

Does the Bible teach Predestination?

DID GOD PREDESTINE CERTAIN PEOPLE TO GO TO HEAVEN, AND CERTAIN PEOPLE TO GO TO HELL? HAS OUR JUDGMENT DAY ALREADY BEEN DETERMINED? SHOULD WE EVEN TRY TO LIVE THE CHRISTIAN LIFE? WERE SOME OF US JUST CREATED TO BE BAD?

The Apostle Paul wrote in Romans 8:28-30:

“And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love Him, who have been called according to His purpose. (29) For those God foreknew He also predestined to be conformed to the likeness of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brothers. (30) And those He predestined, He also called; those He called, He also justified; those He justified, He also glorified.”

1. NOTICE, **“GOD WORKS FOR THE GOOD OF THOSE WHO LOVE HIM.”** SO, DID GOD JUST PREDESTINE CERTAIN PEOPLE TO LOVE HIM, OR DOES EVERYONE HAVE A CHOICE TO EITHER LOVE HIM OR NOT LOVE HIM?

A. Jesus told His Apostles in John 14:23,24: “If anyone loves Me, he will obey My teachings. My Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him. He who does not love Me will not obey My teachings.”

B. And what happens if you refuse to obey His teachings? Jesus told His Apostles in John 12:47-50: *“As for the person who hears My words but does not keep them, I do not judge him. For I did not come to judge the world, but to save it (John 3:16). **There is a judge for the one who rejects Me and does not accept My words; that very word which I spoke (Gospels or New Testament) will condemn him at the last day!”***

C. BUT, IF GOD PREDESTINED SOME PEOPLE TO BE BAD, THEY WOULDN'T BE ABLE TO OBEY HIS TEACHINGS; AND IF GOD PREDESTINED OTHER PEOPLE TO BE GOOD, THEN THEY WOULD ALWAYS OBEY HIS TEACHINGS.

(1) Yet 1 John 1:8-10 says: *“If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the Truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness. **If we claim we have not sinned, we make Him out to be a liar, and His Word has no place in our lives.**”*

(2) And Romans 3:23 adds: *“For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.”*

D. For, as Paul wrote in this same chapter 8, in verses 12-14: “Therefore brothers (Christians), we have an obligation (we must do this) — but it is *not* to our sinful nature, to live according to it (and not obey Christ’s teachings). *For if you live according to the sinful nature, you will die*** (spiritually — Hell); ***but if by the Spirit you put to death the misdeeds of the body*** (stop disobeying the Lord), ***you will live*** (spiritually — Heaven). *Those who are led by the Spirit of God (live according to Spirit) are sons of God.*”**

(1) THIS CLEARLY SHOWS THAT EVERYONE HAS A **CHOICE** AS TO WHETHER THEY WILL OBEY GOD’S SPIRIT, OR THEIR OWN SINFUL DESIRES — GOD DID NOT PREDESTINE THEM TO EITHER BE BAD OR GOOD!

E. But, Paul warned the Galatian Christians in Galatians 5:4-6:8: “You who are trying to be justified by the Law (rejecting the Spirit’s Truth — New Testament; and going back to the Old Testament Law), *have been alienated from Christ; you have fallen away from grace...***(7) *You were running a good race* (obeying Christ’s teachings). ***Who cut in on you and kept you from obeying the Truth*** (Commands from the Spirit)?...(16) *So I say, live by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of your sinful nature* (remember ***Romans 8:12-14?***)....(19) ***The acts of the sinful nature are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery, idolatry and witchcraft; hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions, and envy; drunkenness, orgies, and the like. I warn you, as I did before, that those who live like this will not inherit the kingdom of God...***(6:7) ***Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows. The one who sows to please his sinful nature, from that nature will reap destruction; the one who sows to please the Spirit, from the Spirit will reap eternal life.***”**

F. SO, EVERYONE SINS, AND EVERYONE HAS A CHOICE, TO EITHER FOLLOW GOD’S SPIRIT, AND OBEY THE TRUTH; OR TO OBEY THEIR OWN SINFUL NATURE. AND YOUR CHOICE WILL DETERMINE WHETHER YOU GO TO HEAVEN OR HELL — NOT BECAUSE GOD PREDESTINED YOU TO BE EITHER SAVED OR LOST!

