. But as many as received him, to them gave he the right to become children of God, even to them that believe on his name: which were born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God."

In Rom. 9:11-16 election is illustrated by the case of the twins: "The children being not yet born, neither having done anything, good or bad, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth . . . So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy."

Rom. 11:5, 6: "Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace. But if it is by grace, it is no more of works; otherwise grace is no more grace."

## John Bunyan's 'Statement of Faith' As To Elective Grace

As Stated in THE  
WORKS OF JOHN BUNYAN  
Volume II, pages 598, 599



John Bunyan  
(1628-1688)

Wrote the famous book, *THE PILGRIM'S PROGRESS*.

Spent many years in old Bedford jail for preaching the Gospel. He still preached to sinners who gathered outside the jail and hundreds were saved.

1. I believe that election is free and permanent, being founded in grace, and the unchangeable will of God. (Romans 11:5, 6; II Timothy 2:19).

2. I believe that this decree, choice, or election, was before the foundation of the world; and so before the elect themselves, had being in themselves: For "God who quickeneth the dead, and calleth those things which be not as though they were" (Romans 4:17), stays not for the being of things, to determine His eternal purpose by; but having all things present to Him, and His wisdom, He made His choice before the world was. (Ephesians 1:4, II Timothy 1:9).

3. I believe that the decree of election is so far off from making works in us foreseen the ground or cause of the choice: that it containeth in the bowels of it, not only the persons, but the graces that accompany their salvation. And hence it is, that it is said; we are predestinated to be conformed to the image of his Son (Romans 8:29), not because we are, but "that WE SHOULD be holy and without blame before him in love." (Ephesians 1:4, Ephesians 2:10). He blessed us according as He chose us in Christ. And hence it is again that the salvation and calling of which we are now made partakers, is no other than what was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began; according to His eternal purpose which He purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord. (Ephesians 3:8-11; II Timothy 1:9; Romans 8:29).

4. I believe that Christ Jesus is He in whom the elect are always considered and that without Him there is neither election,

grace, nor salvation. (Ephesians 1:5, 7, 10; Acts 4:12).

5. I believe that there is not any impediment attending the election of God that can hinder their conversion, and eternal salvation. (Romans 8:30-35, Romans 11:7, Jeremiah 51:5; Acts 9:12-15).

6. I believe that no man can know his election, but by his calling. The vessels of mercy, which God afore prepared unto glory, do thus claim a share therein. (Romans 9:24, 25).

7. I believe therefore, that election doth not forestall or prevent the means which are of God appointed to bring us to Christ, to grace, and to glory; but rather putteth a necessity upon the use and effect thereof; because they are chosen to be brought to Heaven that way; that is, by the faith of Jesus Christ, which is the end of effectual calling. (II Peter 1:10; II Thessalonians 2:13; I Peter 1:12).

c. Such as so describe the persons chosen as to imply this. Matt. 11:25, 26: "At that season Jesus answered and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou didst hide these things from the wise and understanding and didst reveal them unto babes; yea, Father, for so it was well pleasing in thy sight."

Luke 4:25-27: Christ illustrates this sovereignty of God by mentioning that many widows had been in Israel, yet had only a heathen widow been blessed; and again many lepers cured. "Of a truth I say unto you, There were many widows in Israel in the days of Elijah . . . and unto none of them was Elijah sent, but only to Zarepath in the land of Sidon, unto a woman that was a widow. And there were many lepers in Israel in the time of Elisha the prophet; and none of them was cleansed, but only Naaman the Syrian."

Acts 26:12-23: Paul's description of his personal condition at his conversion shows that God chose him, not for his merits but from His own good pleasure.

I Cor. 1:26-30: "For behold your calling, brethren, how that not many wise after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called; but God chose the foolish things of the world that he might put to shame them that are wise; and God chose the weak things of the world that he might put to shame the things that are strong; and the base things of the world, and the things that are despised, did God choose, yea, and the things that are not, that he might bring to naught the things that are, that no flesh should glory before God. But of him are ye in Christ Jesus," etc.

Gal. 1:15, 16: Paul says, "When it was the good pleasure of God, who separated me even from my mother's womb, and called me through his grace, to reveal his

Son in me, that I might preach," etc.

Eph. 2:1-13: The description of the condition of those who were dead in trespasses and sins, and in that state were quickened, proves that the quickening and salvation was due to no merit of their own.

The tests thus exhibited under these three classes prove conclusively that not on account of their own merits, but because of the good pleasure of God, does he choose men. They have been presented at some length, because this is after all the point upon which all that is important in this controversy turns. For, although other matters are equally essential to the doctrine, the whole opposition arises from an unwillingness on the part of man to recognize the sovereignty of God, and to ascribe salvation entirely to grace.

This proof, however, has been by no means exhausted, the attempt having been to select some only of the numerous passages, and mainly such as from their conciseness allow of presentation in full. Let the Scriptures be read with reference to this doctrine, and every passage marked which indicates God's dealing with men as an absolute sovereign, and also every declaration which ascribes election or the fruits of it to his choice and not to the will or acts of men, and every illustration afforded that this is God's usual method, and it will appear that scarcely any book of Scripture will fail to furnish testimony to the fact that in the acts of grace, no less than those of providence, God "doeth according to his will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth." (Dan. 4:3-5).

(Taken from ABSTRACT OF SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY by J. P. Boyce, now out of print.)



