



# ARTICLES ON PREDESTINATION

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# 1. God's High Destiny for Man

A. T. Jones

Study 19, General Conference Bulletin, February 27, 1895

Note: This is only part of the study.

**R**EAD on then. God tells us how we know that all things work together for good to those who are called according to God's purpose.

## **Romans 8**

<sup>29</sup> For...

What does that mean? It means the same here as "because"; that is, we know this because God has done something here to demonstrate it so that we can know it. What is this then by which we know it? We know it *because...*

<sup>29</sup> ...whom He did foreknow, He also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son.

What is God's predestination, then? What is the design that He has fixed beforehand, that He has prepared beforehand for every man in the world? For He has foreknown all; He has called all.

## **Isaiah 45**

<sup>22</sup> Look unto me, and be saved, all the ends of the earth.

What is the destiny that He has prepared beforehand for every one? O, it is that we should be conformed to the image of His Son. Where? While we are in this world, conformed to the image of His Son, as His Son was in this world. But He did not get done with His Son in this world; He took Him from this world. Then as certainly as His eternal purpose carried Christ beyond this world, that predestined purpose is concerning *us* beyond this world, and carries us beyond this world. And as certainly as His predestined purpose is that we shall be conformed to the image of Jesus Christ in this world, as He was in this world, so certain it is that we shall be conformed to the image of Jesus Christ in that other world, as He is in that other world.



God's eternal purpose prepared beforehand for every one of us, for you, for me, is that we shall be like Jesus Christ as He is, glorified, and at the right hand of God tonight. In Christ He has demonstrated this. In Christ, from birth to the heavenly throne, He has shown that that is His purpose concerning every man. Thus He has demonstrated before the universe that such is His great purpose for human beings.

God's ideal of a man is not as man stands in this world. Take the finest figure of a man who ever stood in this world—the tallest, the most symmetrical, the best educated, the finest in every respect, the fullest, completest man in himself—is that God's ideal of man? No, you remember that we found back in one of our lessons that God's ideal of a man is *God* and the *man* joined in that new man that is made in Christ Jesus by the destruction of the enmity. That new man that is made of the union of God and man is God's ideal man.

But yet take that man as he stands in this world, in the perfect symmetry of human perfection, and unite God with him so that only God is manifested in him, that is not yet God's full ideal of a man, for the man is still in this world. The ideal of God concerning that man is never met until that man stands at God's right hand in heaven glorified. O, He has prepared great things for us, and I propose to enjoy them! Yes, sir, I propose to open up and let the wondrous power work and enjoy it as I go.

Read on therefore.

### **Romans 8**

<sup>29</sup> Whom He did foreknow, He also did predestinate, to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the first-born among many brethren.

Oh,

### **Hebrews 2**

<sup>11</sup> He is not ashamed to call them brethren. He that sanctifies and they that are sanctified are all of one.

## Romans 8

<sup>30</sup> Moreover, whom He did predestinate, them He also called: and whom He called,...

—those in whom that call meets its purpose and in whom the call is effective. He calls every soul, that is true on His part, but the call does not meet its purpose; only those who respond and meet the purpose of that call, in whom the call takes hold,

<sup>30</sup> ...them He also justified: and whom He justified...

—mark, not those who justify themselves, those whom He justified,

<sup>30</sup> ...them He also glorified.

Then do you not see that God's purpose concerning man is not fulfilled until man is glorified? Therefore Jesus came into the world as we do. He took our human nature as we do, by birth. He went through this world in human nature—God dealing with human nature. He went to the cross and died—God dealing with human nature on the cross and in the grave and God raising Him and setting Him at the right hand of God, glorified—that is His eternal purpose. That is God's eternal predestination. That is the plan He has arranged and fixed for you.

Will you let Him carry out the plan? We cannot do it. He must. But He has shown His ability to do it. He has proven that. Nobody can dispute that. He has proven His ability to take us and fulfill His purpose concerning human nature, concerning sinful flesh as it is in this world. And I am glad of it.

## 2. God's Foreknowledge

E. J. Waggoner

Present Truth, April 9, 1896

**M**ANY refuse to take the gift of salvation, making the excuse that God knows whether they will be lost or saved, and so no choice of theirs can alter their destiny. But in that attitude they do the very thing they profess they are not doing—they choose not to be saved, and frustrate the grace of God. The only way in which men can be lost is to refuse to let the Lord save them, as He is...

### **2 Peter 3**

<sup>9</sup> ...not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.

If a man were famishing, and I should set food before him, it would be no excuse for his refusing it to plead that I knew or did not know he would accept it. I knew he was hungry, and offered the food and even pressed him to take it; but he refused it because I knew he wouldn't take it! Even if I could have foreknowledge of his extraordinary behavior, my knowledge would not be responsible for the failure to save the man's life, but his own refusal to eat.

God knows whether or not a man will accept the bread of heaven. But He constantly presses all men to eat of it. He tells them how good it is to awaken a desire for it, and He even plants the desire for good in every heart; so that in order not to be drawn round the Lord's table men must fight against Him. All may eat, He invites all, and if one does not eat, it is because he, of his own choice, refuses to take what God presses upon him.

### 3. Who Are Israelites?

E. J. Waggoner

Signs of the Times, July 9, 1896

Studies in Romans

Romans 9:1-18

THE 9<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup>, and 11<sup>th</sup> chapters of *Romans* are devoted especially to the answer to this question, so that only a portion of it can be dealt with in this article. The matter has, however, been so clearly indicated in the studies of the 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> chapters, that we may pass over this ground more rapidly than we otherwise should.

This does not mean that the chapters themselves should be dismissed with slight study, for there is no part of the Bible that has more to yield to the patient student; but our work of leading the student to it may be the more quickly done, in consequence of what has already been done.

At first sight it would seem that the subject of the epistle is entirely changed. A more general view will show us that the apostle here carried out the original subject, showing who are heirs of God's promise, and how only it is to be obtained.

#### Paul's Love for His Brethren

##### **Romans 9**

<sup>1</sup> I say the truth in Christ, I lie not, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Ghost,

<sup>2</sup> That I have great heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart.

