

The Doctrine of Election 4. Its Verity

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Transcript

The Doctrine of Election

4. Its Verity

Before proceeding further with an orderly opening up of this profound but precious doctrine, it may be better (especially for the benefit of those less familiar with the subject) if we now demonstrate its Scripturalness. We must not take anything for granted, and as numbers of our readers have never received any systematic instruction upon the subject—yea, some of them know next to nothing about it—and as others have heard and read only perversions and caricatures of this doctrine, it seems essential that we should pause and establish its verity. In other words, our present object is to furnish proof that what we are now writing upon is not some theological invention of Calvin's or any other man's, but is clearly revealed in Holy Writ, namely, that God, before the foundation of the world, made a difference between His creatures, singling out certain ones to be the special objects of His favor. We shall deal with the subject in a more or less general way—occupying ourselves with the fact itself; reserving the more detailed analysis and the drawing of distinctions for later chapters. Let us begin by asking, Has God an elect people? Now this question must be propounded to God Himself, for He alone is competent to answer it. It is, therefore, to His holy Word we have to turn, if we would learn His answer thereto. But ere doing so, we need to earnestly beg God to grant us a teachable spirit, that we may humbly receive the divine testimony. The things of God can no man know, till God Himself declares them; but when He has declared them, it is not only crass folly, but wicked presumption, for any one to contend or disbelieve. The Holy Scriptures are the rule of faith, as well as the rule of conduct. To the law and the testimony, then, we now turn. Concerning the nation of Israel we read, "The Lord thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto Himself, above all people that are upon the face of the earth" (Deut. 7:6); "For the Lord hath chosen Jacob unto himself, and Israel for his peculiar treasure" (Ps. 135:4); "But thou, Israel, art my servant, Jacob whom I have chosen, the seed of Abraham my friend. Thou whom I have taken from the ends of the earth, and called thee from the chief men thereof, and said unto thee, thou art my servant; I have chosen thee, and not cast thee away" (Isa. 41:8, 9). These testimonies make it unmistakably plain that ancient Israel were the favored, elect people of God. We do not here take up the question as to why God chose them, or as to what they were chosen unto; but notice only the bare fact itself. In Old Testament times God had an elect nation. Next, it is to be observed that even in favored Israel God made a distinction: there was an election within an election; or, in other words, God had a special people of His own from among the nation itself. "For they are not all Israel, which are of Israel: neither, because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children: but, in Isaac shall thy seed be called" (Rom. 9:6-8). "God hath not cast