# Particular or Limited Redemption

By J. R. GRAVES  
(1820-1893)

Edited THE TENNESSEE BAPTIST: Wrote JOHN'S BAPTISM; SEVEN DISPENSATIONS; many other works.

(The following excerpts from SEVEN DISPENSATIONS, Chapter VII).

"If His atonement was limited, and to Adam's race only, did it include all, or only a part, of the human family? All denominations, with the above exception (Universalists) hold and teach that only a part, and comparatively a small part, of Adam's race will be saved; and if not, then must it not be because they were not included in the Covenant of Redemption, and given to Christ to save?"

"It is quite impossible to bring an unprejudiced mind and a balanced reason to the examination of these questions. All Bible readers have taken position; and the verdict of the world is made up; and how difficult to reverse or modify it. They involve the sovereignty of God in the bestowment of His favors. All men are by nature Arminians; and the absolute sovereignty of God is a doctrine hateful to the natural and depraved heart. False teachers have taken the advantage of this natural feeling, and have for ages inflamed the prejudices of Christian men and women against any exercise of sovereignty on the part of God in this Covenant, either as to His 'determinate counsels,' His electing love, or His distinguishing grace. They presumptuously and impiously assert, that, unless God extended the same grace to all the lost that He did to those who are saved, He is justly chargeable with partiality and injustice, and, if He saw fit, in the dispensation of His grace, when none would, if left to themselves, accept or desire it, and, indeed, all have rejected it, to so influence the wills of some that they would seek His grace, He is guilty of forcing some men to be saved, and others to be lost. But we know that the Omniscient God is incapable of doing wrong; and if it plainly revealed that He passed by all the fallen angels, who will charge Him with sin or wrong had He passed by all of Adam's race? How, then, can He be charged with injustice, if He saw fit to save a portion of it?"

"Now, will not, must not, all unprejudiced Bible-reading Christians agree to the following propositions?"

"1. That the Son undertook and will save all the Father, in the Covenant of Redemption, gave Him to save.

"2. Since all are not saved, as all evangelical Christians admit, we must conclude that all were not given to the Son.

"3. That the Father, in the Covenant of Redemption, gave some of Adam's race to His Son to be redeemed.

"Christ is pleased to allude to Himself as the Shepherd of Israel, chosen by the Father — the Good Shepherd, who lays down his life for His sheep, i.e., those the Father gave Him to redeem from among men. The shepherds of Palestine, as well as those of England and Scotland in our day, have the sheep counted out to them in the spring; and for the safety of these they become personally responsible: so that in the fall, when they are returned, they are counted back and they are compelled to pay for all they lose. The loss of a part of the flock is an implication of unfaithfulness or lack of ability on the part of the shepherd."

"Christ magnifies His office of Shepherd; He is faithful and true; He is omnipotent; no one is able to pluck the least lamb of the flock out of His hands. His sheep are those His Father gave to Him in the Covenant of Redemption. All these Christ, from the beginning, knew (John 6:64); and all

these will believe on Him, and come to Him; nor come unto Him, discover from this that they are, at least, not His sheep."

"Then—of this we may be confident—all given to the Son by the Father will certainly come to Him and be saved."

"We must admit that not all of Adam's race were given by the Father to the Son to be saved, else all will be saved, as the Universal redemptionists falsely teach."

"Christ took hold of a special class, and a definite number, known by the Father, to succor and to save, and whom He calls the 'Seed of Abraham,' 'His Seed,' 'His Sheep,' 'The lost sheep of the house of Israel.' To save none others was He specially sent into the world. 'I was not sent except to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.' (Matt. 15:24).

"Those He foreknew He gave to His Son to save; and these Christ received, and is said to have written their very names in His Book of Life from the foundation of the world. (Rev. 13:8). These, given to Him by the Father, whose names He has written in His Book of Life, He also, as their High-priest, bears upon His shoulders, and upon His breastplate, as Aaron did the names of the twelve tribes of Israel, whom God, in Covenant, gave His Son. Various are the designations given these in the Scriptures: 'The Seed of the woman,' 'the seed of Abraham,' 'the Elect of God,' 'the Election,' 'Israel,' 'the seed of Jacob,' 'my People,' 'my Sheep,' when Christ is referred to as Shepherd; 'the Lamb's Wife,' 'Peculiar People,' 'Holy Nation.'

"These are those Christ repre-

## GRAVES ON THE LIMITED ATONEMENT

In the "Great Carrollton Debate," between J. R. Graves and Jacob Ditzler (Methodist), held at Carrollton, Missouri in 1875, Graves made the following remarks in his defense of the doctrine of Eternal Security:

"He (Christ) did not contract for the lost angels, nor for all men. He only took hold of the 'seed of Abraham,' not of Adam."

"If He had taken hold of the nature of the lost angels, they would all have been saved. If of the seed of Adam, all men would have been saved, and Universalism would have been the true doctrine. But he contracted as surety, Mediator, only for 'the seed of Abraham'—the elect of mankind."

"I know this is death to Arminianism, the natural religion of all natural men. They want to believe that they elect themselves, and then Christ takes them into His Covenant. The Christian's will has been subdued to the will of God, and he is willing for God to be an absolute sovereign—and in his own experience he knows it, if a Christian, and if not, he doesn't know it, and dislikes to receive it. We were made to love God because He first loved us. We elected or chose Him, because He first elected or chose us." (page 1136).

"It was owing to God's Sovereign love," says an Evangelical writer, "and mere good pleasure, that the elect, the seed of Abraham, and not others in the same condemnation, by the fealty of the first Covenant, were represented and contracted for by Jesus Christ in the second, that their names were put in the eternal contract, while those of angels and others were left out. They were the father's choice, and that was enough for Christ, and should be enough for us. 'Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight.'"