2. NOTICE THAT ROMANS 8:28 ALSO SAYS “GOD WORKS FOR THE GOOD OF THOSE WHO... HAVE BEEN CALLED.”

A. COULD IT BE THAT SOME PEOPLE HAVE BEEN “CALLED” (PREDESTINED BEFORE THEY WERE BORN), AND SOME HAVE NOT? WHO DOES THE BIBLE SAY GOD “CALLED” OR “PREDESTINED” TO BECOME CHRISTIANS?

(1) **II Peter 3:9**: “*The Lord is not slow in keeping His promise, as some understand slowness. He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.*”

(2) ***1 Timothy 1:15,16***: “Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners — of whom I am the worst. But for that very reason I was shown mercy so that in me, the **worst of sinners**, Christ Jesus might display His unlimited patience as an example for those who would believe on Him and receive eternal life.”

(3) ***1 Timothy 2:4***: “Who wants all men to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the Truth. For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus.”

(4) This is why Jesus’ last command to His Apostles in ***Matthew 28:19,20***, says: “Go and make disciples of **all nations**, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you.”

3. GOD HAS “CALLED” (PREDESTINED) EVERYONE TO BE SAVED (EVEN THE “WORST OF SINNERS” — *ROMANS 10:13*** SAYS: “for everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.” BUT, NOT EVERYONE ANSWERS THE CALL!**

A. WHAT CALL? *ROMANS 8:28*** SAYS IT IS THOSE “WHO HAVE BEEN CALLED ACCORDING TO HIS PURPOSE.”**

B. WHAT “PURPOSE?”

(1) ***Acts 2:23***: “This man (Jesus) was handed over to you by God’s set **purpose** and **foreknowledge**; and you, with the help of wicked men, put Him to death by nailing Him to the cross.”

(2) IN OTHER WORDS, IT WAS GOD’S “**PURPOSE**” (OR PLAN), FROM THE BEGINNING, TO SEND JESUS TO EARTH, IN ORDER THAT HE MIGHT BECOME HUMAN, AND ULTIMATELY SACRIFICE HIS LIFE FOR THE LIVES OF **EVERYONE** ON EARTH! THIS WOULD HAVE BEEN MEANINGLESS IF GOD HAD ALREADY PREDESTINED THOSE WHO WOULD BE SAVED AND THOSE WHO WOULD BE LOST!

(3) THIS IS WHY, WHEN THESE PEOPLE HEARD THESE WORDS FROM PETER, THEY ANSWERED IN ***ACTS 2:37***: “When the people heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and the other Apostles, ‘Brothers, what shall we do?’

Peter replied, “**Repent and be baptized everyone of you, in the name of Jesus Christ so that your sins may be forgiven. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off — for all whom the Lord our God will call.**”

(4) Remember John 3:16: “For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son, that **whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have everlasting life. For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through Him. Whoever believes in Him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe stands condemned already.”**

C. GOD’S “PURPOSE” OR PLAN, WAS TO SAVE EVERYONE THROUGH THE SACRIFICE OF JESUS CHRIST! BUT, IT’S UP TO US TO FOLLOW GOD’S “PURPOSE” FOR OUR LIVES.