<sup>3</sup> For I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh:

<sup>4</sup> Who are Israelites; to whom pertains the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises;

<sup>5</sup> Whose are the fathers, and of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came, who is over all, God blessed forever. Amen.

<sup>6</sup> Not as though the word of God has taken none effect. For they are not all Israel, which are of Israel:

<sup>7</sup> Neither, because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children: but, in Isaac shall your seed be called.

<sup>8</sup> That is, they which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God: but the children of the promise are counted for the seed.

<sup>9</sup> For this is the word of promise, at this time will I come, and Sarah shall have a son.

<sup>10</sup> And not only this; but when Rebecca also had conceived by one, even by our father Isaac;

<sup>11</sup> (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 calls;)

<sup>12</sup> It was said unto her, The elder shall serve the younger.

<sup>13</sup> As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated.

<sup>14</sup> What shall we say then? Is there unrighteousness with God? God forbid.

<sup>15</sup> For He said to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion.

<sup>16</sup> So then it is not of him that wills, nor of him that runs, but of God that shows mercy.

<sup>17</sup> For the scripture said unto Pharaoh, Even for this same purpose have I raised you up, that I might show my power in you, and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth.

<sup>18</sup> Therefore He has mercy on whom He will have mercy, and whom He will be hardens.

This is a long portion of Scripture for study, but if it is diligently questioned, to see exactly what it says, it will not be found so difficult as it is usually thought. We can put only a few of the many...

## Questions on the Text

—that might and should be asked.

1. What burden does the apostle say that he carried continually?

*Romans 9:2* “I have great heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart.”

2. For whom did he have this sorrow?

*Romans 9:3* “For my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh.”

3. How great was his love and sympathy for them?

*Romans 9:3* “I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren.”

4. Who were these brethren?

*Romans 9:4* “...Israelites.”

5. What privileges did they have?

*Romans 9:4-5* “The adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises,... [and] the fathers.”

6. What other great honor was theirs?

*Romans 9:5* “...of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came.”

7. If their condition was so bad, notwithstanding all the promises, how could the integrity of God’s word be shown?

*Romans 9:6* “For they are not all Israel, which are of Israel.”

8. Who only of Abraham’s descendants are the seed?

*Romans 9:7* “In Isaac shall your seed be called.”

9. What is said of the children of the flesh?

*Romans 9:8* “These are not the children of God.”

10. Who are the seed?

*Romans 9:8* “The children of the promise are counted for the seed.”

11. What shows that the children are “born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God”<sup>1</sup>?

*Romans 9:10-12* “When Rebecca also had conceived,...the children being not yet born...it was said unto her, The elder shall serve the younger.”

12. How did the verdict in after years agree with this?

*Romans 9:13* “Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated.”

13. Is there then unrighteousness with God?

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<sup>1</sup> *John 1:13.*



*Romans 9:14* “God forbid.” Not by any means. He “without respect of persons judges according to every man’s works.”<sup>2</sup>

14. On what then does every man’s salvation depend?

*Romans 9:16* “It is not of him that wills, nor of him that runs, but of God that shows mercy.”

15. For what purpose did God say to Pharaoh that He had raised him up?

*Romans 9:17* “That I might show my power in you, and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth.”

16. What is the conclusion?

*Romans 9:18* “Therefore He has mercy on whom He will have mercy, and whom He will He hardens.”

## **Both Jews and Greeks**

Although Paul was...

### **Romans 11**

<sup>13</sup> ...the apostle of the Gentiles,

–he did not forget his...

### **Romans 9**

<sup>3</sup> ...kinsmen according to the flesh.

Wherever he went he sought out the Jews first, and preached to them. To the elders of Ephesus he said,

### **Acts 20**

<sup>20</sup> I kept back nothing that was profitable unto you, but have showed you, and have taught you publicly, and from house to house,

<sup>21</sup> Testifying both to the Jews, and also to the Greeks, repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ.

Paul’s solicitude for all classes, even for those who were personally strangers to him, shows, more than anything else, his likeness to the Lord Jesus Christ.

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<sup>2</sup> *1 Peter 1:17.*

## Israel's Advantage

### Romans 3

<sup>1</sup> What advantage then has the Jew?

<sup>2</sup> Much every way; chiefly, because that unto them were committed the oracles of God.

### Romans 9

<sup>4</sup> Who are Israelites; to whom pertains the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises;

<sup>5</sup> Whose are the fathers, and of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came, who is over all, God blessed for ever. Amen.

So here we read a wondrous list of things that pertain to Israel: the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises. A terrible thing it is indeed to prove unfaithful amid such inestimable privileges!

## Salvation Is of the Jews

Thus said Jesus to the woman of Samaria at the well.<sup>3</sup>

### Romans 9

<sup>5</sup> ...of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came.

The Bible was written by Jews, and a young Jewess was the mother of our Lord. As man, Christ was a Jew, of the tribe of Judah. When we read that we are...

### Romans 5

<sup>10</sup> ...saved by His life,

—we know that it is by His life as a Jew. There is no divine gift and blessing for man, that was not “to the Jew first,”<sup>4</sup> and for the knowledge of which we are not indebted to the Jews.

## Nothing from the Gentiles

The Apostle Paul says of the...

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<sup>3</sup> John 4:22.

<sup>4</sup> Romans 1:16.

## **Ephesians 2**

<sup>11</sup> ...Gentiles in the flesh,

–that they are...

<sup>12</sup> ...aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world.

The covenants, the promises, even Christ himself, all belong to the Jews, and not to the Gentiles. Therefore whoever is saved must be saved as a Jew.

## **Acts 15**

<sup>14</sup> God at the first did visit the Gentiles *to take out of them a people* for His name.

## **Accursed from Christ**

### **Romans 9**

<sup>3</sup> For I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh.

It makes no difference whether we use the word “accursed,” or “anathema,” or “separated.” All mean the same thing, and express the most deplorable condition. To be without Christ is to be without hope and without God in the world.<sup>5</sup>

It was in that condition that Paul would have been willing to be placed for his brethren according to the flesh, if it would have done them any good. What does that show? Simply this, that Israel according to the flesh was, and is, in just that condition accursed from Christ,

## **Ephesians 2**

<sup>12</sup> ...having no hope, and without God in the world.