"Infidels may wrest this hard doctrine, more fully developed by Paul than any other Apostle, to their own destruction, but a host of the best and clearest minds that have ever lived on earth have advocated it—as Augustine, Calvin, etc., and Knox, Henry—and it is crystalized in the creeds of Presbyterians, Episcopalians, Methodists, as well as Baptists. We see here no universal Atonement or Redemption." (page 1138).

sents in the Covenant of Redemption; for whom He died; for whom He intercedes, and will intercede; and His atoning work will go on until the last one shall have received the blessing of His atonement; and His work will not be finished until a whole world of sinners will be saved. We do not mean until all who are now living, or who have ever lived on this earth, will be saved, but until enough have been redeemed to re-people this entire earth when it shall have been redeemed — a new heaven. (Rom. 8; Rev. 22).

"The most unyielding Arminian must admit that the Omniscient



JAMES ROBINSON GRAVES

cient Father foreknew, from the beginning; each man and woman, and therefore the entire number that would come to His Son and be saved; for 'the foundation of the Lord standeth sure, having this seal, the Lord knoweth them that are his; and 'known unto God are all his works (and this must be true of His plans) from the beginning of the world.' But those of the race the Father gave to Christ, while known to Him, are unknown to me, and Christ, as Saviour, therefore is freely offered to all to whom the gospel is preached or the Bible sent."

"If any are saved, it must be because God, in the exercise of His sovereignty, willed, i.e. determined that some should be saved; and these He quickens from their death in trespasses and sins and gives to them repentance and the remission of sins. The Brazen Serpent was uplifted on the pole in the very midst of the camp, and the proclamation of life for a look was made, and urged upon all; and yet doubtless thousands died

conditions and races of men, and, savingly, only all men given Him by the Father. Is not this His explanation of the phrase 'all whom the Father giveth me shall come unto me?' These are the 'all' from whom He gave himself a ransom to be testified in due time."

"It was for the 'all men' given by the Father that Christ savingly died; and it was for their justification He rose from the dead; and it was for these alone He prayed on earth, and intercedes in heaven."

"It must therefore be admitted that, if the Father had given all men to His Son, in the sense He did some men, then all men would come to Christ for salvation; but all do not come — comparatively few do come; and these would not, unless graciously drawn to Christ by the Father. (John 6:44)."

"The Arminian, we know, will

## Sovereignty Exhibited

(Continued from page one)

with the boldness of an infuriated demon, will dare to denounce, as an Almighty tyrant, the Lord God who reveals himself the Sovereign Jehovah. Audacious man prescribes measures to Omnipotence, and will not trust sovereignty even to God. There is no degree of force which he will not employ to banish it from the Scriptures.

The God of the Scriptures stoops not to satisfy his impertinent demands. He speaks as a sovereign, and deigns not to smooth the way to the reception of his testimony by removing difficulties to faith; but in almost everything that he teaches, he leaves something to manifest disaffection where it exists. There is not a doctrine in Scripture which perverse ingenuity has not found something at which to cavil, in the manner of its exhibition in the words of the Holy Spirit. No man would have written, if left to his own wisdom, as God has written, the Bible. The style of it is indeed truly in wisdom, but it is in sovereign wisdom. It strikes continually at the pride of man. God sends the message of mercy in such a way that many cry out that they will rather expose themselves to his wrath than receive such a foregiveness.

## Providence Testifies to Sovereignty

Even the rejection of revelation will not relieve from the evidence of the sovereignty of God. The ways of the God of Providence are in sovereignty as well as those of the God of the Bible. It is impossible to deny sovereignty, consistently with the admission of perfect power and wisdom in the Ruler of the world.

That misery exists is a fact that cannot be denied, whatever account the vanity of human wisdom may be inclined to give of its origin. Why did an Almighty, All-wise God permit sin and misery to enter? Human wisdom, or folly, has always been employed in giving an answer to this question. But it will always remain unanswered. The human faculties cannot grapple with the subject. It must be left with divine sovereignty. How the existence of sin and misery is consistent with omnipotence, wisdom, goodness, etc., the intellect of man cannot perceive.

## Sovereignty in the Gospel

The sovereignty of God is most illustriously displayed in the gospel. It meets us at the very threshold, in the fact that Christ interposed for man and not for fallen angels. Why did he not rather take on Him the recovery of the superior nature? Why did He not save both? To ask such questions with the impression that an answer is either necessary or possible for man, is most audacious arrogance. Can human ingenuity

plant the batteries of his rebellion against the sovereignty of God in man's salvation, as expressed in this prayer, and presumptuously charge his Creator with partiality and even sin in thus dealing with man, but he will effect no more than to discover the unsubdued rebellion of his own heart to the government of God. Why does he not charge God with partiality and sin in passing by the lost angels, and taking hold of men instead, an inferior order of beings? Why will not these Arminian professors charge God with the sin of partiality in not creating all men equal constitutionally and intellectually? Why in not offering to all nations, and all men in every nation, the same gospel advantages? God is as chargeable with sin, or blame, in the one case as in the other. We have no controversy with a sovereign God. — Rom. 9:14-26."

find out what God has concealed? We know nothing about redemption but what God has revealed. No absurdity can be greater, than in the matter of redemption to go beyond revelation.