(1) As Peter warned in II Peter 1:10,11: *Therefore, my brothers, be all the more eager to make your calling and election sure. For if you do these things (faith, goodness, knowledge, self-control, perseverance, Godliness, brotherly kindness and love), **you will never fall**, and you will receive a rich welcome into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.”*

4. AS ROMANS 8:29 CONTINUES: “FOR THOSE GOD FOREKNEW HE ALSO PREDESTINED TO BE CONFORMED TO THE LIKENESS OF HIS SON.”

A. BEFORE WE WERE EVER BORN, GOD “FOREKNEW” THAT WE WOULD LIVE ON THIS EARTH, AND “PREDESTINED” US TO FOLLOW HIS “PURPOSE” OR “PLAN,” WHICH WAS: “TO BE CONFORMED TO THE LIKENESS OF HIS SON” — TO BE LIKE JESUS (CHRISTIANS)!

(1) I Corinthians 2:7: “No, we speak of God’s secret wisdom, a wisdom that has been hidden and that God destined (predestination) for our glory before time began (foreknowledge).”

(2) WHAT “SECRET WISDOM” DID GOD PREDESTINE FOR US “BEFORE TIME BEGAN?”

B. Ephesians 1:4-11: “For He chose us in Him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in His sight. In love He predestined us to be adopted as sons through Jesus Christ, in accordance with His pleasure and will — to the praise of His glorious grace, which He has freely given us in the One He loves. In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God’s grace that He lavished on us with all wisdom and understanding. And He made known to us the mystery of His will (or plan) according to His good pleasure, which He purposed in Christ, to be put into effect when the times will have reached their fulfillment — to bring all things in Heaven and on Earth together under one head, even Christ (after Jesus died for us, and rose again).

In Him we were also chosen, having been predestined according to the plan of Him who works out everything in conformity with the purpose of His will, in order that we, who were the first to hope in Christ, might be for the praise of His glory. And you

also were included in Christ when you heard the Word of Truth, the Gospel of your salvation. In Him, when you believed, you were marked with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit, who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance until the redemption of those who are God's possession."

C. GOD DID NOT PREDESTINE PEOPLE TO BE EITHER GOOD OR BAD; HE "PREDESTINED" A "PLAN" TO SAVE ALL PEOPLE (GOOD OR BAD), WHICH WAS THE "PURPOSE" OF JESUS COMING TO EARTH, AND SACRIFICING HIMSELF FOR EVERYONE'S SINS. ANYONE WHO CHOOSES TO BELIEVE IN THIS PLAN (OR "WORD OF TRUTH"), IS THEN GIVEN THE HOLY SPIRIT, WHICH (AS LONG AS WE CHOOSE TO LIVE BY THE SPIRIT'S "WORD OF TRUTH"), WILL GUARANTEE US A PLACE IN HEAVEN!

D. BUT WHAT IF YOU REFUSE TO FOLLOW GOD'S PREDESTINED "PLAN ("WORD OF TRUTH," OR "GOSPEL OF YOUR SALVATION")?"

(1) Jesus told the Church of Ephesus in Revelation 2:4: *"Yet I hold this against you: You have forsaken your first love. Remember the height from which you have fallen! Repent, and do the things you did at first. **If you do not repent, I will come to you and remove your lamp stand from its place.**"*

(2) Jesus told the Church in Sardis in Revelation 3:2: *"Wake up! Strengthen what remains and is about to die, for **I have not found your deeds (works) complete in the sight of My God. Remember therefore, what you have received and heard; obey it, and repent.** But if you do not wake up, I will come like a thief, and you will not know at what time I will come to you."*

(3) Luke 13:1-5: *"Now there were some present at that time who told Jesus about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mixed with their sacrifices. Jesus answered, **'Do you think that these Galileans were worse sinners (God predestined them to sin more) than all the other Galileans because they suffered this way? I tell you, no! But unless you repent, you too will all perish! Or those eighteen who died when the tower in Siloam fell on them — do you think they were more guilty (God predestined them to be more evil) than all the others living in Jerusalem? I tell you, no! But unless you repent, you too will all perish!'**"*

(4) GOD DOESN'T KILL SINNERS — SIN KILLS SINNERS! God didn't predestine these people who died to be worse sinners than the other Jews, and therefore "perish" and go to Hell. Everyone has a choice: You can live a sinful life against God's commands, or you can repent, and stop living a sinful life!