But since all the promises of God are in Christ,<sup>6</sup> those who are separate from Christ have no part in the promises; and therefore we learn anew the fact that Israel after the flesh, as a nation of

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<sup>5</sup> *Ephesians* 2:12.

<sup>6</sup> *2 Corinthians* 1:20.

earth, have not and never had any claim upon God above other nations; that God never made any special promises to Israel after the flesh, more than to any other people.

In the wish that Paul expressed, he showed how completely he was given up to the Lord, and how much he shared in His Spirit. Christ gave himself for men, consenting even to be separated from God, in order that He might reach and save the lost. There is none other name under heaven whereby men can be saved,<sup>7</sup> and consequently Paul's being accursed would not have saved his brethren, as he very well knew. But he simply showed how desperate was the case of the Jews, and how great was his solicitude. While no human sacrifice can avail, men are privileged to share Christ's sufferings for others. Paul says of himself,

### **Colossians 1**

<sup>24</sup> Who now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for His body's sake, which is the church.

## **Circumcision Made Uncircumcision**

We have before read the words,

### **Romans 2**

<sup>25</sup> If you be a breaker of the law, your circumcision is made uncircumcision.

This language was addressed to the Jews, who in the same connection were charged with breaking the law.<sup>8</sup> In the thirty-first verse of this present chapter we also are told that Israel did not attain to the law of righteousness.

### **Romans 9**

<sup>31</sup> But Israel, which followed after the law of righteousness, has not attained to the law of righteousness.

And the reason is that they did not accept Christ, through whom alone the righteousness of the law can be obtained. So

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<sup>7</sup> Acts 4:12.

<sup>8</sup> Romans 2:17-24.

again we find that Israel, Paul's "kinsmen after the flesh," were not Israelites at all, but Gentiles, separate from Christ,

### **Ephesians 2**

<sup>12</sup> ...having no hope, and without God in the world.

### **No Failure in the Promise**

This is a sad state of things. All the promises belong to Israel, and there is nothing from God for any other nation, and yet the very people known as Israel are accursed from Christ. Nevertheless the word of God has not failed,

### **Romans 9**

<sup>6</sup> ...for they are not all Israel, which are of Israel.

The unbelief of some cannot make the faith of God without effect.<sup>9</sup> If every literal descendant of Jacob were lost, that would not weaken in the least God's promises to Israel, since the true Israelites are only those who believe the promises.

### **The Seed of Abraham**

#### **Romans 9**

<sup>7</sup> In Isaac shall your seed be called.

Isaac was the child of promise; therefore those who believe the promises of God are the seed of Abraham. To the Jews who were self-satisfied because of their descent, John the Baptist said,

#### **Matthew 3**

<sup>9</sup> Think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father; for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham.

He could do that as easily as He could make man in the beginning from the dust of the earth.

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<sup>9</sup> *Romans 3:3.*

## **The Flesh and the Promise**

### **Romans 9**

<sup>8</sup> They which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God: but the children of the promise are counted for the seed.

This text alone should forever set at rest the speculations about the return of the Jews to old Jerusalem, in order that God's promises may be fulfilled. Still more should it put an end to the absurd notion that any nation, as England or America, constitutes Israel, and is heir to those promises of God.

### **God's Foreknowledge**

When the children were not yet born, and had done neither good nor evil, it was said of them,

### **Romans 9**

<sup>12</sup> The elder shall serve the younger.

God knows the end from the beginning, and could tell what each one would do. The choice was in accordance with what is said of God,

### **2 Timothy 1**

<sup>9</sup> Who has saved us, and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began.

## **Esau Have I Hated**

### **Romans 9**

<sup>13</sup> As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated.

This was not written until many years after the death of both Jacob and Esau.

### **Malachi 1**

<sup>2</sup> Was not Esau Jacob's brother? says the Lord; yet I loved Jacob,

<sup>3</sup> And I hated Esau, and laid his mountains and his heritage waste for the dragons of the wilderness.

Of his descendants it is said that they shall be called,



## **Malachi 1**

<sup>3</sup> The people against whom the Lord has indignation for ever.

And why?

## **Amos 1**

<sup>11</sup> Thus says the Lord, For three transgressions of Edom, and for four, I will not turn away the punishment thereof; because he did pursue his brother with the sword, and did cast off all pity, and his anger did tear perpetually, and he kept his wrath forever.

Jacob, on the other hand, while no better by nature than Esau, believed the promises of God, and was by them made partaker of the divine nature and thus an heir of God and a joint heir of Jesus Christ.

## **No Unrighteousness with God**

Mark well verses 14-17 for evidence that there is no arbitrariness in God's choice. It is all of mercy.

## **Romans 9**

<sup>14</sup> What shall we say then? Is there unrighteousness with God? God forbid.

<sup>15</sup> For He said to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion.

So it is all of...

<sup>16</sup> ...God that shows mercy.

The earth is full of the mercy of the Lord,<sup>10</sup> and...

## **Psalms 118**

<sup>1</sup> His mercy endures forever.

## **God's Purpose for Pharaoh**

The case of Pharaoh is cited by the apostle as an illustration of the statement that:

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<sup>10</sup> *Psalms* 119:64.

## Romans 9

<sup>16</sup> It is not of him that wills, nor of him that runs, but of God that shows mercy.

<sup>17</sup> For the Scripture said unto Pharaoh, Even for this purpose have I raised you up, that I might show my power in you, and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth.

It is immaterial whether this refers to the bringing of Pharaoh to the throne, or to the preserving of him up to that time. One thing is certain: it does not teach us, as is commonly supposed, that God brought Pharaoh to the throne for the purpose of wreaking His vengeance upon him. It is astonishing that any professed Christian could ever have dishonored God by such a charge against Him.