In the redemption of sinners, sovereignty offends human wisdom with respect to its extent. Why are not all men actually saved from hell? Acres of paper have been wasted in attempting to account for this, independently of the divine sovereignty. Men may attempt to impose on themselves with words. But after considering everything that human wisdom can allege, have we got an answer which enables us to acquiesce with satisfaction in the eternal misery of either angels or men? We have no relief but by unreserved acquiescing in the sovereignty of God.

## Opposition to No Avail

The sovereignty of God is so offensive to the proud heart of man, that every expedient of artifice has been employed to banish it from the Bible. But no expedient has ever succeeded—no expedient ever will succeed. The sovereignty of Jehovah meets us in every page of the Bible.

Nothing more strongly shows the enmity of the human heart to this part of the divine character than the forced attempts of learning and ingenuity to expel it from the ninth chapter of the Epistle to the Romans. Every engine of torture has been employed to make the apostle retract, prevaricate, or soften. But all in vain. The obstinate witness, after every sinew is cracked, after every joint is dislocated, still cries, "Sovereignty, sovereignty, not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God who showeth mercy."

Even the Christian, if he will listen to his own wisdom, will not admire this feature in the divine countenance, and will not be indisposed to throw it into the shade. He will talk like a sage, in the language of science, and adopt as an improvement the criticism that makes God less hateful in the wisdom of man. But after all that human ingenuity can allege, the only reason that keeps any man from seeing a sovereign God in this chapter is that he does not like a sovereign God.

## Sovereignty in Substitution

The sovereignty of God is seen in the substitution of Christ to bear the curse of the law in the room of his people. Sin is often represented in Scripture as debt. The representation is true, but it does not give the full character of sin. Sin must be viewed as crime as well as debt. In the payment of a debt justice can make no difference, whether it comes from the debtor, or from any other who is willing to advance it. Justice cannot refuse to accept payment from any substitute.

(Continued on page 8, column 4)



# Divine Foreknowledge

By ARTHUR W. PINK  
(1886-1952)

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ARTHUR W. PINK

What controversies have been engendered by this subject in the past! But what truth of Holy Scripture is there which has not been made the occasion of theological and ecclesiastical battles? The deity of Christ, His virgin birth, His atoning death, His second advent; the believer's justification, sanctification, security; the church, its organization, officers, discipline; baptism, the Lord's supper, and a score of other precious truths might be mentioned. Yet, the controversies which have been waged over them did not close the mouths of God's faithful servants; why, then, should we avoid the vexed question of God's Foreknowledge, because, forsooth, there are some who will charge us with fomenting strife? Let others contend if they will, our duty is to bear witness according to the light vouchsafed us.

## Foreknowledge Misunderstood

There are two things concerning the Foreknowledge of God about which many are in ignorance: the meaning of the term, its Scriptural scope. Because this ignorance is so widespread, it is an easy matter for preachers and teachers to palm off perversions of this subject, even upon the people of God. There is only one safeguard against error, and that is to be established in the faith; and for that, there has to be prayerful and diligent study, and a receiving with meekness the engrafted Word of God. Only then are we fortified against the attacks of those who assail us.

There are those today who are mis-using this very truth in order to discredit and deny the absolute sovereignty of God in the salvation of sinners. Just as higher critics are repudiating the Divine inspiration of the Scriptures; evolutionists, the work of God in creation; so some pseudo Bible teachers are perverting His foreknowledge in order to set aside His unconditional election unto eternal life.

When the solemn and blessed subject of Divine foreordination is expounded, when God's eternal choice of certain ones to be conformed to the image of His Son is set forth, the Enemy sends along some man to argue that election is based upon the foreknowledge of God, and this "foreknowledge" is interpreted to mean that God foresaw certain ones would be more pliable than others, that they would respond more readily to the strivings of the Spirit, and that because God knew they would believe, He, accordingly, predestinated them unto salvation. But such a statement is radically wrong. It repudiates the truth of total depravity, for it makes His decrees rest upon what He discovers in the creature. It completely turns things upside down, for in saying God foresaw certain sinners would believe in Christ, and that because of this, He predestinated them unto salvation, is the very reverse of the truth. Scripture affirms that God, in His high sovereignty, singled out certain ones to be recipients of His distinguishing favours (Acts 13:43), and therefore He determined to bestow upon them the gift of faith. False theology makes God's foreknowledge of our believing the cause of His election to salvation; whereas, God's election is the cause, and our believing in Christ is the effect.

## Foreknowledge Defined

Ere proceeding further with our

discussion of this much misunderstood theme, let us pause and define our terms. What is meant by "foreknowledge"? "To know beforehand" is the ready reply of many. But we must not jump at conclusions, nor must we turn to Webster's dictionary as the final court of appeal, for it is not a matter of the etymology of the term employed. What is needed is to find out how the word is used in Scripture. The Holy Spirit's usage of an expression always defines its meaning and scope. It is failure to apply this simple rule which is responsible for so much confusion and error. So many people assume they already know the signification of a certain word used in Scripture, and then they are too dilatory to test their assumptions by means of a concordance. Let us amplify this point.

Take the word "flesh." Its meaning appears to be so obvious that many would regard it as a waste of time to look up its various connection in Scripture. It is hastily assumed that the word is synonymous with the physical body, and so no inquiry is made. But, in fact, "flesh" in Scripture frequently includes far more than what is corporeal; all that is embraced by the term can only be ascertained by a diligent comparison of every occurrence of it and by a study of each separate context.

Take the word "world." The average reader of the Bible imagines this word is the equivalent for the human race, and consequently, many passages where the term is found are wrongly interpreted.