(5) But, as Hebrews 10:26,27 warns: *"If we deliberately keep on sinning after we have received the knowledge of the Truth, no sacrifice for sins is left, but only a*

fearful expectation of judgment and of raging fire that will consume the enemies of God!”

(6) As Jesus continues in Luke 13:6-9:

“Then He told this parable: ‘A man (God) had a fig tree (people), planted in his vineyard (Kingdom), and he went to look for fruit on it, but did not find any. So he (God) said to the man who took care of the vineyard (Jesus), ‘For three years (Jesus’ ministry) now I’ve been coming to look for fruit on this fig tree and haven’t found any. Cut it down! Why should it use up the soil?’

‘Sir,’ the man (Jesus) replied, ‘leave it alone for one more year, and I’ll dig around it and fertilize it. If it bears fruit next year, fine! If not, then cut it down’.”

E. God didn’t predestine certain people to be saved, and others to be condemned; He sent Jesus to give everyone a chance to repent and start producing for Him. If some people were predestined to be bad fig trees, that were to be cut down, then why is Jesus asking God to give us more time, so He can possibly save us from perishing?

5. God told Ezekiel to tell Israel (those He supposedly predestined, called, justified and glorified) the following in Ezekiel 18:2-32:

“What do you people mean by quoting this proverb about the land of Israel:

‘The fathers eat sour grapes, and the children’s teeth are set on edge’?

*As surely as I live, declares the Sovereign Lord, you will no longer quote this proverb in Israel. For every living soul belongs to Me, the father as well as the son — both alike belong to Me. **The soul who sins is the one who will die (spiritual death in Hell).***

Suppose there is a righteous man who does what is just and right...(9) He follows My decrees and faithfully keeps My Laws. That man is righteous; he will surely live (eternally in Heaven).

Suppose he has a violent son, who sheds blood or does any of these other things (though the father has done none of them)...(13)Will such a man live (go to Heaven)? He will not! Because he has done all these detestable things, he will surely be put to death (go to Hell) and his blood will be on his own head (He chose to sin against God; God did not predestine him to be so evil).

(14) But suppose this son has a son who sees all the sins his father commits, and though he sees them, he does not do such things...(17) He will not die for his father’s sin; he will surely live. But his father will die for his own sin.

(20) The soul who sins is the one who will die (go to Hell). The son will not share the guilt of the father, nor will the father share the guilt of the son. The righteousness of the righteous man will be credited to him, and the wickedness of the wicked will be charged against him.

But if a wicked man turns away from all the sins he has committed and keeps all my decrees and does what is just and right, he will surely live; he will not die. None of the offenses he has committed will be remembered against him. Because of the righteous things he has done, he will live. Do I take any pleasure in the death of the wicked? declares the Sovereign Lord. Rather, am I not pleased when they turn from their ways (repent) and live?

But if a righteous man turns from his righteousness and commits sin and does the same detestable things the wicked man does, will he live? None of the righteous things he has done will be remembered. Because of the unfaithfulness he is guilty of and because of the sins he has committed, he will die.

(26) If a righteous man turns from his righteousness and commits sin, he will die for it; because of the sin he has committed he will die. But if a wicked man turns away from the wickedness he has committed and does what is just and right, he will save his life!

(30) Therefore, O house of Israel, I will judge you, each one according to his ways, declares the Sovereign Lord. Repent! Turn away from all your offenses; then sin will not be your downfall. Rid yourselves of all the offenses you have committed, and get a new heart and a new Spirit. Why will you die, O house of Israel? For I take no pleasure in the death (spiritual, that sends to Hell) of anyone, declares the Sovereign Lord. Repent, and live!

