

## On Free Will and Predestination

### Question #1:

Now, contrary to what has been taught for centuries, the Holy Scriptures do not say Men have a FreeWill. Yes, men have a will but not a freewill.

If men had a free will, they would do whatever they desire and please but the Word of God makes us understand that, the plans of men are futile if the Lord doesn't endorse such place. In Romans Chapter 9, we are told about how the Lord hardened the heart of Pharoah for God's own divine purpose; Pharoah had no choice other than to do as the Lord had planned. In Genesis 20, God literally WITHHELD Abimalech from sinning (Sleeping with Sarah). See:

Genesis 20:6-7

[6]And God said to him in a dream, "Yes, I know that you did this in the integrity of your heart. **For I also withheld you from sinning against Me; therefore I did not let you touch her.**

[7]Now therefore, restore the man's wife; for he is a prophet, and he will pray for you and you shall live. But if you do not restore her, know that you shall surely die, you and all who are yours."

Once God can withhold men from doing certain things, then men don't have FREEWILL!

### Response #1:

Hello.

As I said in the other thread, I'm quoting you for reference purposes, so that those who read my answers can easily see what I am responding to and where they can find it, if they go looking. Please, don't feel obliged to respond to me. I am not seeking a debate with you. I don't think that it is possible for me and you to have a meaningful one.

I think that the Scriptures are quite clear that human beings have a free will. That is what it means to be made in the image of God. See, for example, the following passage:

19 And this is the condemnation, that the light has come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.

John 3:19 (NKJV)

The above is obviously declaring that men had a preference for one thing over another when they could have had either.

But free will is often misunderstood. Atheists insist that it must be the ability to do exactly anything that one wants. That is not what creature free will is. In the piece above, free will has

been treated somewhat similarly to what atheists insist that it is, so the protest above does have some merit.

Creature free will is the creaturely counterpart or, more correctly, mirror (hence the Bible's use of the term "image" ) of God's Absolute Sovereignty. God is able to do anything at all that He wants. Nobody limits His desires or plans. He does not have a set of options from which He may choose and outside of which He cannot venture. For Him, reality is a blank canvas on which He can paint absolutely anything that pleases Him.

For creatures, this is not so. Those creatures to whom God has given a free will or rather, as the Bible actually puts it, those creatures that are made in God's Image are those that are able to make a free choice between options that God presents to them under the constraints of their individual makeup and their unique circumstances. That is, we cannot do anything that God has not made us able to do or that He has not given us an opportunity to do.

So, Abimelech in the example above would not have been able to sleep with Sarah if the Lord did not (1)make him physically able to or (2)give him an opportunity to do so. It doesn't matter if he wanted to do so. If events intervened that occupied him and exhausted his energies so that he never found the time to actually have sex with her, then he never would. If he fell sick and couldn't function sexually, then he also wouldn't be able to. It is in this way that the Lord limits our choices.

But this does not at all mean that we don't make choices. The fundamental choice that we all have to make is whether we will submit to God by putting our faith in His Messiah -- an unknown Person before the Cross, but real nevertheless, and the now-revealed Jesus Christ Who has died for the sins of all human beings -- or whether we will remain His enemies by rejecting the Gospel of the Salvation that He was yet to work in Jesus at the time of Abimelech and that He has now worked in the first Advent.

When we make this choice, the Lord organizes our physical abilities and circumstances to give us opportunities to confirm it or to eventually deny it. This is why Paul tells us that

13 No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it.

1 Corinthians 10:13 (NKJV)

Our experiences are designed by God so that we face tests that are exactly suited to our true hearts. Abimelech would not have sinned against God by marrying Sarah if he knew that she was Abraham's wife. So, the Lord preserved him from sinning any further by simply not allowing him to have a choice about sleeping with her. When the time was right for him to be tested again about it, the Lord revealed to him that he was in trouble already. And he acted according to his true heart and gave Sarah back to Abraham.

The example of Jacob and Esau speaks not to free will but to the nature of salvation. Paul's teaching there was that salvation is God's Work, not ours. How this applies to Jacob and Esau was that Jacob was the one who believed whereas Esau rejected the Gospel. The mention of God's election is about God's foreknowledge and His Working together of all things to make sure that all those who would choose Him would be saved.

In short, God is very heavily biased toward believers. He built creation to work in a way that would produce only true believers in Jesus Christ at the end. Jacob was obviously the one whom God knew would choose His Promises over what nice things that this world can offer. The Lord knew that Esau, on the other hand, would use his physical and spiritual resources and opportunities in this life to reject the Promises that God not only gave to his fathers but also made him natural heir to. So, of course, God rejected him before he was even born.

What God did in the past is decree that each person would make exactly the choice that they wanted to and also decree where each person belonged eternally on the basis of this choice that He knew that they would make given every opportunity.