Take also the word "immortality." Surely it requires no study! Obviously it has reference to the indestructibility of the soul. Ah, my reader, it is foolish and wrong to assume anything where the Word of God is concerned. If the reader will take the trouble to carefully examine each passage where "mortal" and "immortal" are found, it will be seen these words are never applied to the soul, but always to the body.

Now what has just been said on "flesh," the "world," "immortality," applies with equal force to the terms "know" and "foreknow." Instead of imagining that these words signify no more than a simple cognition, the different passages in which they occur require to be carefully weighed. The word "foreknowledge" is not found in the Old Testament. But "know" occurs there frequently. When that term is used in connection with God, it often signifies to regard with favor, denoting not mere cognition but an affection for the object in view.

"I know thee by name" (Ex. 33:17).

"Ye have been rebellious against the Lord from the day that I knew thee" (Jer. 1:5).

"They have made princes and I knew not" (Hos. 8:4).

"You only have I known of all the families of the earth" (Amos 3:2).

In these passages "knew" signifies either loved or appointed.

In like manner, the word "know" is frequently used in the New Testament, in the same sense as in the Old Testament.

"Then will I profess unto them,

I never knew you" (Matt. 7:23).

"I am the good shepherd and know My sheep and am known of Mine" (John 10:14).

"If any man love God the same is known of Him" (I Cor. 8:3).

"The Lord knoweth them that are His" (II Tim. 2:19).

## Foreknowledge of PERSONS

Now the word "foreknowledge" as it is used in the N. T. is less ambiguous than in its simple form "to know." If every passage in which it occurs is carefully studied, it will be discovered that it is a moot point whether it ever has reference to the mere preception of events which are yet to take place. The fact is that "foreknowledge" is never used in Scripture in connection with events or actions; instead, it always has reference to persons. It is persons God is said to "foreknow," not the actions of those persons. In proof of this we shall now quote each passage where this expression is found.

The first occurrence is in Acts 2:23. There we read, "Him being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain." If careful attention is paid to the wording of this verse it will be seen that the apostle was not there speaking of God's foreknowledge of the act, but of the crucified: "Him (Christ being delivered by," etc.

The second occurrence is in Rom. 8:29, 30. "For whom He did foreknow, He also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the Firstborn among many brethren. Moreover whom He did predestinate, them He also called," etc. Weigh well the pronoun that is used here. It is not what He did foreknow, but whom He did. It is not the surrendering of their wills nor the believing of their hearts, but the persons themselves, which is here in view.

"God hath not cast away His people which He foreknew" (Rom. 11:2). Once more the plain reference is to persons, and to persons only.

The last mention is in I Peter 1:2: "Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father." Who are "elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father"? The previous verse tells us: the reference is to the "strangers scattered" i.e. the Diaspora, the Dispersion, the believing Jews. Thus, here too the reference is to persons, and not to their foreseen acts.

Now in view of these passages (and there are not more) what scriptural ground is there for anyone saying that God "foreknew" the acts of certain ones, viz., their "repenting and believing," and that because of those acts He elected them unto salvation? The answer is, None whatever. Scripture never speaks of repentance and faith as being foreseen or foreknown by God. Truly, He did know from all eternity that certain ones would repent and believe, yet this is not what Scripture refers to as the object of God's "foreknowledge." The word uniformly refers to God's foreknowing persons: then let us "hold fast the forms of sound words" (II Tim. 1:13).

## Decree Precedes Foreknowledge

Another thing to which we desire to call particular attention is that the first two passages quoted above show plainly and teach implicitly that God's "foreknowledge" is not causative, that instead, something is His own sovereign decree. Christ was "delivered by the (1) determinate counsel and (2) foreknowledge of God" (Acts 2:23). His "counsel" or decree was the ground of His foreknowledge. So again in Rom. 8:29. That verse opens with the word "for," which tells us to look back to what immediately precedes. What, then, does the previous verse say? This, "all things work together for good to

# NOTES ON ELECTION

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## 1. Election is God's Act.

John 15:16—"Ye have not chosen Me, but I have chosen you."

Mark 13:20—"For the elect's sake, whom He hath chosen."

James 2:5—"Hath not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith?"

Luke 18:17—"Shall not God avenge His own elect?"

I Thess. 1:4—"Knowing, brethren beloved, your election of God."

## 2. Election is God's Sovereign Act.

Romans 9:15-20 — "Therefore hath He mercy on whom He will have mercy, and whom He will He hardeneth. . . . Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God?"

## 3. Election is an Act of Sovereign Grace.

Romans 11:5-7—"What then? Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for; but the election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded . . . a remnant according to the election of grace."

## 4. Election was before the foundation of the world.

Ephesians 1:4—"According as He hath chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world."

## 5. Election was from the beginning.

II Thess. 2:13—"God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth."

them . . . who are the called according to His purpose." Thus God's "foreknowledge" is based upon His "purpose" or decree (see Psalm 2:7).

God foreknows what will be because He has decreed what shall be. It is therefore a reversing of the order of Scripture, a putting of the cart before the horse, to affirm that God elects because He foreknows people. Truth is, He "foreknows" because He has elected. This removes the ground or cause of election from outside the creatures and places it in God's own sovereign will. God purposed in Himself to elect a certain people, not because of anything good in them or from them, either actual or foreseen, but solely out of His own mere pleasure. As to why He chose the ones He did, we do not know, and can only say, "Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in Thy sight." The plain truth of Rom. 8:29 is that God, before the foundation of the world, singled out certain sinners and appointed them unto salvation (II Thess. 2:13). This is clear from the concluding words of the verse: "Predestinated to be conformed to the image of His Son," etc. God did not predestinate those whom He "foreknew were conformed," but, on the contrary, those whom He "foreknew" (i.e., loved and elected) He predestinated "to be conformed." Their conformity to Christ is not the cause, but the effect of God's foreknowledge and predestination.