The purpose of God in raising Pharaoh up, or causing him to stand, was that He might show to him and in him His power, and that His name might be declared throughout all the earth. This purpose was accomplished in the destruction of Pharaoh because of his stubborn resistance. But it would have been accomplished just as well, and much better for Pharaoh if he had listened to the word of God. Pharaoh saw God's power, but would not believe. If he had believed, he would have been saved, because the power of God is salvation to every one that believes.<sup>11</sup>

Pharaoh had an imperious will. His one great characteristic was steadfastness, pertinacity degenerating into stubbornness. But who can estimate the power for good that Pharaoh would have been if his will had been yielded to the Lord? To yield to the Lord would have meant a great sacrifice, as men count sacrifices, but no greater than that which Moses had made. Moses had given up the same throne, to cast in his lot with God's people. A wonderful and honorable position was offered to Pharaoh, but he knew not the day of his visitation. It involved humiliation, and he rejected it. As a consequence he lost everything; while Moses, who chose to suffer affliction with the people of God, and to share the re-

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<sup>11</sup> *Romans 1:16.*

proach of Christ,<sup>12</sup> has a name and a place that will endure throughout eternity. The mercies of God rejected turn into curses.

#### **Hosea 14**

<sup>9</sup> For the ways of the Lord are right, and the just shall walk in them; but the transgressors shall fall therein.

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<sup>12</sup> *Hebrews* 11:25-26.

## 4. Foreknowledge and Foreordination

E. J. Waggoner

Apples of Gold Library, No. 41, May 1897

Also in Signs of the Times, June 11, 1896, a series on Romans

### **Romans 8**

<sup>29</sup> For whom He did foreknow, He also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the first-born among many brethren.

THE word “predestinate” is the same as “foreordain,” which is found in the *Revised Version*. Volumes of speculation have been written about these terms, but a few words are sufficient to set forth the facts. With respect to these, as well as the other attributes of God, it is sufficient for us to know the fact. With the explanation we have nothing to do.

That God knows all things is plainly set forth in the Scripture. Not only does He know the things that are past, but He sees the future as well.

### **Acts 15**

<sup>18</sup> Known unto God are all His works from the beginning of the world.

### **Psalms 139**

<sup>1</sup> O Lord, you have searched me, and known me. You know my downsitting and my uprising;

<sup>2</sup> You understand my thought afar off.

Thus God can tell what people even yet unborn will do and say. This does not make God responsible for the evil that they do. Some have foolishly thought it necessary to apologize for the Lord and to relieve Him of the charge that if He is omniscient, He is responsible for the evil if He does not prevent it, by saying that He could know if He wished, but that He chooses not to know many things. Such a “defense” of God is both foolish and wicked. It assumes that God would be responsible for the evil if He knew it beforehand and did not prevent it, and that in order not to be in a position to prevent it, He deliberately shuts His eyes from it.

Thus their “defense” really puts the responsibility for all evil upon God. Not only so, but it limits Him. It makes him like a man.

God knows all things, not by study and research as man learns the little he knows, but because He is God. He inhabits eternity.

### **Isaiah 57**

<sup>15</sup> For thus says the high and lofty One *that inhabits eternity*, whose name is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones.

We cannot understand how this can be any more than we can understand eternity. We must accept the fact and be not only content, but glad, that God is greater than we. All time, past, present, and future, is the same to Him. It is always “now” with God.

The fact that God knew the evil that men would do, even before the foundation of the world, does not make Him responsible for it, any more than the fact that a man can see by means of a telescope what a man is doing ten miles distant makes him responsible for that other one’s actions. God has from the beginning set before people warnings against sin, and has provided them with all the necessary means for avoiding it; but He cannot interfere with man’s right and freedom of choice without depriving him of his manhood and making him the same as a stick.

Freedom to do right implies freedom to do wrong. If a man were made so that he could not do wrong, he would have no freedom at all, not even to do right. He would be less than the brutes. There is no virtue in forced obedience, nor would there be any virtue in doing that which is right if it were impossible to do wrong. Moreover, there could be no pleasure or satisfaction in the professed friendship of two persons if one associated with the other just because he could not avoid it. The joy of the Lord in the companionship of His people is that they of their own free-will choose Him above all others. And that which is the joy of the Lord is the joy of His people.

The very ones who rail against God for not preventing the ills that He foresees since He is all-powerful, would be the very first to charge Him with cruelty if He did arbitrarily interfere with their freedom and make them do that which they do not choose. Such a course would make everybody unhappy and discontented. The wisest thing for us to do is to stop trying to fathom the ways of the Almighty, and accept the fact that whatever He does is right.

### **Psalm 18**

<sup>30</sup> As for God, His way is perfect.

## **Predestination**

The text shows that...

### **Romans 8**

<sup>29</sup> Whom He did foreknow, He also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the first-born among many brethren.

God's thoughts toward men are thoughts of peace, and not of evil.

### **Jeremiah 29**

<sup>11</sup> For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, says the Lord, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end.

He ordains peace for us.

### **Isaiah 26**

<sup>12</sup> Lord, You will ordain peace for us: for You also have wrought all our works in us.

We read nothing about men being foreordained to destruction; the only thing that God has predestinated is that men should be conformed to the image of His Son.

But it is only *in Christ* that we become conformed to His image. It is in Him that we come...



## **Ephesians 4**

<sup>13</sup> ...unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.

Therefore it is that men are foreordained or predestinated only in Christ. The whole story is told in the following passage of Scripture:

## **Ephesians 1**

<sup>3</sup> Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ;

<sup>4</sup> According as He has chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love;

<sup>5</sup> Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good-pleasure of His will,

<sup>6</sup> To the praise of the glory of His grace, wherein He has made us accepted in the Beloved.

Everything is in Christ. We receive all spiritual blessings in Him; we are chosen in Him unto holiness; in Him we are predestinated unto the adoption of children; in Him we are accepted; and in Him we have redemption through His blood.

## **1 Thessalonians 5**

<sup>9</sup> God has not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ.

That is God's purpose and foreordination concerning man. Still further,

## **Romans 8**

<sup>29</sup> Whom He did foreknow, He also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son.

Whom did He foreknow? There can be no limit; He must have foreknown all. If there were any exception, then God would not be infinite in knowledge. If He foreknows one person, then He foreknows every person. There has not been a person born into the world whose birth God did not foreknow.

## Hebrews 4

<sup>13</sup> Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in His sight; but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of Him with whom we have to do.

