

PREDESTINATION MISUNDERSTANDINGS EXPLAINED

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Ezekiel 34:10, 23

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Revised
September 2026

The doctrines of "Election" and "Predestination" go hand-in-hand. And for a long time now the erroneous interpretation of these concepts has caused a lot of confusion, misunderstanding and conflict among the Churches. In this article, I will attempt to explain it in a manner which will end the conflict and misunderstandings.

There has been numerous Theologians in the past who have written about these concepts. I've never read any of those writings, nor do I need to, and I don't intend to. I get all the knowledge I need about these things from the Bible itself and from other preachers who teach about these things. **All** theologians exercise their brain so much that they fail to recognise the leading and teaching of the Holy Spirit. (see article listed below on: How To Be Spiritual.) What we need is to simply read the Bible for ourselves so that the obvious clear honest understanding of these Bible concepts will be attained from normal Bible reading. Therefore, I will avoid using names of theologians and I would like to ask my reader not to automatically assume that I am the same as any of the other theologians that they are familiar with.

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. 30 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." Notice the words **foreknow** and **predestinate**. This word "predestinate" in the Websters Dictionary means: "To pre-determine or foreordain; to appoint or ordain beforehand by an unchangeable purpose." Notice that it does NOT mean simply to "foreknow". In the original language of this verse, the Greek

word translated as “predestinate” is “[προορίζω](#)”, which means “[to limit in advance, that is, \(figuratively\) predetermine](#)” It is accompanied with the understanding of “election” and “previous”. Since the word “predestinate” is commonly misinterpreted to mean “foreknow”, it is necessary to repeat, it does NOT mean simply to “foreknow”. [1Pet 1:2](#) **Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father.....**” In this verse the word “foreknowledge” is not the same word as “predestinate” in the other verse above.

The conclusion is obvious. It is **not** necessary to have a theologian to tell you what these verses mean. In fact, the correct, honest conclusion is so simple and obvious that a child could tell you what it means. But, even though the conclusion is so simple that a child can figure it out, a child would not figure out the full import of that conclusion. A child would think about the aspect of the saved people, who God selected beforehand, that are all picked by God, in advance. [Eph 1:4](#) **“According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world.....”**

However, the serious weight of the correct conclusion concerning the unsaved people is what Christians have been fighting over for a long time now. If God indeed selected beforehand the people who would be saved, then what about the people who were not going to be saved? What about them? Are they “selected” beforehand to go to hell? A child who understands the part about “election” and “predestination” usually does not think about this unpleasant part. [Mar 13:20](#) **“And except that the Lord had shortened those days, no flesh should be saved: but for the **elect's** sake, whom he hath **chosen**, he hath shortened the days.”**

This is very similar to a common reason some people give when they reject salvation when they hear the gospel of Jesus Christ. They say, “What about all those people who never get a chance to even hear this gospel message? It does not seem fair if they have to go to hell and not even have any opportunity at all of getting saved. That kind of God is unjust.” And therefore they reject Jesus Christ.

This subject of “election/predestination” is very much tied together with the subject of salvation itself. How does salvation happen? [John 1:13](#) **“Which were born, not of blood, nor of the **will** of the flesh, nor of the **will** of man, but of God.”** [John 3:8](#) **“The wind bloweth where it listeth (wants), and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence (from where) it cometh, and whither (to where) it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit.”** The essence of salvation is that it cannot be done by people themselves. God is the one who performs salvation on

people. Also, since some people talk about people's "free will" to choose God, it must be noted here, as written above, it does NOT happen by "**the will of man**".

Notice, in this verse the people who try to obtain salvation by their own "free will" fail, because salvation comes by the "election" of God. Rom 11:7 "..... Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for; but the **election** hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded."

1Thes 1:4-5 "Knowing, brethren beloved, your **election** of God. 5- For our gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost, ..." The "election" is "of God", not by the "free will" of the person. Salvation can only be real if it is done as a rebirth by the power of the Holy Spirit.

1Pet 1:2 "**Elect** according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit....." 2John 1:1 "The elder unto the **elect** lady and her children, whom I love in the truth;....."

Eph 1:4 "According as he hath **chosen** us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and"

Rev 17:8 ".....whose names were not written in the book of life from the foundation of the world,....."

Rev 13:8 ".....whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world."

This doesn't mean that it doesn't happen that there are some people who choose to follow Jesus Christ out of their own "free will". What it means is that a salvation based on the "free will" of a person is not a genuine rebirth of the Spirit of God. John 3:3 "..... Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." Such a salvation is phoney. No Human being is capable of achieving true salvation without the power of the Spirit of God. (See article from web page on: Salvation) Not even in the natural world is a child ever born of their own "free will". It is the parents that cause a child to be born, not the child that causes it to happen.