## Foreseen Faith Not the Cause of Election

God did not elect any sinner because He foresaw that he would believe, for the simple but sufficient reason that no sinner ever does believe until God gives him faith; just as no man sees until God gives him sight. Sight is God's gift, seeing is the consequence of my using His gift. So faith is God's gift. If it were true that God had elected certain

Get these facts: The beginning was before anything was created. Gen. 1:1 and John 1:1. That was when the election took place. God elected men before He created them. The election was unto salvation. Salvation takes place through the sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth. The truth believed by which men are saved is revealed in the gospel. II Thess. 2:14 shows that no man was ever saved, who did not hear and believe the gospel.

## 6. Election was before birth.

Romans 9:11-12—"For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of Him that calleth; it was said unto her, the elder shall serve the younger."

## 7. Election is personal.

Rom. 9:13—"As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated."

Acts 9:15—"He (Saul) is a chosen vessel unto Me."

John 13:18—"I know whom I have chosen."

John 15:16—"Ye have not chosen Me but I have chosen you."

Romans 8:33—"Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect?"

Ephesians 1:11—"Having been foreordained according to the purpose of Him who worketh all things after the counsel of His own will." (R.V.)

ones to be saved because in due time they would believe, then that would make believing a meritorious act, and in that event the saved sinner would have ground for "boasting," which Scripture emphatically denies: Eph. 2:9.

Surely God's Word is plain enough in teaching that believing is not a meritorious act. It affirms that Christians are a people "who have believed through grace" (Acts 18:27). If, then, they have believed "through grace," there is absolutely nothing meritorious about "believing," and if nothing meritorious, it could not be the ground or cause which moved God to choose them. No; God's choice proceeds not from anything in us, or anything from us but solely from His own sovereign pleasure. Once more, Rom. 11:5, we read of "a remnant according to the election of grace." There it is, plain enough; election itself is of grace, and grace is unmerited favor, something for which we had no claim upon God whatsoever.

It thus appears that it is highly important for us to have clear and Scriptural views of the "foreknowledge" of God. Erroneous conceptions about it lead inevitably to thoughts most dishonouring to Him. The popular idea of (Continued on page 8, column 3)

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## AN OLD QUESTION ANSWERED—

**"IF SOME ARE ELECT, WHY PREACH?"**

By C. H. SPURGEON

Captious and cavilling persons will object, "You say that God loves His people, and therefore they will be saved; then what is the good of preaching?" What is the good of preaching? When I say that God loves a multitude that no man can number, a countless host of the race of men, do you ask me what is the good of preaching?

What is the good of preaching? To fetch these diamonds of the Lord out of the dunghill; to go down to the depths, as the diver does, to fetch up God's pearls from the place where they are.

What is the good of preaching? To cut down the good corn, and gather it into the garner.

What is the good of preaching? To fetch out God's elect from the ruins of the fall, and make them stand on the rock Christ Jesus, and see their standing sure.

Ah, ye who ask what is the good of preaching, because God has ordained some to salvation, we ask you whether it would not be a most foolish thing to say, because there is to be a harvest, what is the good of sowing? There is to be a harvest, what is the use of reaping? The very reason why we do sow and reap is, because we feel assured that there is to be a harvest.

And if, indeed, I believed there was not a number who must be saved, I could not go into a pulpit again. Only once make me think that no one is certain to be saved and I do not care to preach. But now I know that a countless number must be saved; I am confident that Christ "shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days." I know that, if there is much to dispirit me in my ministry, and I see but little of its effects, yet He shall keep all whom the Father has given to Him; and this makes me preach.

I come into this chapel tonight with the assurance that God has some child of His, in this place, not yet called; and I feel confident that He will call someone by the use of the ministry, so why not by me? I know there are not a few souls whom God

has given me through my ministry, not only hundreds, but thousands. I have seen some hundreds of those who profess to have been brought to God through my preaching at Park Street, and elsewhere; and with that confidence I must go on. I know that Jesus must have a "seed." His people must increase, and it is the very purpose of the ministry to seek them out, and bring them into God's fold. Our Saviour tells us the use of the ministry is, that they may "believe on me through their word."

There is one peculiarity about this. Christ says, "They shall believe on me through their word." Have you never heard people call out about running after men? They say, "You are all running after such-and-such a man." What then, would you have them run after a woman? You say, "The people go after one particular man." Whom else shall they go after? Some persons say, "We went to such-and-such a place, and the people there love their minister too much." That would be very dreadful, but it is not so. As for ministers being in danger of being ruined by too much love in any particular place, they get too much of the reverse somewhere else. If we get a little sweet, somebody else is sure to put in much that is bitter. Is it not singular that Christ should say, "They shall believe on me through their word?"

Now, do God's people believe on Christ through the word of the ministry? We know that our faith does not rest on the word of man, but on the Word of God. We do not rest on any man, yet it is through "their" word; that is, through the word of the apostles, and through the word of every faithful minister.