away his people which he foreknew. . . . I have reserved to myself seven thousand men who have not bowed the knee to the image of Baal: even so that at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace. . . . Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for; but the election hath obtained it" (Rom. 11:2-7). Thus we see that even in visible Israel, the nation chosen to outward privileges, God had an election—a spiritual Israel, the objects of His love. The same principle of Divine selection appears plainly and conspicuously in the teaching of the New Testament. There too it is revealed that God has a peculiar people, the subjects of His special favor, His own dear children. The Saviour and His apostles describe this people in various ways, and often designate them by the term of which we here treat. "For the elect's sake those days shall be shortened . . . insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect ... and they shall gather together His elect from the four winds" (Matt. 24:22, 24, 31). "Shall not God avenge His own elect, which cry day and night unto Him?" (Luke 18:7). "Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect?" (Rom. 8:33). "That the purpose of God according to election might stand" (Rom. 9:11). "I endure all things for the elect's sake" (2 Tim. 2:10), "The faith of God's elect" (Titus 1:1). Many other passages might be quoted, but these are sufficient to clearly demonstrate that God has an elect people. God Himself says He has, who will dare say He has not! The word "elected" in one of its forms, or its synonym "chosen" in one of its forms, occurs upon the sacred page considerably over one hundred times. The term, then, belongs to the divine vocabulary. It must mean something; it must convey some definite idea. What, then, is its significance? The humble inquirer will not force a construction upon the word, or seek to read into it his own preconceptions, but will prayerfully endeavor to ascertain the mind of the Spirit. Nor should this be difficult, for there is no word in human language which has a more specific meaning. The concept universally expressed by it is that one is taken and another left, for if all were taken there would be no "choice." Moreover, the right of choice always belongs to him who chooses: the act is his, the motive is his. Therein "choice" differs from compulsion, the paying of a debt, discharging an obligation, or responding to the requirements of justice. Choice is a free and sovereign act. Let there be no uncertainty about the meaning of our term. God has made a choice, for election signifies selection and appointment. God has exercised His own sovereign will and singled out from the mass of His creatures those upon whom He determined to bestow His special favors. There cannot be an election without a singling out, and there cannot be a singling out without a passing by. The doctrine of election means that from all eternity God made a choice of those who were to be His special treasure, His dear children, the coheirs of Christ. The doctrine of election means that before His Son became incarnate God marked out the ones who should be saved by Him. The doctrine of election means that God has left nothing to chance: the accomplishment of His purpose, the success of Christ's undertaking, the peopling of heaven, is not contingent upon the fickle caprice of the creature. God's will, and not man's will, fixes destiny. Let us now call attention to a most remarkable and little known example of divine election. "I charge thee before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, and the elect angels" (1 Tim. 5:21). If then, there are "elect angels" there must necessarily be non-elect, for there cannot be the one without the other. God, then, in the past made a selection among the hosts of heaven, choosing some to be vessels of honor and others to be vessels of dishonor. Those whom He chose unto His favor, stood steadfast, remained in subjection to His will. The rest fell when Satan revolted, for upon his apostasy he dragged down with himself one third of the angels (Rev. 12:4). Concerning them we read, "God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell, and delivered them into chains of darkness" (2 Pet. 2:4). But those of them who belong to the election of grace are "the holy angels": holy as the consequence of their election, and not elected because they were holy, for election antedated their creation. The supreme example of election is seen in Christ; the next highest in that God made choice among the celestial hierarchies. Let us next observe and admire the marvel and singularity of God's choice among men. He has selected a portion of Adam's race to be the

high favorites of heaven. "Now this is a wonder of wonders, when we come to consider that the heaven, even the heaven of heavens, is the Lord's. If God must have a chosen race, why did He not select one from the majestic order of angels, or from the flashing cherubim and seraphim who stand around His throne? Why was not Gabriel fixed upon? Why was he not so constituted that from his loins there might spring a mighty race of angels, and why were not those chosen of God from before the foundation of the world? What could there be in man, a creature lower than the angels, that God should select him rather than the angelic spirits? Why were not the cherubim and seraphim given to Christ? Why did He not assume the nature of angels, and take them into union with Himself? An angelic body might be more in keeping with the person of Deity than a body of weak and suffering flesh and blood. There was something congruous if He had said unto the angels, 'Ye shall be My Sons.' But no! though all these were His own; He passes them by and stoops to man" (C. H. Spurgeon). Some may suggest that the reason why God made choice of Adam's descendants in preference to the angels, was that the human race fell in Adam and thus afforded a more suitable case for God to display His rich mercy upon. But such a supposition is entirely fallacious, for, as we have seen, one third of the angels themselves fell from their high estate, yet so far from God showing them mercy, He "hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day" (Jude 6). No Saviour was provided for them, no gospel has ever been preached to them. How striking and how solemn is this: the fallen angels passed by; the fallen sons of Adam made the recipients of the overtures of divine mercy. Here is a truly marvelous thing. God determined to have a people who should be His peculiar treasure, nearer and dearer to Himself than any other creatures; a people who should be conformed to the very image of His Son. And that people was chosen from the descendants of Adam. Why? Why not have reserved that supreme honor for the celestial hosts? They are a higher order of beings; they were created before us. They were heavenly creatures, yet God passed them by; we are earthly, yet the Lord set His heart upon us. Again we ask, why? Ah, let those who hate the truth of God's high sovereignty and contend against the doctrine of unconditional election, carefully ponder this striking example of it. Let those who so blatantly insist that it would be unjust for God to show partiality between man and man, tell us why did He show partiality between race and race, bestowing favors upon men which He never has upon angels? Only one answer is possible: because it so pleased Him. Election is a divine secret, an act in the will of God in eternity past. But it does not forever remain such. No, in due time, God is pleased to make openly manifest His everlasting counsels. This He has done in varying degrees, since the beginning of human history. In Genesis 3:15 He made known the fact that there would be two distinct lines: the woman's "seed," which denoted Christ and His people, and the Serpent's "seed," which signified Satan and those who are conformed to his likeness; God placing an irreconcilable "enmity" between them. These two "seeds" comprehend the elect and the non-elect. Abel belonged to the election of grace: evidence of this being furnished in his "faith" (Heb. 11:4), for only those "ordained to eternal life" (Acts 13:48) savingly "believe." Cain belonged to the non-elect: evidence of this is found in the statement "Cain, who was of that Wicked one" (1 John 3:12). Thus at the beginning of history, in the two sons of Adam and Eve, God "took" the one into His favor, and "left" the other to suffer the due reward of his iniquities. Next, we behold election running in the line of Seth, for it was of his descendants (and not those of Cain's) we read, "Then began men to call upon the name of the Lord" (Gen. 4:26). But in the course of time they too were corrupted, until the entire human race became so evil that God sent the flood and swept them all away. Yet even then the principle of divine election was exemplified: not only in Enoch, but that "Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord" (Gen. 6:8). It was the same after the flood, for a marked discrimination was made between the sons of Noah: "Blessed be the Lord God of Shem" (Gen. 9:26), which imports that God had chosen and blessed him. On the other hand, "Cursed be Canaan: a servant of servants shall he be unto his brethren" (Gen. 9:25), which is expressive of preterition and all