A. SO, “WHY WILL YOU DIE”? WHY WOULD YOU WANT TO SPEND AN ETERNITY IN HELL? GOD DIDN’T PREDESTINE YOU TO BE EVIL! GOD NOT ONLY GIVES EVERYONE THE CHANCE TO REPENT, HE WANTS YOU TO “REPENT, AND LIVE” ETERNALLY WITH HIM IN HEAVEN ---- BUT, IT’S YOUR CHOICE!

B. BUT, WHAT ABOUT NEW TESTAMENT CHRISTIANS? DOES GOD STILL FEEL THE SAME WAY? LISTEN TO THE APOSTLE PAUL IN ROMANS 11:11-26:

“Did they (Israel) stumble so as to fall beyond recovery? Not at all! Rather, because of their transgression, salvation has come to the Gentiles to make Israel envious...(13) I am talking to you Gentiles (Christians). Inasmuch as I am the Apostle to the Gentiles, I make much of my ministry in the hope that I may somehow arouse my own people (Jews) to envy and save some of them...(16) If the root (Christ) is holy, so are the branches (Israel). If some of the branches have been broken off, and you (Gentile Christians), though a wild olive shoot, have been grafted in among the others (Jews) and now share in the nourishing sap from the olive root (Christ), do not boast over those branches (Jews). If you do, consider this: You do not support the root (Christ), but the root (Christ) supports you. You will say then, ‘Branches (Jews) were broken off so that I could be grafted in.’ Granted. But they (Jews) were broken off because of their unbelief (in Jesus Christ), and you stand by faith (in Christ Jesus). Do not be arrogant, but be afraid. For if God did not spare the natural branches (Israel), He will not spare you either.

Consider therefore the kindness and sternness of God: sternness to those who fell (died spiritually refusing to repent), but kindness to you, provided that you continue in His kindness (continue to obey His commands). Otherwise, you also will be cut off! And if they (Jews) do not persist in unbelief (and repent), they will be grafted in, for God is able to graft them in again (He did not predestine them to be broken off or grafted in — it’s their choice). After all, if you were cut out of an olive tree that is wild by nature (Gentiles), and contrary to nature were grafted into a cultivated olive tree (Israel), how much more readily will these, the natural branches (Jews), be grafted into

their own olive tree (Israel)?

I do not want you to be ignorant of this mystery, brothers (Christians), so that you may not be conceited: Israel has experienced a hardening in part until the full number of the Gentiles (Christians) has come in. And so all Israel will be saved!”

(1) GOD HASN'T CHANGED! BOTH ISRAEL AND CHRISTIANS HAVE THE CHOICE TO OBEY HIM (THROUGH HIS SON JESUS CHRIST) AND LIVE (HEAVEN), OR TO REJECT HIS SPIRIT'S TRUTHS AND DIE SPIRITUALLY (HELL)

6. ROMANS 8:30 CONCLUDES: *“And those He predestined, He also called; those He called, He also justified; those He justified, He also glorified.”*

A. God's primary “*purpose*” (“*before time began*”), was to “*predestine*” a “*plan*” (even though He “*foreknew*” the outcome), whereby He would “*call*” “*everyone*” “*to be conformed to the likeness of His Son*” (become Christians). And, whoever chose to “*love*” God enough to “*repent*” of the evil that they were doing, and “*obey*” Him (following His “*Holy Spirit's*” “*Word of Truth*”); He would “*justify*” them, and “*glorify*” them, in order that they could be with Him in Heaven!

B. GOD DID NOT PREDESTINE US TO BE EITHER SAVED OR LOST REGARDLESS OF WHAT WE OURSELVES DECIDE TO DO. HE GAVE US OUR OWN CHOICE TO DETERMINE OUR OWN DESTINY!

7. SEE MY STUDIES ON: “YES, YOU CAN FALL FROM GRACE;” “YOU MUST REPENT;” AND “THE BIBLE DOES NOT SAY ‘FAITH ONLY.’”