Therefore, since every person has been known to God even before the foundation of the world, and those whom He foreknew He predestinated to be conformed to the image of His Son, it follows that God has purposed salvation for every soul that has ever come into the world. His love embraces all, without respect of persons.

“Then everybody will be saved, no matter what he does,” someone will say.

Not by any means. Remember that the purpose of God is *in Christ*. It is only in Him that we are predestinated. And we are free to choose for ourselves whether we will accept Him or not. Man’s will has been forever set free, and God himself will not presume to interfere with it. He holds sacred the choice and will of each individual. He will not carry out His own purpose contrary to man’s will.

His will is to give man whatever man decides will best please him. So He sets before man life and death, good and evil, and tells him to choose which he will have. God knows what is best, and has chosen and prepared that for man. He has gone so far as to fix it beyond all possibility of failure, that man shall have that good thing if he chooses it. But the wonderful kindness and courteousness of the great God is seen in this, that He defers in everything to man’s wishes. If man, in his turn, will but defer to God’s wishes, there will be the most delightful and loving companionship between them.

## Called, Justified, Glorified

### Romans 8

<sup>30</sup> 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.

This is completed action. We need not stumble over it, if we will but remember that everything is in Christ. In Christ we have already been blessed with all spiritual blessings. All men are called to that which God has prepared for them, but none are “the called according to His purpose”<sup>13</sup> unless they have made their calling and election sure by submitting to His will. Such ones are predestinated to be saved. Nothing in the universe can hinder the salvation of any soul that accepts and trusts the Lord Jesus Christ.

And all such are justified. The death of Christ reconciles us to God.

### **1 John 2**

<sup>2</sup> He is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.

His death has secured pardon and life for all. Nothing can keep them from salvation except their own perverse will. Men must take themselves out of the hand of God, in order to be lost. Much more, then, those who accept the sacrifice, are justified.

### **Romans 5**

<sup>8</sup> God commends His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

<sup>9</sup> Much more then, being now justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him.

<sup>10</sup> For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son; much more being reconciled, we shall be saved by His life.

### **Romans 8**

<sup>30</sup> ...and whom He justified, them He also glorified.

Have we not read in the prayer of Christ for His disciples, not only for those who were with Him in the garden, but also for all them that should believe on Him through their word and therefore for us,

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<sup>13</sup> *Romans 8:28.*

## **John 17**

<sup>22</sup> The glory which You gave me, I have given them?

Peter said that he was a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed.<sup>14</sup> God has left nothing undone. Everything that Christ has, we have if we accept Him. All that remains is that it should be revealed.

## **Romans 8**

<sup>19</sup> The earnest expectation of the creature waits for the manifestation of the sons of God.

When God asks concerning His people,

## **Isaiah 5**

<sup>4</sup> What could have been done more to my vineyard, that I have not done in it?

—who shall presume to say that there is something that He has overlooked?

## **All Things Ours**

But we have anticipated the apostle. Hear him:

## **Romans 8**

<sup>31</sup> ...If God be for us, who can be against us?

<sup>32</sup> He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?

How shall He not? That is, How can He avoid giving us all things? In giving Christ for and to us, God could not do otherwise than give us all things,

## **Colossians 1 [RV]**

<sup>16</sup> For in Him were all things created, in the heavens and upon the earth, things visible and things invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers; all things have been created through Him, and unto Him;

<sup>17</sup> And He is before all things, and in Him all things consist.

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<sup>14</sup> 1 Peter 5:1.

### **1 Corinthians 3**

<sup>21</sup> Therefore let no man glory in men. For all things are yours;

<sup>22</sup> Whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; all are yours;

<sup>23</sup> And you are Christ's; and Christ is God's.

This, then, answers the question,

“Who can be against us?”

Everything is for us.

### **2 Corinthians 4**

<sup>15</sup> All things are for your sakes.

A general once telegraphed to the seat of government,

“We have met the enemy, and they are ours.”

This is what every child of God is privileged to say.

### **1 Corinthians 15**

<sup>57</sup> Thanks be to God, which gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

### **1 John 5 [RV]**

<sup>4</sup> This is the victory that has overcome the world, even our faith.

This is what makes us know that all things work together for good to them that love God. No matter how dark and forbidding the things may seem, if we are in Christ, they are for us, and not against us.

## 5. Predestination (1898)

A. T. Jones

Advent Review, June 7, 1898

Original title: Editorial Note

WHEN it is known that we were predestinated to be gathered together with all things in heaven and on earth, in Christ, *into glorious and eternal harmony in God*, it is easy to see that the Lord's predestination is a glorious thing.

### Ephesians 1

<sup>9</sup> Having made known unto us the mystery of His will, according to His good pleasure which He has purposed in himself:

<sup>10</sup> That in the dispensation of the fullness of times He might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in Him:

<sup>11</sup> In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of Him who works all things after the counsel of His own will.

When it is known that according to this glorious purpose, the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ chose us in Christ, before the foundation of the world, *that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love*, it is easy to see that the Lord's predestination is a glorious thing.

<sup>3</sup> Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ:

<sup>4</sup> According as He has chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love.

When it is known that Jesus, the Lamb without blemish and without spot, was foreordained before the foundation of the world, *that we might believe in God*, and so attain to this position and condition of holiness and eternal harmony in God, then it is easy to see that the Lord's foreordination is a glorious thing.



## **1 Peter 1**

<sup>20</sup> Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you,

<sup>21</sup> Who by Him do believe in God, that raised Him up from the dead, and gave Him glory; that your faith and hope might be in God.

When it is known that in order that all this glorious destiny might be attained by us, even though we are sunken in sin, God predestined us *unto the adoption of children*, by Jesus Christ, *unto himself*, according to the good pleasure of His will, then it is easy to see that the Lord's predestination is a glorious thing.

## **Ephesians 1**

<sup>5</sup> Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of His will.

When it is known that, having predestinated us unto the adoption of children of Jesus Christ unto himself, *in this* He also predestinated us *to be conformed to the image of His Son*, because that in all things *that Son* is the example of what all His children are to be, with God and in God, then it is easy to see that the Lord's predestination is a glorious thing.

