

# THE BEREANS

ACTS 17:11

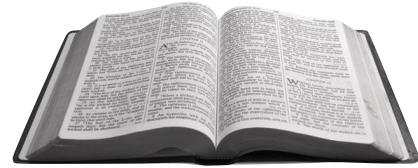
Romans 11:33

Lesson #20

Divine Election

05/19/2019

## How to read the Old Testament



Who are  
the Elect of God?



1

### The Jewish (O.C.) view of “justification before God”.

1. **God’s gracious election / redemption** took place through Abraham (Promise) / Moses (Exodus) where national Israel is elect and saved.
  - Election is corporate, not individual.
  - Salvation is national, not personal.
2. **Keeping the Law of Moses** identifies the elect (which could include Gentile proselytes).
3. **Israel’s hope** was the restoration of Israel to its rightful place as the kingdom of God on earth through the coming Messiah.

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### O.C. disciples of Jesus wanted to know:

1. **The mystery of Election** - Who is the true Israel or the chosen people of God?
2. **The mystery of Holiness** - How could a holy and just God justify Gentile sinners without the Law and its temple sacrifices?
3. **The mystery of the Cross** - How could a crucified Messiah save God’s elect people?



The Apostles address  
these issues in the N.C.  
Epistles.

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### The answers are embedded in the O.C. itself

1. The divine **Election** of Israel.
2. The **Imputation** of virtue to the ceremonial washing of priests.
3. The **Atonement** of sin though blood sacrifice.

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Augustine taught that divine election  
is individual and unconditional.

Step #1	Step #2	Step #3	Step #4
God sovereignly & unconditionally chooses who will be saved.	Christ is sent to redeem only the elect (those God has chosen) .	The Spirit is sent to convict and give new birth to the elect.	The elect are identified by faith and obedience.
Eternity past	1st century	Pre conversion	Post conversion

Calvin’s followers believe that “This is the correct Biblical message and the ONLY narrative that fully respects God’s GLORY and GRACE!”

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**Reasons why Calvinists believe that unconditional election of individuals is vital to the Gospel of sovereign grace.**

- ✓ If humans contribute to their salvation by BELIEVING, salvation is no longer by grace but involves works (faith).
- ✓ The Scripture “clearly” teaches the absolute sovereignty of God and the unconditional election of individuals.

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**Some concerns with this teaching**

- Does the Scriptural picture of God **emphasize** His sovereign CONTROL or His loving COMPASSION and appeal to our FREE response?
- Are the **implications** of absolute divine sovereignty consistent with God’s JUSTICE, MERCY, & LOVE?
- Does the Scripture **clearly** teach unconditional election?



**Major texts used to support “unconditional election” of individuals to salvation:**

*Ephesians 1:4*

“just He chose us in him before the foundation of the world.”

“just as **He chose us** in Him”

**He chose us TO BE in him (BEFORE we believed).**

“just as **He chose us** in Him”

**He chose us WITH HIM (WHEN we believed).**

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*1 Corinthians 15:22*

“For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ all will be made alive.”



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***Ephesians 1:4-6 Colossians 1:21-23***  
**(Interpretive Paraphrase)**

“From the very beginning God had planned for us to share His nature and showcase His grace and love to the world. **His chosen Son** is the key to this plan. And we were included with him through adoption when we believed. This is a testimony to God’s grace.”

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## Major texts used to support “unconditional election” of individuals to salvation:

*John 6:44 (10:3)*

“No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him,”

### ✓ Jesus may be addressing the believing “remnant” within Israel only.

*Paraphrase*

“Only the believing remnant within Israel will recognize me as the Christ and be drawn to me.”

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## Two different ways of reading these important passages.

*John 6:37, 10:26-28*

“<sup>26</sup> But you do not believe, because you are not of My sheep. <sup>27</sup> My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me; <sup>28</sup> and I give eternal life to them, and they shall never perish; and no one shall snatch them out of My hand.”

