

Shayla: What is the role of predestination in the church and Israel?

Meforshim:

Predestination refers to God's plan for the eternal salvation of those who choose Him. The term is *proorizo* (Strong's #4309) and needs to be distinguished from *proginosko*, which means "to foreknow." The process is clearly described in:

- **Romans 8:29-30 HCSB** For those He foreknew He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, so that He would be the firstborn among many brothers. (30) And those He predestined, He also called; and those He called, He also justified; and those He justified, He also glorified.

The steps in the process include:

1. Transcendent, timeless God foreknows how each person will respond to His call.
2. Those whom He knows will respond positively are predestined to conformity to His Son.
3. Then, within linear time, He calls them.
4. As expected they respond positively and are thus justified.
5. All those who are justified by the blood of the Lamb are eventually glorified.

I believe that the biblical revelation is progressive. What is more general in the Old Covenant is made more specific in the New. What is less clear in the Old is brought to full fruition and understanding in the New.

- **Colossians 1:26 HCSB** the mystery hidden for ages and generations but now revealed to His saints.
- **Matthew 13:35 HCSB** so that what was spoken through the prophet might be fulfilled: **I will open My mouth in parables; I will declare things kept secret from the foundation of the world.**

With that in mind, predestination is not systematically defined or taught in the Old Covenant. However, we do see intimations of it in the doctrines surrounding the *Sefer Ch'aim*, the Book of Life.¹ All humans are by default written in the Book of Life because God does not want any to perish but all to come to repentance.² This is how King David knew that his stillborn son would be waiting for him in heaven.³ This also fits with the parable of the Sower where Jesus portrays God as profligately spreading the seed, even in areas where He knows for a fact He won't get a return.

However, those who Hashem knows will react positively have *mitzvot* prepared for them to do.⁴

This process of foreknowledge, predestination, election, justification, and eventual glorification was begun before the creation of the world.⁵

This process is presupposed in Matthew 20:23 where the Lord tells His disciples that their position on his right or left was already prepared by the Father. It is reinforced by His statement in John 10:29 that no one placed in His hand by the Father may be removed. The reason is because their salvation was already foreseen by transcendent God. It's a done deal.

Hyper Calvinists would describe some men as "hell-fodder." They believe that these people were created for hell. In my opinion, that flies in the face of 2 Peter 3:9. God absolutely has the right to choose who He wants for whatever He wants but the ability to do a

¹ Exodus 32:32; Psalm 69:28; Daniel 12:1

² 2 Peter 3:9

³ 2 Samuel 12:23

⁴ Ephesians 2:10

⁵ Ephesians 1:3-6

thing and the desire to do a thing are two completely separate issues. He can do it but He won't because of His grace and mercy. He is so amazing that He even gives those whom He foreknows will reject Him a chance! What a great God!

In regards to the Jewish people the fact remains that there has NEVER been an "us/them" dichotomy based on genes. All those who accept His mitzvot are His people. Those who choose to obey His commands are to be treated as though they are "born Israelis"⁶. Those who reject His commands are to be cut off from the People.⁷ His People have never been exclusively selected from one particular genetic puddle.

- **Ezekiel 16:2-3 HCSB** "Son of man, explain Jerusalem's abominations to her. (3) You are to say: This is what the Lord GOD says to Jerusalem: Your origin and your birth were in the land of the Canaanites. Your father was an Amorite and your mother a Hittite.

Abraham was not a Hebrew until God got hold of him. The Jews were not a people until God got hold of them. The Pharisees forgot that important fact. It is Adonai, not Abraham, who is the true primordial Jew. Adonai taught all the spiritual and ethical concepts we hold so dear to Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Moses.

Abraham was to become, not the father of Israel, but the father of many nations.⁸ Through His descendent the Messiah all the nations would be blessed.⁹ As Isaiah put it

- **Isaiah 56:3 HCSB** No foreigner who has converted to the LORD should say, "The LORD will exclude me from His people"; and the eunuch should not say, "Look, I am a dried-up tree."

As the Messiah put it,

- **Matthew 12:50 HCSB** **For whoever does the will of My Father in heaven, that person is My brother and sister and mother."**

We may have once been disparate nations, but no longer. We may have once been foreigners, but no longer. Hashem has taken born Jews and adopted Jews and made of them one sovereign nation.

- **Ephesians 2:11-19 HCSB** So then, remember that at one time you were Gentiles in the flesh--called "the uncircumcised" by those called "the circumcised," done by hand in the flesh. (12) At that time you were without the Messiah, excluded from the citizenship of Israel, and foreigners to the covenants of the promise, with no hope and without God in the world. (13) But now in Christ Jesus, you who were far away have been brought near by the blood of the Messiah. (14) For He is our peace, who made both groups one and tore down the dividing wall of hostility. In His flesh, (15) He did away with the law of the commandments in regulations, so that He might create in Himself one new man from the two, resulting in peace. (16) *He did this so* that He might reconcile both to God in one body through the cross and put the hostility to death by it. (17) When *Christ* came, He proclaimed the good news of peace to you who were far away and peace to those who were near. (18) For through Him we both have access by one Spirit to the Father. (19) So then you are no longer foreigners and strangers, but fellow citizens with the saints, and members of God's household,

A large group of Semitic people who claimed to be citizens of Israel, crucified the rightful King, rejecting the Lord's anointed. In their rebellion they said,

⁶ Exodus 12:48-49; Leviticus 19:33-34; Numbers 15:13-16

⁷ Numbers 9:13; 15:29-31. For a more complete study of what it meant to be cut off and what it took to be cut off from the nation see Genesis 17:14; Exodus 12:15, 19; 30:33, 38; 31:14; Leviticus 7:20-21, 25, 27; 17:4, 9-10, 14; 18:29; 19:8; 20:2-3, 5-6, 17-18; 22:3; 23:29; Numbers 19:13, 20; Proverbs 2:22 cp 1 Kings 9:7 and Jeremiah 44:8; Ezekiel 5:11; 14:8; Romans 11:22

⁸ Genesis 17:4-6, 16

⁹ Genesis 18:18

- **Matthew 27:25 HCSB** All the people answered, "His blood be on us and on our children!"

As a result, they and theirs have, just as Pharaoh did long ago, had their hearts hardened. God took what was already their desire and simply enhanced it – reaffirmed it. However, sometime in the future, a small remnant of Israel will be left when the Messiah returns. When that remnant sees the Messiah they will realize the error their ancestors made and will convert.

- **Zechariah 12:10 HCSB** "Then I will pour out a spirit of grace and prayer on the house of David and the residents of Jerusalem, and they will look at Me whom they pierced. They will mourn for Him as one mourns for an only child and weep bitterly for Him as one weeps for a firstborn.

As it has always been, anyone who accepts Yahweh Melek is considered God's chosen people. All those who reject their rightful King are cut off, and cast out into outer darkness.