that is involved in God's rejection. Thus, even of those who emerged from the ark, God made one to differ from another. From the sons of Noah sprang the nations which have peopled the world. "By these [i.e., Noah's three sons] were the nations divided in the earth after the flood" (Gen. 10:32). From those seventy nations God chose the one in which the great current of His election would run. In Genesis 10:25 we read that this dividing of the nations was made in the time of Eber, the grandson of Shem. Why are we told this? To intimate that God then began to separate the Jewish nation unto Himself in Eber, for Eber was their father; hence it is also that at the beginning of Shem's genealogy we are told, "Shem also (the elected and blessed of God), the father of all the children of Eber" (10:21). This is very striking, for Shem had other and older children (whose line of descendants is also recorded), as Asshur and Elim, the fathers of the Assyrians and the Persians. The seemingly dry and uninteresting detail in Genesis 10 to which we have just alluded, marked a most important step forward in the outworking of the divine counsels, for it was then that God began to separate unto Himself the Israelites in Eber, whom He had appointed to be their father. Till then the Hebrews had lain promiscuously mingled with the other nations, but now God "divided" them from the rest, as the other nations were divided from one another. Accordingly, we find Eber's posterity, even when very few in number, were designated "Hebrews" as their national denomination ("Israel" being their religious name) in distinction from those among whom they lived: "Abraham the Hebrew" (Gen. 14:13), "Joseph the Hebrew" (Gen. 39:14). Hence, when they became a nation in numbers, and while living in the midst of the Egyptians, they are again styled "Hebrews" (Exod. 1:15), while in Numbers 24:24 they are distinctly called "Eber"! What we have sought to explain above is definitely confirmed by "Remember the days of old, consider the years of many generations: ask thy father, and he will show thee; thy elders, and they will tell thee. When the most High divided to the nations their inheritance, when he separated the sons of Adam, he set the bounds of the people according to the number of the children of Israel. For the Lord's portion is his people; Jacob is the lot of his inheritance" (Deut. 32:7-9). Notice, first, the Lord here bade Israel cast their minds back to ancient times, the traditions of which had been handed down by their fathers. Second, the particular event alluded to was when God "divided" to the nations their inheritance, the reference being to that famous division of Genesis 10. Third, those nations are spoken of not "as the sons of Noah" (who was in the elect line), but as "the sons of Adam"—another plain hint that he headed the line of the reprobate. Fourth, that when God allotted to the non-elect nations their earthly portion, even then the eye of grace and favor was upon the children of Israel. Fifth, "according to the number of the children of Israel," which was seventy when they first settled in Egypt (Gen. 46:27)—the exact number of the nations mentioned in Genesis 10! The chief link of connection between Eber and the nation of Israel was, of course, Abraham, and in his case the principle of divine election shines forth with sunlight clearness. The divine call which he received marked another important stage in the development of God's eternal purpose. At the tower of Babel God gave over the nations to walk in their own evil ways, afterward taking up Abraham to be the founder of the favored nation. "Thou art the Lord the God, who didst choose Abraham, and broughtest him forth out of Ur" (Neh. 9:7). It was not Abraham who chose God, but God who chose Abraham. "The God of glory appeared unto our father Abraham, when he was in Mesopotamia" (Acts 7:2): this title "the God of glory" is employed here to emphasize the signal favor which was shown to Abraham, the glory of His grace in electing him, for there was nothing in him by nature that lifted him above his fellows and entitled him to the divine notice. It was unmerited kindness, sovereign mercy, which was shown him. This is made very evident by what is told us in Joshua 24 of his condition before Jehovah appeared to him: "Thus saith the God of Israel, your fathers dwelt on the other side of the flood in old time, even Terah, the father of Abraham, and the father of Nachor: and they served other gods" (v. 2). Abraham was living in the heathen city of Ur, and belonged to an idolatrous family! At a later date God pressed this very fact upon his descendants, reminding them of