- This could be understood as referring to those individuals (Jew and Gentile) who had been chosen unconditionally before they were born.
- This could be understood as referring to a believing Jewish remnant who upon hearing Jesus recognized him as the Messiah.

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## Major texts used to support “unconditional election” of individuals to salvation:

*Romans 9:11*

“for though the twins were not yet born, and had not done anything good or bad, in order that God’s purpose according to His choice might stand, not because of works, but because of Him who calls,”

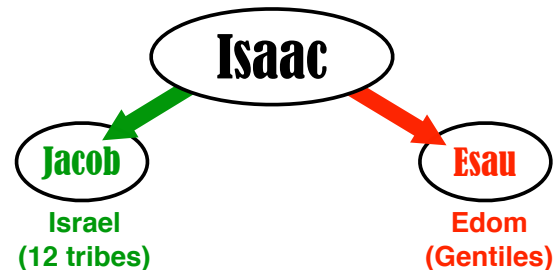
### ✓ Paul was addressing Israel and Edom (Gentiles) not individual salvation.

*Paraphrase*

“God’s plan chooses to use the events of history to accomplish His will.”

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“<sup>10</sup> And not only this, but there was Rebekah also, when she had conceived twins by one man, our father Isaac; <sup>11</sup> for though the twins were not yet born, and had not done anything good or bad, in order that God’s purpose according to His choice might stand, not because of works, but because of Him who calls, <sup>12</sup> it was said to her, “*The older will serve the younger.*” (Gen.25:23) <sup>13</sup> Just as it is written, “*Jacob I loved, but Esau I hated.*” (Mal. 1:2-4)



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## Illustration

*Malachi 1*

“<sup>1</sup> The oracle of the word of the Lord **to Israel** through Malachi. <sup>2</sup> “I have loved you.” says the Lord. But you say, “How have You loved **us**?” “Was not Esau Jacob’s brother?” declares the Lord. “Yet **I have loved Jacob**; <sup>3</sup> **but I have hated Esau**, and I have made his mountains a desolation and appointed his inheritance for the jackals of the wilderness.” <sup>4</sup> Though **Edom** says, “We have been beaten down, but we will return and build up the ruins”; thus says the Lord of hosts, “**They** may build, but I will tear down; and men will call them the wicked territory, and **the people** toward whom the Lord is indignant forever.”

**Two nations (Israel & Edom) are in view (not individuals).**

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## *A Point of Romans 9*

“God’s redemptive plan is fulfilled as He uses the disobedience of Israel, and the hard heart of Pharaoh, to bring blessing to the Gentiles.”

### *Other examples*

- ✓ Joseph’s slavery in Egypt.
- ✓ Paul’s thorn in the flesh.
- ✓ The crucifixion of Jesus.

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## Predestination in Romans 9

Determinative  
in who is  
redeemed

OR

Instrumental  
in the drama  
of God's plan

Individuals  
Christians

Israel  
Christ

Redeemed  
people

Redemptive  
plan

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## The arguments for and against Augustine's doctrine of divine election to salvation

### The strongest arguments for:

- The nation **Israel** was **chosen by God** not by the Jewish people.

### The strongest arguments against:

- God chose the **corporate nation** not the individuals.

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*Other Christians teach that divine election is corporate and conditional.*

Step #1	Step #2	Step #3	Step #4
God's chooses Christ and (all who would believe) in him as He did Israel	Christ is sent to redeem the sins of all humanity.	The Spirit is sent to convict the world of its need for Christ.	All who believe are justified by being united with (in) Christ
Eternity past	1st century	Pre conversion	At conversion

*They believe that "This is the **ONLY** narrative that fully respects God's LOVE and JUSTICE!"*

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## Jesus is the elect one

*Isaiah 49:5*

"And now says the Lord, who formed me from the womb to be **His Servant**, to bring Jacob back to Him, so that **Israel might be gathered to him.**"

*Isaiah 42:1*

"Behold, **My Servant**, whom I uphold; My **chosen** one in whom My soul delights. I have put My Spirit upon him; he will bring forth justice to the nations."