**Election**

(Continued from page 2)

in harmony with the Arminian scheme; but repentance and faith are not conditions of salvation, but rather, means of salvation, as Bro. Pendleton here points out. If the two were conditions of sal-

vation, then the sinner would be the one to perform the conditions of himself, and salvation would be, in part, the work of the sinner. But since repentance and faith are means to salvation, not conditions of salvation, and since the means are the gifts of God, salvation is wholly of God's efficacious, irresistible grace.)

God, therefore, in predestinating the salvation of His people, predestinated their repentance, and faith, and all other means necessary to their salvation. If any inquire, as is sometimes the case, what will become of those elected to eternal life if they do not repent and believe, it is best to answer by asking what would have become of the persons in the ship with Paul if the "shipmen" had not remained at their posts of duty. If it is said that the "shipmen" did remain, I say, those chosen to salvation will repent and believe.

The following passages teach the use of means in connection with the purpose of God in election:

**"God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation THROUGH SANCTIFICATION OF THE SPIRIT AND BELIEF OF THE TRUTH."**—II Thessalonians 2:13.

**"Therefore I endure all things for the elect's sake, that they may also OBTAIN THE SALVATION which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory."**—II Timothy 2:10. (Also I Pet. 1:2; Eph. 2:10).

From the first of these Scriptures, we learn that election to salvation is indicated by "sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth;" from the second, that Paul's many trials as a minister had an instrumental connection with the salvation of the elect; from the third, that election is not only through sanctification of the Spirit, but unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ; and from the last, that the purpose of election embraces foreordination to good works. In view of these passages, it is plain that the doctrine of predestination does not supercede the use of means, but requires them.

**VI. Election Only Known By Calling**

Before dismissing this topic, it should be said that as God's purpose of election is "in Himself," we can know nothing about it till it is disclosed in the "calling" already referred to. Paul, for example, when he preached in Thessalonica, knew nothing of the election of any of its citizens to eternal life, but after the grace of God was displayed in "effectual calling," he did not hesitate to write, "Knowing, brethren, beloved, your election of God."—I Thess. 1:4).

Hence, too, Peter wrote to his brethren, "Give diligence to make your calling and election sure."—II Peter 1:10. It is observable that he puts calling before election. God begins with election, but man cannot. He must begin with the calling, and when he makes that sure, the election is sure. The calling is the only attainable proof of the election.

It will be seen, therefore, that the question of election is, in the hands of a sinner, the most unmanageable of all questions. The reason is, it is none of his business, and he can do nothing with it.

The time has been when in some places sinners, becoming serious on the subject of salvation, instead of repenting and believing in Christ, employed themselves in efforts equally earnest and fruitless to ascertain whether they were elect or non-elect. This was, is, and ever must be, an absurdity. That which is required of sinners is expressed in the words of Peter: "Repent ye, therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out."—Acts 3:19.

**Divine Foreknowledge**

(Continued from page seven)

Divine foreknowledge is altogether inadequate. God not only knew the end from the beginning,

but He planned, fixed, predestinated everything from the beginning. And, as cause stands to effect, so God's purpose is the ground of His prescience. If then the reader be a real Christian, he is so because God chose him in Christ before the foundation of the world (Eph. 1:4), and chose not because He foresaw you would believe, but chose simply because it pleased Him to choose; chose you notwithstanding your natural unbelief. This being so, all the glory and praise belongs alone to Him. You have no ground for taking any credit to yourself. You have "believed through grace" (Acts 18:27), and that, because your very election was "of grace" (Rom. 11:5).

**Sovereignty Exhibited**

(Continued from page 6)

But it is not so with crime. The sheriff could not execute another who should present himself in the room of the prisoner. An absolute sovereign might in his sovereignty accept such substitution. God, then, in accepting the substitution of Christ, acts in sovereignty, and provides what the law has not provided. Had it been possible for man to have presented a substitute able to make atonement for transgression, God might have rejected him. The law under which man was made knows nothing of fulfillment by substitution. The acceptance of Christ as our substitute is in sovereignty. "This," says God, "is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." Here is a declaration of the Father's acceptance of the Son in the room of the guilty.

**Sovereignty Makes Us Differ**

There is sovereignty not only in God's choice of his people, there is sovereignty also in His conduct toward them. Even to them he gives no account of His matters. One He places in affluence, another in poverty; to one He gives much knowledge, to others very little; to some He gives health, others have scarcely a day free from pain. They all have troubles, but some have troubles beyond others. Sometimes He continues the least distinguished of them to the utmost term of human life, while the most talented are cut off in the midst of a glorious career of usefulness.

In ten thousand ways the Lord shows his dealings with His people to be in sovereignty as well as in mercy. They must not presume to question his comparative treatment of them. That He does all things well, they must believe on His own testimony.

**The Limited Atonement**

(Continued from page one)

afterwards." "No," says he, "I believe in a just God, and if God be just, He will not punish Christ first, and then punish men afterwards. No, my Saviour died, and now I am free from every demand of God's vengeance, and I can walk through this world secure; no thunderbolt can smite me, and I can die absolutely certain that for me there is no flame of Hell, and no pit digged; for Christ, my ransom, suffered in my stead, and, therefore, am I completely delivered. Oh! glorious doctrine! I would wish to die preaching it! What better testimony can we bear to the love and faithfulness of God than the testimony of a substitution eminently satisfactory for all them that believe on Christ?"