the lowly and corrupt state of their original, and giving them to know it was for no good in him that he had been chosen: "Hearken to me, ye that follow after righteousness, ye that seek the Lord: look unto the rock whence ye are hewn, and to the hole of the pit whence ye are digged. Look unto Abraham your father, and unto Sarah that bare you; for I called him alone, and blessed him" (Isa. 51:1, 2). What a flesh-withering word is that: the great Abraham is here likened (by God) to "the hole of the pit"—such was his condition when the Lord first appeared unto him. But there is more in the above passage. Observe carefully the words "I called him alone." Remember that this was while he dwelt in Ur, and as modern excavations have shown, that was a city of vast extent: out of all its huge number of inhabitants God revealed himself to one only! The Lord here emphasized that very fact and calls upon us to mark the singularity of His election by this word "alone." See here, then, the absolute sovereignty of God, exercising His own imperial will, choosing whom He pleases. He had mercy upon Abraham simply because He was pleased to do so, and He left the remainder of his countrymen in heathen darkness simply because it so seemed good in His sight. There was nothing more in Abraham than in any of his fellows why God should have selected him: whatever goodness was found in him later was what God Himself put there, and therefore it was the consequence and not the cause of His choice. Striking as is the case of Abraham's own election, yet God's dealings with his offspring is equally if not more noteworthy. Therein God furnished an epitome of what has largely characterized the history of all His elect, for it is a very rare thing to find a whole family which (not simply makes a profession, but) gives evidence of enjoying His special favor. The common rule is that one is taken and other is left, for those who are given to really believe this precious but solemn truth, are made to experimentally realize its force in connection with their own kin. Thus Abraham's own family furnished in his next and immediate successors, a prototype of the future experience of the elect. In his family we behold the most striking instances of both election and preterition, first in his sons, and then in his grandsons. That Isaac was a child of pure electing grace (which was the cause and not the consequence of his faith and holiness), and that as such he was placed in Abraham's family as a precious gift, while Ishmael was excluded from that preeminent favor, is quite evident from the history of Genesis. Before he was born, yea, before he was conceived in the womb, God declared unto Abraham that Isaac was heir of the same salvation with him, and had irrevocably estated the covenant of grace upon him thereby distinguishing him from Ishmael; who, though blessed with temporal mercies, was not in the covenant of grace, but rather was under the covenant of works (see Gen. 17:19-21 and compare the Spirit's comments thereon in Gal. 4:22-26). Later, while Isaac was yet young, and lay bound as a sacrifice upon the altar, God ratified the promises of blessing which He had made before his birth, confirming them with a solemn oath: "By myself have I sworn, saith the Lord, for because thou hast done this thing, hast not withheld thy son, thine only son: that in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven" (Gen. 22:16, 17). That oath respected the spiritual seed, the heirs of promise, such as Isaac was, the declared son of promise. To that the apostle referred when he said, "wherein God; willing more abundantly to show unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath" (Heb. 6:17). And what was His "immutable counsel" but His eternal decree, His purpose of election? God's counsels are His decrees within Himself from everlasting (Eph. 1:4, 9,10). And what is a promise with an oath but God's immutable counsel or election put into promissory form. And who are the "heirs of promise" but the elect, such as Isaac was. An objector would argue that the choosing of Isaac in preference to Ishmael was not an act of pure sovereignty, seeing that the former was the son of Sarah, while the latter was the child of Hagar, the Egyptian bondwoman—thus supposing that God's gifts are regulated by something in the creature. But the next instance precludes even that sophistry and entirely shuts us up to the uncaused and uninfluenced will of the Most High. Jacob and Esau were by the same father and mother, twins. Concerning them we read, "(For the children being not yet born, neither