*Luke 9:35*

"This is My Son, My **chosen** one;"

*Galatians 3:16*

"Now the promises were spoken to Abraham and to his seed. He does not say, "And to seeds," as referring to many; but rather to one, "**And to your seed,**" that is **Christ.**"

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## Consideration #1

**Is God's loving, sovereign, power SELF LIMITED IN THIS AGE?**

Did God give moral creatures (those who bear His image) a measure of real freedom to choose with the subsequent consequences?

Could God's love and respect for them limit His absolute control of them?



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## Consideration #2

**Is God's loving, sovereign, power threatened by MY CHOICES?**

If I were to play a one-on-one basketball game with LeBron James he would not have to control everything I did in order to get his way. I could be free to do anything I wanted within the limits of my ability.



My free choices might affect what he did but would have no affect on him getting his way.

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### Consideration #3

Is God's loving, sovereign, power  
a function of His CREATIVE WISDOM?



Whose Line  
is it Anyway?

"They create  
humor out  
of anything."

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### Consideration #3

Is God's loving, sovereign, power  
a function of His CREATIVE WISDOM?



"God  
changed  
chaos to  
cosmos."

Genesis I

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### Consideration #4

Is God's loving, sovereign,  
power a function of His  
KNOWLEDGE?

"I can give my  
grandson Alex  
free choices  
and because I  
know him, I  
know what he  
will choose."



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### Consideration #4

Is God's loving, sovereign,  
power a function of His  
KNOWLEDGE?

*Psalms 139*

"<sup>1</sup> O Lord, You have searched me and known me. <sup>2</sup> You know when I sit down and when I rise up; You understand my thoughts from afar. <sup>3</sup> You scrutinize my path and my lying down, and are intimately acquainted with all my ways. . . <sup>6</sup> Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is too high, I cannot attain to it."<sup>27</sup>

### Consideration #5

Is God's loving, sovereign, power  
in sync with His FOREKNOWLEDGE .

Like a grandmaster in chess, God  
can see how history is set up to  
enable certain things to unfold, and  
He uses this as a part  
of His providential  
plan.



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*Philippians 2*

"<sup>12</sup> So then, my beloved, just as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, **work out your salvation with fear and trembling;** <sup>13</sup> **for it is God who is at work in you, both to will and to work for His good pleasure.**"

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“It is the  
Godfather, not  
God the Father,  
who makes you  
an offer you  
can’t refuse.”

Peter Kreeft



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### ***Some mistakes we make in resolving difficulties.***

- ✓ Blindly following tradition and culture.
- ✓ Demonizing all who disagree with us.
- ✓ Dogmatically defending our opinions on all issues.
- ✓ Dramatizing every issue as a “major.”
- ✓ Demanding that our interpretation be clear, certain, and canonized.
- ✓ Believing that God gives (only) us special revelation knowledge through prayer.
- ✓ Refusing to be open to change as our personal security is tied to all our views.

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### ***Some general rules in dealing with theological difficulties.***

- ✓ There are many more wrong answers than right answers.
- ✓ We will always fail to see some things clearly in this life.
- ✓ It is wiser to live with a paradox than to remove it with an erroneous view.
- ✓ Certainty on difficult issues is to be approached with humility, and caution.
- ✓ Respect for the complexity of an issue and those who honestly differ is a gracious virtue.

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### ***Conclusion***

**God’s Grace should inspire  
awe and worship  
not passivity and fatalism  
or pride and fear.**

*Romans 11:33*

“Oh, the depth of the riches  
both of the wisdom and  
knowledge of God!

How unsearchable are  
His judgments and  
unfathomable  
His ways!”



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