This problem with misinterpreting "election/predestination" is misunderstood by people who have already accepted Jesus Christ as their saviour, and who are considered to already be Christians. After they start reading their Bibles, they discover this unusual teaching about "election/predestination", which they consider unacceptable.

But, the only way anyone can come to any other conclusion than the obvious clear simple honest reading is to alter the definition of the words themselves. When people start changing the definitions of the words themselves there is no more reason to continue any discussion. They have rejected this part of the Bible and then they make-up anything they want.

The word "elect" includes the idea of choice, or maybe it would be better to say "selection". When a president gets "elected" in a country, did he obtain office by using his own "free will" or was he "selected" by somebody else (the voters)?

The same people who twist the meaning of the word "predestinate" also twist the meaning of the word "elect". They insist that a person gets saved by exercising their own "free will" by choosing Jesus Christ. When these people read the following verses, they also interpret them with their own twisted definition so that the word "elect" doesn't really mean "elect". They can even recite them from memory, and yet at the same time reject their true meaning.

Rom 9:11 "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;"

The typical interpretation of Romans chapter 9 seems to many people to make God look like an offensive unloving villain. However, from the time I have read it from my youth I never saw it that way, myself. There are other people who also never seen it that way. Rom 9:13 "As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated." Rom 9:11 "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;" Here, our examples are Jacob and Esau. Before they were even born God had already decided that he hated Esau. And, in this same context it mentions the human will, Rom 9:16 "So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy." Salvation does not come by our works, not even human ability to choose God. The Human **will** cannot attain salvation. Mat 19:25-26 "When his disciples heard it, they were exceedingly amazed, saying, Who then can be saved? 26 But Jesus beheld them, and said unto them, With men this is impossible; but with God all things are possible." John 1:13 "Which were born, not of blood, nor of the **will** of the flesh, nor of the **will** of man, but of God."

But, the real issue is **not** about the subjects of “election” or “predestination” at all. Rather, this whole conflict is about the subject of **HELL**. The nature of hell and under what conditions and what quantity people are put there. First of all, when those christians oppose the teachings of “election” and “predestination” they are not even thinking about whether or not the teachings of “election” and “predestination” are true or false. They are focused on lost people and the circumstances under which they are sent to hell. Furthermore, altering the definition of the word “predestination” to mean “foreknowledge” does not change the offence. God still created the majority of the people in a way so that almost all of them will end up in **HELL** anyway. So, what’s the need for changing the definition?

They claim that the natural interpretation of the teachings of “election” and “predestination” lead a person to evaluate God as a villain. Therefore something has to be wrong with it. It doesn’t matter that the correct and honest interpretation of the Bible is that the teachings of “election” and “predestination” are true. What they are concerned about is that the ugly consequences for the unsaved people make God look like a monstrous villain. These teachings say that the unsaved are destined even before they are born to end up in hell and that there is no possible way they can escape from that fate.

However, as long as the vast majority of all humanity is going to end up in hell anyway, what difference does it make whether “election” and “predestination” are right or wrong? The mere fact that God has arranged this world so that almost everyone is going to end up in hell makes God look like a villain anyway. (He looks like a villain in their perception, but that doesn’t mean that God really is a villain. I have read about “election” and “predestination” since I was young, and I never thought of God as a villain.) [Mat 7:13-14](#) “Enter ye (y’all) in at the strait (στενός confined) gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and **many** there be which go in thereat: 14 Because strait (στενός confined) is the gate, and narrow (θλίβω compressed) is the way, which leadeth unto life, and **few** there be that find it.”

The conditions under which people are put in hell is more important to the people who oppose themselves to the teachings of “election” and “predestination”

than these teachings themselves. In fact, inasmuch that they are not happy to perceive themselves as being destined to go to the desirable reward in heaven, it may be thought that their hostility to this goodness is evident proof that they are not really destined for such good fortune. Why are they more concerned about hell than about their own benefit in heaven?

The people who oppose themselves to “predestination” and “election” talk about the “free will” of a person, which they imagine is what starts the salvation process. In fact, they talk about “free will” as though it is something sacred, of which even God has to respect or else God would surely be a villain. Well, quite to the contrary, the will of man must conform to the will of God or else such a person will have no part in the kingdom of God. [Mat 7:21](#) “Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the **will** of my Father which is in heaven.” Even people who are members of the “elect” who do not do the **will** of God will lose their crown and inheritance in God’s kingdom.