having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth;) It was said unto her, The elder shall serve the younger. As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated" (Rom. 9:11-13). Let us bow in awed silence before such a passage. The nation which sprang from Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, was God's chosen and favored people, singled out and separated from all other nations, to be the recipients of the rich blessings of God. It was that very fact which added so greatly to the enormity of their sins, for increased privileges entail increased responsibility, and increased responsibility not discharged involves increased guilt. "Hear this word that the Lord hath spoken against you, O children of Israel.... You only have I known of all the families of the earth: therefore I will punish you for all your iniquities" (Amos 3:1, 2). From the days of Moses until the time of Christ, a period of fifteen hundred years, God suffered all the heathen nations to walk in their own ways, leaving them to the corruptions and darkness of their own evil hearts. No other nation had God's Word, no other nation had a divinely appointed priesthood. Israel alone was favored with a written revelation from heaven. And why did the Lord choose Israel to be His special favorites? The Chaldeans were more ancient, the Egyptians were far wiser, the Canaanites were more numerous; yet they were passed by. What, then, was the reason why the Lord singled out Israel? Certainly it was not because of any excellency in them, as the whole of their history shows. From Moses till Malachi they were a stiff-necked and hardhearted people, unappreciative of divine favors, unresponsive to the divine will. It could not have been because of any goodness in them: it was a clear case of the divine sovereignty: "The Lord thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto himself, above all people that are upon the face of the earth. The Lord did not set his love upon you, nor choose you because ye were more in number than any people; for ye were the fewest of all people; but because the Lord loved you, and because He would keep the oath which He had sworn unto your fathers" (Deut. 7:6-8). The explanation of all God's acts and works was to be found in Himself—in the sovereignty of His will, and not anything in the creature. The same principle of divine selection is as plainly and prominently revealed in the New Testament as in the Old. It was strikingly exemplified in connection with the birth of Christ. First, in the place where He was born. How startlingly the sovereignty of God was displayed in that momentous event. Jerusalem was not the Savior's birthplace, nor was it one of the prominent towns of Palestine; instead, it was in a small village! The Holy Spirit has called particular attention to this point in one of the leading Messianic prophecies: "But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel" (Mic. 5:2). How different are God's thoughts and ways from man's! How He despises what we most esteem, and honors that which we look down upon. One of the most insignificant of all places was chosen by God to be the scene of the most stupendous of all events. Again; the high sovereignty of God and the principle of His singular election appeared in those to whom He first communicated these glad tidings. To whom was it God sent the angels to announce the blessed fact of the Savior's birth? Suppose Scripture had been silent upon the point: how differently would we have conceived of the matter. Would we not have naturally thought that the first ones to be informed of this glorious event had been the ecclesiastical and religious leaders in Israel? Surely the angels would deliver the message in the temple. But no, it was neither to the chief priests nor to the rulers they were sent, but unto the lowly shepherds keeping watch over their flocks in the fields. And again we say, how entirely different are God's thoughts and ways from man's. And what thus took place at the beginning of this Christian era was indicative of God's way throughout its entire course (see 1 Cor. 1:26-29). Let us next observe that this same grand truth was emphasized by Christ Himself in His public ministry. Look at His first message in the Nazareth synagogue. "And there was delivered unto him the book of the prophet Esaias. And when he had opened the book, he found the place where it was written, the Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor [i.e., the poor in spirit, and not

