

Basilus Caesariensis

by John Gill

Basil the Great teaches that everything that happens was foreordained by God, and that the elect are a distinct people chosen for an inheritance of everlasting good things.

Scripture: Ephesians 1:4

Topics: "Predestination", "Sovereignty Of God"

Description

John Gill discusses the teachings of Basil the Great on the doctrine of predestination, emphasizing that all events are foreordained by God and nothing occurs by chance. Basil asserts that every aspect of life, including the duration of one's existence, is determined by God's will, and he highlights the predestination of certain individuals to eternal salvation. He references scripture to illustrate that the elect are a distinct group chosen by God, blessed with the promise of everlasting life. Gill underscores the importance of recognizing God's sovereignty in all matters and the special status of the elect among humanity.

Transcript

The

CAUSE OF GOD AND TRUTH.

Part 4

Chapter 1--Of Predestination

Section 13--Basilus Caesariensis. A.D. 370.

Basil, commonly called the Great to distinguish him from others of the same name, was bishop of Caesarea; he died A.D. 378. He held the doctrine of predestination, and asserts, that whatever comes to pass, was foreordained by God. Take care, says he,[1] how thou sayest this thing was done by chance, and this comes of its own accord; for ouden atakton, ouden aoriston, nothing is unordained, nothing undetermined, nothing is done in vain, nothing is done rashly." He affirms, that not a hand nor an eye are moved, but according, to the will of God; the time, state, and condition of this present life, he says, are fixed and determined by God; his words are these,[2] "Consider, that that God, who has formed us, put the soul into us, idian edoken ekaste psuche tou biou diagogen, has given to every soul its manner of living; and indeed to others he has fixed other terms of removing hence; for he hath appointed this man to abide longer in the flesh, and on the contrary hath decreed, that that man should be sooner loosed from the

bonds of the body, according to the unspeakable methods of his wisdom and justice."

And he not only maintained a predestination of all things in general, but of particular persons, to eternal salvation; citing those words in John 10:16, Other sheep I have which are not of this fold. He observes,[3] that "the Lord is speaking of them, tou apo ton ethnon proorismenous eis soterian, who from among the Gentiles, are predestinated unto salvation." And upon mentioning the same words a little after,[4] he has this following note; "the Lord shows that there is some other fold truly holy, into which the sheep of Christ are to be gathered; namely, they, tous apo ton ethnon proorismenous eis soterian, who, from among the Gentiles are predestinated to salvation; that is, the church in which the true worshippers worship in spirit and in truth."

He represents the elect as a particular and distinct people, and as peculiarly blessed. "No man, says he,[5] calls the people of the Jews blessed, but the people, ton apo panton ton gaon arisinden exeigmenon, which is chosen best out of all people; we are the nation, of whom the Lord is our God; we are the people whom he has chosen for an inheritance for himself; a nation truly, because we are gathered out of many nations: a people verily, because we are called in the room of a people cast away, and because many are called, and few are chosen; he calls not him that is called, but him that is chosen, blessed; blessed therefore is he whom he hath chosen.

What is the cause of this blessedness? the expected inheritance of everlasting good things; or, perhaps, because according to the apostle, after the fullness of the Gentiles shall be come in, then all Israel shall be saved; first, he calls the fullness of the Gentiles blessed, afterwards Israel, who shall be saved last; but not every one shall be saved, only "the remnant which shall be according to the election of grace." And in another place,[6] he says, "The blessing of the elect, in the time of retribution, he (Christ) foretold by the parable of the shepherd; Come, says he, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the beginning of the world." ENDNOTES:

[1] Basil. Homil. in Psalm 32:p. 231, vol. 1. Vide ibid. p. 205.

[2] Homil. in Martyr. Julitt. p. 374.

[3] Homil, in Psalm 28, p. 170.

[4] Al. Homil. in ibid. p. 182.

[5] Homil. in Psalm 32, p. 208.

[6] De Baptismo, 50:1, c. 2, p. 644.

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