Those people who want to deify the “free will” of a human being can’t even detect what the **will** of God is, much less do it. Practicing their own will all the time blinds them to the **will** of God. Their “free will” is stopping them from any possible relationship with God.

In some aspects this whole thing of “election” is similar to marriage. Both the man and the woman have a free will to say yes or no. However, in the case of salvation people think that if it is God who does the choosing then the person’s free will is overrun and shut out. But, quite to the contrary, this is very comparable to all Bible prophecy. God makes prophecies about the future. People still have a free will, and at the same time the prophecy always happens without overrunning anyone’s free will.

On the other hand, when people put so much emphasis on “free will”, they perceive salvation so much dependent on human response that God has no choice in the matter, at all. These people have a hard time understanding that the human “free will” to choose Jesus Christ amounts to nothing unless God makes the re-birth process. The process of regeneration is only done by God in the spirit. The human “free will” cannot produce regeneration without God’s hand in the process. [John](#)

1:13 "Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, **nor of the will of man**, but of God."

It would seem likely that the people who oppose themselves to the correct and obvious Bible teaching of "election" and "predestination", that they would also reject the teaching of hell altogether. Why not? There are many other groups out in the world who oppose the correct Bible teaching of hell. But, these people usually don't. Why? It could be that all the other churches are in unanimous agreement about hell and they don't want to be outcasts. On the other hand, maybe they think that the Bible teaching on the subject of hell is too strong and they don't want to make it too obvious that they are rejecting and twisting the Word of God.

I myself don't understand why God made a place like hell. But, even though I don't understand hell or even that I may not like it, I accept it anyway. Not because I understand it. Nor because I like it. I accept it because God said so. I accept that God knows more than I do. So..... when the Bible says that saved people are "elect" and "predestined" to be redeemed, why don't my readers follow my example and accept it, just because God said so? I trust God's understanding more than my own understanding. Shouldn't you, too?

And, what is the nature of hell, anyway? Suffering in the flesh makes people stop sinning. 1Pet 4:1 "Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind: for he that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin;" Fire refines people like heating up gold. When gold is liquified by fire, the impurities rise to the top where they can easily be removed. Rev 3:18 "I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich;...." Fire purges sin. Isa 6:6-7 "Then flew one of the seraphims unto me, having a live coal in his hand, which he had taken with the tongs from off the altar: 7 And he laid it upon my mouth, and said, Lo, this hath touched thy lips; and thine

iniquity is taken away, and thy sin purged.” The Spirit of God is there. Psa 139:8 “If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there.” The Bible never tells us how the Spirit of God interacts with the people in hell, except that they receive preaching. 1Pet 4:6 “For this cause was the gospel preached also to them that are dead, that they might be judged according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the spirit.”

It may be that hell is a much different place than most Christians think. I used to think: why didn't God just create only the people that he would love. Why do bad people even have to exist? Why does a place like Hell even have to exist? But, who are we to question the decisions of God? Rom 9:14 “What shall we say then? Is there unrighteousness with God? God forbid.”

THEOLOGY

One term used by some theologians, is called “limited atonement”. This term means that the substitutionary sacrifice of Jesus Christ only applies to the persons who are predestined to be saved. Notice that this term “limited atonement” is not found in the Bible. The theologian himself invented it. This term is probably what has caused the greatest conflict between churches, more than anything else. However, the truth of the correct teaching of predestination is NOT dependent on this **un**biblical terminology. The teaching of predestination is true **and** at the same time the sacrifice Jesus made by his death on the cross applies to **all** humanity. 1John 2:2 “And he (Jesus) is the propitiation (atonement) for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.”

The term “limited atonement” could possibly apply much later on, when this present life is long gone and everyone is in whatever state they will be in for the rest of eternity. At such a time, it will be very clear who the atonement had applied to, and who it did not apply to.

Point of view is very important. For example, imagine a person who is on a large ship for the first time. When it starts to move out to sea, the new person

might look out and think that the land is moving. And it is very important to recognize that from his point of view the land really is moving. Or, try to imagine in the days of Galileo when they first invented the telescope. Galileo was one of the first people to say that the earth revolved around the sun, instead of the sun revolving around the earth. The conflict got so great that they were almost ready to kill him over that.

Well, it doesn't matter to me what revolves around what. I don't have any reason to be concerned about it. I'd rather spend my brain energy thinking about something else. In fact, except for an astronaut, I don't know anyone else who has any reason to be concerned about it either. I'd rather just forget about it.

So,..... why do we have so much conflict over Bible interpretation when there's no real reason for conflict. Just read the Bible and accept what it says.

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