I will here quote the testimony of that pre-eminently profound divine, John Owen:

"Redemption is the freeing of a man from misery by the intervention of a ransom. Now, when a ransom is paid for the liberty of a prisoner, does not justice demand that he should have and enjoy the liberty so purchased for him by a valuable considera-

tion? If I should pay a thousand pounds for a man's deliverance from bondage to him that retains him, who hath power to set him free, and is contented with the price I give, were it not injurious to me and the poor prisoner that his deliverance be not accomplished? Can it possibly be conceived that there should be a redemption of men, and those men not redeemed? That a price should be paid and the ransom not consummated?

"Yet all this must be made true, and innumerable other absurdities, if universal redemption be asserted. A price is paid for all, yet few delivered; the redemption of all consummated, yet few of them redeemed, the judge satisfied, the jailer conquered, and yet the prisoners enthralled! Doubtless 'universal,' and 'redemption' where the greatest part of men perish, are as irreconcilable as 'Roman' and 'Catholic.'

"If there be a universal redemption of all, then all men are redeemed. If they are redeemed, then are they delivered from all misery, virtually or actually, whereunto they were enthralled, and that by the intervention of a ransom. Why, then, are not all saved? In a word, the redemption wrought by Christ being the full deliverance of the persons redeemed from all misery, where-in they were inwrapped, by the price of His blood, it can not possibly be conceived to be universal unless all be saved: so that the opinion of the Universalists is unsuitable to redemption."

**Foreordination**

(Continued from page one)

and to institute these laws. In so decreeing He necessarily decreed all that was to come. In fine, God foresaw the future events of the universe as certain, because He had decreed to create; but this determination to create involved also a determination of all the actual results of that creation; or, in other words, God decreed those results.

E. G. Robinson, Christian Theology, 84—"The existence of divine decrees may be inferred from the existence of natural law." Law—certainty—God's will. Positivists express great contempt for the doctrine of the eternal purpose of God, yet they consign us to the iron necessity of physical forces and natural laws. Robinson also points out that decrees are "implied in the prophecies. We cannot conceive that all events should have converged toward the one great event—the death of Christ—without the intervention of an eternal purpose."

No undecreed event can be foreseen. We grant that God decrees primarily and directly His own acts of creation, providence, and grace; but we claim that this involves also a secondary and indirect decreeing of the acts of free creatures which he foresees will result therefrom. There is therefore no such thing in God as *scientia media*, or knowledge of an event that is to be, though it does not enter into the divine plan; for to say that God foresees an undecreed event, is to say that He views as future an event that is merely possible; or, in other words, that he views an event not as it is.

Only knowledge of that which is decreed is foreknowledge. Knowledge of a plan as ideal or possible may precede decree; but knowledge of a plan as actual or fixed must follow decree. Only the latter knowledge is properly foreknowledge. God therefore foresees creation, causes, laws, events, consequences, because He has decreed creation, causes, laws, events, consequences; that is, because He has embraced all these in His plan. The denial of decrees logically involves the denial of God's foreknowledge of free human actions; and to this Socinians, and some Arminians, are actually led.

(Systematic Theology, Vol. 1, pages 356, 357).

**Ten Questions**

that it is not God's will that they be saved.

"And all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing; and he doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth; and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?"—Daniel 4:35.

6. If election is true, then isn't God unjust?

No. The same Bible that teaches election also states that God is just (Isaiah 45:21). When God chooses some unworthy sinners to salvation, He does no injustice to the rest of unworthy sinners. They have merited Hell by their sins, and they deserve to go there. God's election does not send them there, but their sins send them there. God's election simply blesses with salvation a great number which no man can number (Rev. 7:9,10).

7. Does not everyone have an opportunity to be saved?

It is foolish to talk of an unsaved man's having an "opportunity" to be saved, for the only opportunity which he wants is the opportunity to live his life as he so desires. Apart from God's grace given by God's own choice we have never known a single person who wanted to be saved. Jesus said that men love darkness rather than light (John 3:19).

8. What do you mean by UNCONDITIONAL election?

By unconditional election is meant that God made His choice without being influenced by anything foreseen in those whom He elected. God's choice was made according to His own good pleasure which He hath purposed in Himself (Eph. 1:9). Man did not, in the least, influence God to elect or not to elect.

9. Why preach the gospel if some are elected to go to Heaven anyway?

God's elect are not chosen simply to go to Heaven, but they are chosen to be saved in their life, and thereby go to Heaven. We preach the gospel to all men because the Spirit uses it in calling out the elect from among the nations of the world. The elect are called unto salvation by the gospel of Jesus Christ. All the elect will hear the gospel and will be saved during their lifetime, for this is what God has ordained.

"And as many as were ordained to eternal life believed."—Acts 13:48.

"All that the Father giveth me shall come to me."—John 6:37.

10. Does election mean that God foresaw who would repent and believe, and thus knew beforehand who would be saved, and so chose them to be saved?

Absolutely not. There would have been no need for God's choosing them to be saved if He saw beforehand that they would be saved. There is no election whatsoever about such doctrine. It is no less foolish than would be a decree on the part of the President of the United States that there may be daylight tomorrow. There will be daylight tomorrow regardless of the President's decree. God did not foresee repentance and faith in anyone, but He predestinated that those whom He elected would receive the gifts of repentance and faith from the Holy Spirit of God, these gifts being purchased for the elect by Christ in His atonement. Repentance is given by God. (Acts 5:31; II Tim. 2:25; Jer. 31:18, 19). And faith is given of God. (John 10:6, 26, 27; John 6:67-70; Matt. 16:17; I Cor. 3:5-8; Eph. 2:8; Phil. 1:29).