Paul was using this to teach that salvation was God's work. Just as God is the One running the universe so that He is not really responding to any choices we are making, rather we are responding to His Eternal Decrees with our choices, in the same way salvation is not a response to our works, rather itself is God's Work in our behalf and we are the ones who must respond to it. This is what, as he says, Israel refused to accept and for which they were rejected as a result.

So, even Romans 9 does not teach that we don't have a free will.

### **Question #2:**

Romans 9:16

[16]So then it is not of him who wills, nor of him who runs, but of God who shows mercy.

### **Response #2:**

This passage was addressed in my answer above. Obviously, salvation is not due to our work but due to God's. Thus, His Mercy is how we are saved. But we must choose whether to accept that mercy or reject it. Those who insist on providing their own salvation, like Cain and Esau did, are the ones willing and running and still missing out on salvation just like most of Israel were and are.

### **Question #3:**

Romans 8:29-30

[29]For whom He foreknew, **He also predestined** to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren.

[30] [b]Moreover whom He predestined, these He also called; whom He called, these He also justified; and whom He justified, these He also glorified. [/b]God's Everlasting Love

What are you talking about??

**Response #3:**

Our God is good. He has not left us with confusion but has made His counsel abundantly clear. If the Lord "foreknew," then of course He knew beforehand who would choose for Him and who wouldn't, and those are the ones for whom He has designed creation to make sure that their choices for the Truth are not at all thwarted or prevented. This is why we have been given life and breath and everything we could possibly need so that we will seek after Him and find Him.

25 And he is not served by human hands, as if he needed anything. Rather, he himself gives everyone life and breath and everything else. 26 From one man he made all the nations, that they should inhabit the whole earth; and he marked out their appointed times in history and the boundaries of their lands. 27 God did this so that they would seek him and perhaps reach out for him and find him, though he is not far from any one of us.

Acts 17:25-27 (NIV)

Predestination is merely the biblical concept that God has made sure that all those who want to be saved will be saved. Nothing will prevent them from being saved. But if anyone wants to be saved, then they must choose to believe in Jesus Christ according to the Gospel and they must retain that faith until the end of their earthly lives or else they will fall away and not be saved in the end. Since God knows all those who will choose to hold on to faith in Jesus Christ no matter what, He has structured creation so that nothing will prevent them from making the choice that they want to make. That is predestination.

**Question #4:**

Acts 13:48

Now when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad and glorified the word of the Lord. **And as many as had been appointed to eternal life believed.**

The veil covering your heart is really thick!

John 1:12-13

[12]But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name:

[13] **who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.**

You must be born again, don't be deceived by your position in 'church'

**Response #4:**

Not a single choice made anywhere in this world is made without God's say-so. The Lord knew us before He made us. He knew what we would want to choose. Therefore He made us with the ability and the opportunity to choose it. So, those whom God knew would want to be saved are those that He appointed to be saved.

And again, salvation is all God's work, not man's. So those who are born of God above are those who by their choice to believe took advantage of God's salvation in Christ Jesus. Doesn't mean that we don't make a choice. After all, it is to them that believe that power is given to become children of God, not to those who don't do anything at all.

As for my position in "church," I'm not sure what that means. I don't go to church in the traditional way. Those that might be called my church are a loose group of people scattered across the world, each person following the Lord according to their conscience as educated in the truth of God's Word. I am just one of them. When my own ministry as a pastor-teacher fully kicks off, maybe this position thing will make sense then.

**Question #5:**

John 15:16

[16] **You did not choose Me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit, and that your fruit should remain,** that whatever you ask the Father in My name He may give you.

You must be born again bro

**Response #5:**

Of course, it was not us who appointed the Lord to save us. He chose to save us. When He made creation with us as a part of it, He had chosen us for salvation even then and that was because, as Romans 8 teaches us, He knew well before creating us that we would choose to be saved.

Please feel free to get born again if you want, my friend. But I've been born from above already. It is meaningless for me to seek anything more.

**Question #6:**

Acts 13:48

Now when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad and glorified the word of the Lord. **And as many as had been appointed to eternal life believed.**

Period!

**Response #6:**

I bless the Lord for His Word, for His Protection of all those to whom His Truth is life itself, more precious than much refined gold.

I bless Him for preserving His Truth and making a witness for Himself in the earth that those who seek Him may find Him.

I bless Him for His Promised Justice against all those who destroy His Church and I rejoice greatly in my spirit for His deliverance of His Children from the lies of those who hate the Truth and of Satan their master.

Our God is good Who has preserved us and protected us through the truth ministered to willing hearts through the agency of pastor-teachers whom the Lord chooses and prepares for their work of ministry that they may give His children their food in due season.

Our God is forever praised who always delivers us from those who would destroy us.

**Question #7:**

GOD bless you.

**Response #7:**

Amen and thank you. God bless you too.