## **Romans 8**

<sup>29</sup> For whom He did foreknow, He also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the first-born among many brethren.

When it is known that, to make all this glorious destiny sure to all, *unto every one of us* is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ, for the perfecting of the saints, for the building up of the body of Christ, *till we all come* in the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, *unto a perfect man*, unto the measure of the stature of *the fullness of Christ*, then it is easy to see that the Lord's predestination is a glorious thing.

## **Ephesians 4**

<sup>7</sup> But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ.

<sup>8</sup> Wherefore He said, When He ascended up on high, He led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men.

<sup>9</sup> (Now that He ascended, what is it but that He also descended first into the lower parts of the earth?

<sup>10</sup> He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that He might fill all things.)

<sup>11</sup> And He gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers;

<sup>12</sup> For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ:

<sup>13</sup> Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.

And when it is seen that this glorious destiny is eternally *fixed* for every creature in heaven and on earth, and that it is worth all that it cost to make it sure to all, then it is easy to see that the Lord's predestination is the most glorious thing in the universe of God, glory to His name!

And by all this it is easy to see what a fearful thing it is for any soul to question, to criticize, and to reject, the Lord's glorious predestination: he is rejecting all the good that there is in the universe, and for nothing.

## 6. The Freedom of the Will

E. J. Waggoner

Present Truth, February 13, 1902

Original title: The Editor's Private Corner. The Freedom of the Will

It is always said that God gave man a free will, and yet one of His principal acts was to *forbid* man to eat of a certain tree. How could men have a free will in this case, inasmuch as God said that he would fall?

A SINGLE text of Scripture is the key to the solution of this difficulty, which is so common among men—the idea that obedience to law is incompatible with freedom. The text is:

### Psalm 119

<sup>45</sup> I will walk at liberty; for I seek your precepts.

The free man is the man who obeys righteous laws; the slave is the one who falls into transgression.

The words of Christ to the Jews tell us this truth:

### John 8

<sup>31</sup> If you abide in my Word, then are you my disciples indeed;

<sup>32</sup> And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.

<sup>33</sup> They answered Him, We be Abraham's seed, and were never in bondage to any man: how do you say, You shall be made free?

<sup>34</sup> Jesus answered them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whosoever commits sin is the servant of sin.

<sup>35</sup> And the servant abides not in the house for ever: but the Son abides ever.

<sup>36</sup> If the Son therefore shall make you free, you shall be free indeed.

### The King Must Be Free

When God made man, the crowning work of His creation, He crowned him with glory and honor, and set him over the works of His hands, putting...

## Hebrews 2

<sup>7</sup> ...all things in subjection under his feet.

<sup>8</sup> For in that He put all in subjection under him, He left nothing that is not put under him.

## Psalms 8

<sup>6</sup> God gave man dominion over...

<sup>7</sup> All sheep and oxen, yea, and the beast of the field;

<sup>8</sup> The fowl of the air, and the fish of the sea, and whatsoever passes through the paths of the seas.

Man was made ruler over the very earth itself,

## Genesis 1

<sup>28</sup> ...and over every living thing that moves upon the earth.

Man—not only the first being that God created, but mankind, male and female—was made king. He was given dominion over the works of God's hands; and since the heavens are the works of God's hands,<sup>15</sup> it follows that man's rightful dominion extends beyond this planet on which we live. A most magnificent kingdom was given to him. Now it needs no argument to show that one cannot be a king and a slave at the same time.

## 2 Peter 2

<sup>19</sup> ...of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage,

—and when a man is in bondage he is evidently not ruling.

From time immemorial, the root idea of royalty, derived from God himself, has been that the king's person is sacred. If he be a king indeed, it will be so regarded, not only by his fellow-men, but by the beasts of the earth, as has many times been demonstrated. The truth may be stated either way:

*Every real king is a free man,  
and every absolutely free man is a king.*

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<sup>15</sup> Psalm 19:1; Hebrews 1:10.

Christ said that He makes His followers free, and the Scriptures also told us that all whom He frees from sin are made kings and priests.<sup>16</sup>

### **God's Absolute Freedom**

God is King of kings, and there can be no question but that He is absolutely free.

#### **Psalm 103**

<sup>19</sup> The Lord has prepared His throne in the heavens; and His kingdom rules over all.

#### **Psalm 115**

<sup>8</sup> Our God is in the heavens; He has done whatsoever He has pleased.

#### **Ephesians 1**

<sup>11</sup> [He] works all things after the counsel of His own will.

The greatest ruler that ever exercised dominion on this earth, and who had demonstrated the futility of trying to resist God, said, when light and reason from heaven dawned upon him, that:

#### **Daniel 4**

<sup>34</sup> His kingdom is from generation to generation:

<sup>35</sup> And all the inhabitants of the world are reputed as nothing: and He does 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 are You doing?

God, being absolute ruler, is absolutely free. His mind and will are free.

### **God's Will on Earth**

We are taught to pray to God, our Father:

#### **Matthew 6**

<sup>10</sup> Your kingdom come. Your will be done in earth, as it is in heaven.

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<sup>16</sup> *Revelation 1:5-6.*

This was the condition in the beginning, and it is that which is to be restored through the Gospel. But can you not see that such a state must necessarily be one of absolute freedom on earth? It follows from the fact that God is free, and that His will is absolutely unfettered. He is free, and He gives freedom by giving himself. Christ, who is the image of the invisible God, and one with Him, has secured our everlasting freedom by giving himself to us. Being made partakers of the Divine nature,—being made one with Christ as He is one with the Father,—we must necessarily be as free as He is.

Let me repeat, in order that this truth may be very plain. God's will is absolutely free, and therefore whenever and wherever His will is done there can be only freedom. The man in whom God's will is done,—that one in whom God's will has free course,—whose only will is God's will, can, like God, do whatsoever He will. Nothing will be impossible to him. There can be no talk of bondage in connection with such a man.

### **What Constitutes a Perfect Man**

This we may know by reference to the formation of the man whom God pronounced “very good.” The simple story is told in:

#### **Genesis 2**

<sup>7</sup> God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul,

—a perfect man. So again we read:

#### **Job 33**

<sup>4</sup> The Spirit of God has made me, and the breath of the Almighty has given me life.