to wealthy Laodiceans]; he hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted [not the stout-hearted, but those sorrowing before God over their sins] , to preach deliverance to the captives [and not to those who prate about their "free will"] , and recovering of sight to the blind [not those who think they can see] , and to set at liberty them that are bruised [not those who deem themselves whole], To preach the acceptable year of the Lord" (Luke 4:17-19). The immediate sequel is indeed solemn: "And He began to say unto them, This day is this Scripture fulfilled in your ears. And all bear him witness, and wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth" (vv. 21, 22). So far so good: they were pleased at His "gracious words"; yes, but would they tolerate the preaching of sovereign grace? "But I tell you of a truth, many widows were in Israel in the days of Elias, when the heaven was shut up three years and six months, when great famine was throughout the land; but unto none of them was Elias sent, save unto Sarepta, a city of Sidon, unto a woman that was a widow. And many lepers were in Israel in the time of Eliseus the prophet; and none of them was cleansed, saving Naaman the Syrian" (vv. 25-27). Here Christ pressed upon them the truth of God's high sovereignty, and that they could not endure: "And all they in the synagogue, when they heard these things, were filled with wrath; and rose up, and thrust Him out of the city" (vv. 28, 29) and mark it well that it was the respectable worshippers of the synagogue who thus gave vent to their hatred of this precious truth! Then let not the servant today be surprised if he meet with the same treatment as his Master. His sermon at Nazareth was by no means the only time when the Lord Jesus proclaimed the doctrine of election. In Matthew 11 we hear Him saying, "I thank Thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. Even so, Father: for so it seemed good in thy sight" (vv. 25, 26). To the seventy He said, "Notwithstanding, in this rejoice not, that the spirits are subject unto you; but rather rejoice, because your names are written in heaven" (Luke 10:20). In John 6 it will be found that Christ, in the hearing of the multitude, hesitated not to speak openly of a company whom the Father had "given to him" (vv. 37, 39). To the apostles He said, "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit" (John 15:16): how shocked would the great majority of church goers be today if they heard the Lord say such words unto His own! In John 17:9 we find Him saying, "I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me." As an interesting and instructive illustration of the emphasis which the Holy Spirit has placed upon this truth we would call attention to the fact that in the New Testament God's people are termed "believers" but twice, "Christians" only three times, whereas the designation elect, is found fourteen times and saints or separated ones sixty-two times! We would also point out that various other terms and phrases are used in the Scriptures to express election: "And the Lord said unto Moses, I will do this thing also that thou hast spoken: for thou hast found grace in my sight, and I know thee by name" (Exod. 33:17); "Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee, and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee" (Jer. 1:5; cf. Amos 3:2). "I speak not of you all: I know whom I have chosen" (John 13:18; cf. Matt. 20:16). "As many as were ordained to eternal life believed" (Acts 13:48). "God at the first did visit the Gentiles, to take out of them a people for his name" (Acts 15:14). "Church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven" (Heb. 12:23). This basic truth of election undergirds the whole scheme of salvation: that is why we are told "the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, the Lord knoweth them that are his" (2 Tim. 2:19). Election is necessarily and clearly implied by some of the most important terms used in Scripture concerning various aspects of our salvation, yea, they are unintelligible without it. For example, every passage which makes mention of "redemption" presupposes eternal election. How so? Because "redemption" implies a previous possession: it is Christ buying back and delivering those who were God's at the beginning. Again; the words "regeneration" and "renewing" necessarily signify a previous spiritual life—lost when we fell in Adam (1 Cor. 15:22). So again the term "reconciliation:" this not only denotes a state of alienation before the reconciliation, but a condition of

