

GRACE GAZETTE

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Wherefore lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees; And make straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way; but let it rather be healed.

Hebrews 12:12-13

INSEPARABLE TRUTH

Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain. Acts 2:23

If there is one doctrine which is universally hated by the natural man it would have to be the doctrine of GOD's unconditional election of a people unto salvation before they were born. Yet it is extremely difficult for anyone who reads the Bible to deny that the doctrine of election is taught in its pages. Since such verses as Ephesians 1:4 which says, "*According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world*" and Romans 9:14 which says, "*As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated.*" cannot be quietly torn from the scriptures, men often go to great lengths and contrive explanations as to why this doctrine cannot be true. Or they twist and turn its meaning into a form which is more palatable to the fleshly mind, by misusing scriptural terminology, in essence denying that such a doctrine is true except in a very limited sense.

The most common explanation of election by those who despise the thought of a sovereign, electing GOD, is to cast it at the feet of GOD's foreknowledge. The two chief verses which are generally used in this so called explanation are found in 1 Peter 1:2 "*Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father,*" and Romans 8:29; "*For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of HIS Son.*" Now no one can deny that election is according to the foreknowledge of GOD for the scripture plainly says as much. Neither can anyone deny that GOD can see down through time. In fact the scripture says "*Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world.*" (Acts 15:18) We know that HE is omniscient (see II Chr.16:9) and omnipresent (see Prov.15:3) so it is a rather elementary truth that HE knows the things that will occur before they transpire.

Now those who wish to explain away GOD's sovereign choice of an elect people, seek to limit the definition of foreknowledge as it is used in the scripture, setting it forth as a simple act of the omniscience of GOD looking down through time to find out what would occur; as if the world was wound up like a big toy and then let loose to run whatever course it may take. Their concept denies the very truth of the fact that GOD is an absolute Sovereign. GOD does not look through time to see future events so that HE might be aware of what is going to occur. Those who believe that would have to conclude that GOD was a fatalist, blindly waiting for fate to have its course. Rather the scripture plainly says, "*Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me, Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure: Calling a ravenous bird from the east, the man that executeth my counsel from a far country: yea, I have spoken it, I will also bring it to pass; I have purposed it, I will also do it.*" (Isa.46:9-11)

GOD is not a reactionary. HE is a sovereign predestinator of all events. "*I am the LORD, and there is none else. I form the light, and create darkness: I make peace, and create evil: I the LORD do all these things.*" (Isa.45:6-7) HE knows the end from the beginning because HE

declares what will take place and leaves nothing to blind chance or fate. Even the minutest of details are in the hands of this Sovereign; whether it be the results of a game of dice. *"The lot is cast into the lap; but the whole disposing thereof is of the LORD."* (Prov 16:33) or the number of hairs on a mans head. (see Mat.10:30) GOD's choice of an elect people is truly based on HIS foreknowledge because HE decreed all things to come to pass exactly as HE desired them.

The *"determinate counsel and foreknowledge"* of GOD are inseparable truths. Where you find one you will always find the other. GOD knows beforehand what will occur because HE marks out what will occur and no one can overturn it. Were this not so there would be no such thing as the redemption of sinners by the LORD JESUS CHRIST. HE came into the world for a specific purpose. *"thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins."* (Matt 1:21). In order for HIM to save HIS people (i.e.; HIS elect) it was necessary for HIM to die a substitutionary death for them to satisfy the claims of the law. In order for HIM to die a sinner's death it was necessary for HIM to be taken by wicked men and slain according to the purpose of GOD as HE revealed, that it would be done, by the prophets. (see Isa.53:1-12) So here in the book of Acts Peter preaches the glorious truth of the predestination of every event which brought JESUS CHRIST to die in our stead and take upon HIMSELF our sin. GOD is never bound to use any sort of means in any thing that HE undertakes to do, but HE has revealed very plainly in this matter that HE used the wickedness of these Jewish zealots to deliver HIS only begotten SON up to be slain. Just as HE foreordained and directed the wickedness of Satan to fulfill HIS purpose of teaching HIS servant Job a necessary lesson, HE directed and used the wickedness of Judas to betray HIM into the hands of those who were marked out to drive the nails in HIS feet and hands. Every hammer blow and every lash of the whip along with the hands which would hold those instruments of torture, was determined before the foundation of the world by HIM who loved HIS people with an everlasting love. Every person who cried out "crucify HIM" was marked out and in his proper place on the day when HIS death sentence was spoken by men.

The redemptive work of the LORD JESUS CHRIST has been revealed in the scripture as entirely and originally the purpose and will of Almighty GOD. *"Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot: Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you."* (1 Pet.1:18-20) Glory to GOD!

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