#### **Job 32**

<sup>8</sup> There is a spirit in man; and the inspiration of the Almighty gives them understanding.

Do you see what it is that constitutes the perfect man? that is, the man who is complete as *man*. It is just this: A body of dust with the Spirit of God. The clay we have; but just to the extent

that we lack the Spirit, the mind, the “perfect will of God,” do we come short of being perfect men. Bear in mind that in using the word “perfect,” I do not mean simply “good,” but complete, just as one would say of an animal that has no blemish that it is a perfect animal, or of a machine that is complete in all its parts that it is a perfect machine. So the Spirit of God is an essential part of man. The man who lacks the Spirit of God, who is guided and controlled by any other Spirit, is an incomplete man.

The Spirit of God must of course always speak and act according to the will of God.<sup>17</sup> So the perfect, the complete man, is free because his body is yielded to God, so...

### **Romans 12**

<sup>2</sup> ...that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God,

—may be done in it, even as it is in the person of God himself. The man is free because he is dependent upon God, and because he acknowledges and acquiesces in that fact. Freedom of the creature is therefore always found in dependence, in obedience, and never in independence. When this truth is learned, God can send us out into His wide universe, to range as freely as He himself.

### **God's Will Not Arbitrary**

From all that has been said it must be evident that God's will is not arbitrary. That is, God does not, like human rulers, think out laws for the government of His subjects. He does not try experiments. He does not impose rules, or make prohibitions, simply because He wishes things to go in a certain way. His laws are all like himself,—they *are*. He cannot be other than He is, and so His law—His will—cannot be other than it is. If this great truth be recognized, then it will make obedience very easy. Then we shall know that...

### **1 John 5**

<sup>3</sup> This is the love of God, that we keep His commandments; and His commandments are not grievous.

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<sup>17</sup> *Romans 8:27.*

Knowing this we may see that it was not anything like what in man would be caprice, or the arbitrary exercise of authority, that made God forbid man to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. The tree was not, we may be sure, placed in the garden merely as a *test*. It was there because it was necessary for it to be there. Just *why* it was necessary we shall doubtless know better when we get into the garden; but we may be confident that God does not act capriciously.

It also necessarily follows that the fruit of the tree was forbidden, because it was not good for man, at least not at that time. Sometimes a merchant will purposely leave money in the way of a new office boy, to see if he will take it; but we must settle it for ever in our minds that God does not deal thus with His children.

### **James 1**

<sup>13</sup> God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempts He any man.

He never trifles with His creatures. Our knowledge of the fact that the very best fruit is not always, at all seasons, suitable to be eaten, may help us to understand that an explanation of why the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil had such a “mortal taste”<sup>18</sup> to Adam and Eve may sometime be forthcoming. Till then we may rest content in the knowledge of God’s goodness and absolute justice.

The essential part of your question is not answered. Man is a king, and free, only when he is simply the agent of the King of kings, whose will is perfect and unfettered. When man has no will but God’s will, no mind but God’s mind, because he has no spirit but God’s Spirit, then he is free indeed; for...

### **2 Corinthians 3**

<sup>17</sup> Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.

Only so is he a man indeed.

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<sup>18</sup> John Milton, *Paradise Lost*, Book I.



## God's Foreknowledge and Man's Freewill

But how could it be that man was free to act as he chose, when God knew beforehand just what he would do?

This is an old question, and many have put it forward as proof that man is not free, while others use it as evidence that God does not know all things. Now it should be remembered that questions and objections are not proofs; and the fact that we do not understand a thing does not prove that it does not exist. The facts are clear, both that man is free except when he voluntarily goes into bondage, and that God knows all things, and knows them just as well before they occur as afterwards.

God is the one who is, and who was, and who is to come.<sup>19</sup> He is the beginning and the end.<sup>20</sup> He inhabits eternity.<sup>21</sup> But eternity is future as well as past. You may say that you cannot understand how God can dwell in the future; neither can I; but I can understand it just as well as I can understand how He has existed from all eternity, without any beginning. Can not you? We cannot understand the Being of God at all; but, accepting the truth that He *is*, we must also, and can just as easily, accept the truth that He is the one who *will be*. That is, He is even now in the days to come.

When you tell me something that you have done, and I tell you that I have already heard of it, you do not think that my knowledge of what has taken place in the least interfered with the freedom of your will. It does not curtail your liberty for me to look back upon your choice. Even so it does not interfere with our freedom for God, from His habitation in the eternity yet to come, to look back, as it were, upon what we are now doing.

Remember that eternity has neither beginning nor end. Then it is a circle. Now draw a circle upon a piece of paper and make two figures upon two different sections of it. Conceive them to be

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<sup>19</sup> *Revelation* 1:4, 8; 4:8.

<sup>20</sup> *Revelation* 21:6; 22:13.

<sup>21</sup> *Isaiah* 57:15.

traveling around the circle in the same direction, and then say which one is ahead. Either one of them may be said to be ahead of the other. But even this is a feeble illustration, for God is not at one point only of the circle, but at every point of it at the same time.

Now I know that this does not explain God's existence or His foreknowledge; but this illustration of a Scripture statement enables us to realize that God is infinitely great, and that nothing is hard for Him, and that just because He knows all things, even before they happen, we are free agents. He knows the future, not because He looks ahead, but because He is there.

The practical benefit of this truth is the confidence it begets in His power to save. He can thwart every design of the enemy against us, making all things work together for our good. What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?

O blessed life! The heart at rest,  
When all without tumultuous seems;  
That trusts a higher Will, and deems  
That higher will, not mine, the best.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> William T. Matson, *O Blessed Life*, 1866.

## 7. Predestination (1903)

E. J. Waggoner

Present Truth, September 10, 1903

Original title: The Editor's Private Corner. Predestination

I should be pleased to receive some help on the doctrine of “final perseverance,” or “once in grace always in grace,” also concerning predestination.

**W**E WILL consider predestination first. The Scriptures are clear on this subject, and there is great comfort to be gleaned from them for every one.

### **Ephesians 1**

<sup>4</sup> [God has] chosen us in Christ before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love:

<sup>5</sup> Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself.