harmony and amity, before the alienation. But enough: the truth of election has now been abundantly demonstrated from the Scriptures. If these many and indubitable proofs are not sufficient, it would be a waste of time to further multiply them. Let it now be pointed out that this grand truth was definitely held and owned by our forefathers. First, a brief quotation from the ancient Creed of the Waldenses (eleventh century)—those renowned confessors of the Christian Faith in the dark ages, in the midst of the most terrible persecutions from the Papacy: "That God saves from corruption and damnation those whom He has chosen from the foundation of the world, not for any disposition, faith, or holiness that He foresaw in them, but of His mere mercy in Christ Jesus His Son; passing by all the rest, according to the irreprehensible reason of His own free will and justice." Here is one of the Thirty-nine Articles of the Church of England: "Predestination to life is the everlasting purpose of God whereby, before the foundations of the world were laid, He hath constantly decreed by His secret counsel to us to deliver from curse and condemnation those whom He had chosen in Christ out of mankind, and to bring by Christ to everlasting salvation as vessels made to honor." This is from the Westminster Confession of Faith, subscribed to by all Presbyterian ministers, "By the decree of God, for the manifestation of His glory, some men and angels are predestinated unto everlasting life, and others foreordained to everlasting death. These angels and men, thus predestinated and foreordained, are particularly and unchangeably designed; and their number is so certain and definite, that it cannot be either increased or diminished." And here is the third article from the old Baptist (English) Confession: "By the decree of God, for the manifestation of His glory, some men and angels are predestinated or foreordained to eternal life through Jesus Christ, to the praise of His glorious grace; others being left to act in their sin to their just condemnation, to the praise of His glorious justice." Let it not be thought that we have quoted from these human standards in order to bolster up our cause. Not so: the present writer, by divine grace, would believe and teach this grand truth if none before him had ever held it, and if every one in Christendom now repudiated it. But what has just been adduced is good evidence that we are here advancing no heretical novelty, but a doctrine proclaimed in the past in each section of the orthodox Church upon earth. We have also made the above quotations for the purpose of showing how far the present generation of professing Christians have departed from the Faith of those to whom under God, they owe their present religious liberties. Just as the modern denials of the divine inspiration and authority of the Scriptures (by the higher critics), the denial of immediate creation (by evolutionists), the denial of the deity of Christ (by Unitarians), so the present denial of God's sovereign election and of man's spiritual impotency, are equally departures from the Faith of our forefathers, which was based upon the inerrant Word of God. The truth of divine election has been most conspicuously exemplified in the history of Christendom. If it be true that during the last two thousand years of the Old Testament dispensation the spiritual blessings of God were largely confined to a single people, it is equally true that for the last five hundred years one section of the human race has been more signally favored by heaven than all the other sections put together. God's dealings with the Anglo-Saxons have been as singular and sovereign as His dealings with the Hebrews of old. Here is a fact which cannot be gainsaid, staring us all in the face, exposing the madness of those who deny this doctrine: for centuries past the vast majority of God's saints have been gathered out of the Anglo-Saxons! Thus, the very testimony of modern history unmistakably rebukes the folly of those who repudiate the teachings of God's Word on this subject, rendering their unbelief without excuse. Tell us, ye who murmur against the divine sovereignty, why is it that the Anglo-Saxon race has been singled out for the enjoyment of far the greater part of God's spiritual blessings? Were there no other races equally needy? The Chinese practiced a nobler system of morality and were far more numerous: why, then, were they left for so long in gospel darkness? Why was the whole African continent left for many centuries before the Sun of Righteousness shone there again with healing in His wings? Why is America today a thousand times more favored than

India, which has thrice the population? To all of these questions we are compelled to fall back upon the answer of our blessed Lord: "Even so, Father: for so it seemed good in thy sight." And just as with Israel of old there was an election within an election, so in Germany, in Great Britain, and in the U.S.A., certain particular places have been favored with one faithful minister after another, while other places have been cursed with false prophets. "I caused it to rain upon one city, and caused it not to rain upon another city" (Amos 4:7)—true now in a spiritual way. Finally, the veracity of election is clearly evidenced by the fierce opposition of Satan against it. The Devil fights truth, not error. He vented His hatred against it when Christ proclaimed it (Luke 4:28, 29); he did so when Paul preached it (as Rom. 9:14, 19 more than hints); he did so when the Waldenses, the Reformers, and the Puritans heralded it—using the Papists as his tools to torment and murder thousands of them who confessed it. He still opposes it. Today he does so in his guise as an angel of light. He pretends to be very jealous of the honor of God's character, and declares that election makes Him out to be a monster of injustice. He uses the weapon of ridicule: if election be true, why preach the gospel? He seeks to intimidate: even if the doctrine of election be Scriptural, it is not wise to preach it. Thus, the teaching of Scripture, the testimony of history, and the opposition of Satan, all witness to the veracity of this doctrine.

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