<sup>11</sup> In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of Him who works all things after the counsel of His own will.

So you see, if you have given your heart to Jesus Christ, you have connected yourself with something that goes back to a time before Adam fell, or the earth was created. You must not look at yourself, and think,

“Now I have just given myself to the Lord, I wonder if I can stand the trial of my faith, and whether I shall be holding on still six months from now?”

When you fall on the Rock,<sup>23</sup> coming to Him as unto a living stone, you are built into the living foundation, which is Christ Jesus, and partake of its solidity and strength.<sup>24</sup> That foundation has stood the fiercest storms that can come, and for thousands of

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<sup>23</sup> *Matthew* 21:44.

<sup>24</sup> *1 Peter* 2:4-5.

years it has been steadfast and unmovable.<sup>25</sup> In Christ you have the same standing, you have a life that has not wavered since the days of eternity.

It was not you that chose Christ, He chose you.<sup>26</sup> It was not because of your will that you were born again. It was because of God's will.<sup>27</sup> When you knew that God had chosen you, you were willing to be His. You surrendered to His will, that He might...

### **Philippians 2**

<sup>13</sup> ...work in you to will and to do of His good pleasure.

When you are tempted to think that you are too frail and vacillating to endure to the end, remember that what has made you a Christian has not wavered once, in all the past, that the life you receive by faith is an everlasting life, and that He who has begun the good work is able to carry it forward to the glorious end.<sup>28</sup>

Although God has willed our salvation and predestinated us to eternal life, there is perfect freedom with Him, and no one is compelled to take what God provides. We have a will of our own, but the best use we can make of it is to will that we will accept God's will. Our little will, like the little switch, has power to connect us with God or break the connection. We may have very little will power, but it only takes a very small switch to make the connection. When our life is thus willingly connected with God, the current flows through us, and we have the everlasting life, and learn that the Gospel is the power of God.

God has made known our predestination to us, because:

### **Hebrews 6**

<sup>17</sup> [He is] willing...to show unto the heirs of promise the immutability of His counsel.

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<sup>25</sup> *Matthew 7:24-25.*

<sup>26</sup> *John 15:16.*

<sup>27</sup> *John 1:13, James 1:18.*

<sup>28</sup> *Philippians 1:6.*

We partake of the root as well as of the fatness of the olive tree.<sup>29</sup>

But this assurance is not for a few only. Those of whom Paul speaks in the *Epistle to the Ephesians* were not specially deserving of being predestinated to sonship and inheritance. It was when they were “dead in sins” that they were quickened together with Christ.<sup>30</sup> Who then can be counted out of God’s predestination? Not one.

### **Romans 8**

<sup>30</sup> For whom He did foreknow, He also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son.

Some hold an entirely erroneous view of predestination, which is opposed to the Scripture. They believe that God foreordained some to be lost, and some to be saved. Now God could not predestinate some to be lost without knowing which they were, but the text we have just read states emphatically that everyone whom God knew of beforehand was predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son. This proves that God had no thought whatever of condemning any to be lost. Such a thing did not enter His mind.

If you will look through the passages that speak of election, you will find that every one of them speaks of election to salvation.

### **Romans 9**

<sup>15</sup> He said to Moses, I *will have mercy* on whom I will have mercy, and I *will have compassion* on whom I will have compassion.

Notice that it is mercy and compassion that God is determined on, not mercy on some and wrath on others.

Even Pharaoh is quoted as an instance of this. God raised him up to make him a witness, and that the name of God might be declared through him in all the earth. Pharaoh resisted God’s gracious purpose, but it was carried out nevertheless. It might have

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<sup>29</sup> *Romans* 11:17.

<sup>30</sup> *Ephesians* 2:1, 5.

been done through Pharaoh as a willing instrument, but since he would not yield, it was done through him against his will. His very effort to defeat God's plan was the means by which the plan was carried out.

In Pharaoh's case, we see how it is that some will be lost, although God has predestined them to life. They resist the gracious purpose of God, and in so doing they harden themselves. They will not be pliable in God's hands, as the clay is in the hands of the potter. They become stiff, so that while God in mercy is dealing with them, seeking to mold them aright, they break in His hands, as Pharaoh did. Their lives are spoiled and wasted, and they fail of the design that God planned for them.

If they had been passive in God's hands, His eternal purpose would have been fulfilled in them. God does all that He can do to make His predestination effective.

### **Romans 8**

<sup>30</sup> Whom He did predestinate, them He also called: and whom He called, them He also justified: and whom He justified, them He also glorified.

God does all that He can for every man.

### **Ezekiel 18**

<sup>29</sup> O house of Israel, are not my ways equal?

The question may be asked,

“Why are not all saved?”

God asks that question, too. There is no reason that any man will dare to offer when he stands before the great white throne. No deficiency will be alleged there so far as God is concerned.

...once in grace, always in grace...

On this point, little needs to be said. There is no reason why men should not always be in grace.

## **Romans 5**

<sup>20</sup> Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound.

The great difficulty usually is to get men to believe at all in the grace of God, and we would not say a word to lessen anyone's courage in the Lord's power to take care of their past, present, and future.

Here is the best by which we may know if we are in grace or not.

## **Romans 6**

<sup>14</sup> Sin shall not have dominion over you: for you are not under the law, but under grace.

This is the work that grace does. I have met men who have perverted this truth, and say,

"I have once been in grace, therefore I cannot be lost."

That is wrong. As long as sin does not have dominion over them they will not be lost.

Sometimes a man will learn that the seventh day is the Sabbath, and he sees that he ought to keep it, but he is afraid to face the consequences. He will say,

"It does not make any difference to my salvation whether I obey God in this matter or not. I have been in grace once, and so I am sure of being saved at last, even if I do not keep the Sabbath."

Such a man shows that he does not know what grace is. He is no Christian at all. Jesus saves His people from their sins, and the man who makes Christ's work a reason for his remaining in sin, is putting a cruel dishonor upon the Saviour.

As long as a man abides in Christ he is saved from sin and is under grace. When he walks in sin he is not abiding in Christ,

## **1 John 2**

<sup>6</sup> For he that says he abides in Him, ought himself also so to walk, even as He walked.



