**1 Peter: Aliens who are Chosen**

*1 Peter 1:1-2*

**Context**

Peter starts this epistle off after his salutation with the essence of God’s work on behalf of His children as chosen by God according to the foreknowledge of God the Father. That may seem peculiar, yet Paul does the same thing.

**Ephesians 1:1-5***—Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, To the saints who are at Ephesus and who are faithful in Christ Jesus:****2****Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.* ***3****Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ,****4****just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we would be holy and blameless before Him.  In love* ***5****He**predestined us to adoption as sons through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the kind intention of His will*

**Titus 1:1-2***—Paul, a bond-servant of God and an apostle of Jesus Christ, for the faith of those chosen of God and the knowledge of the truth which is according to godliness,****2****in the hope of eternal life, which God, who cannot lie, promised long ages ago*

There arguably is not a doctrine in the Christian faith that is more hotly contested than that of God’s sovereign election.

“God’s sovereign election is the truth most loathed and reviled by the majority of those claiming to be believers.  Let it be plainly announced that salvation originated not in the will of man, but in the will of God, that were it not so none would or could be saved.  For, as the result of the fall, man has lost all desire and will unto that which is good, and that even the elect themselves have to be made willing, and loud will be the cries of indignation against such teaching.” –Arthur Pink

As with all biblical truths, we must examine closely the context of the scripture and have an impartial mindset and an attentive examination of what it communicates. With a clear sense that His thoughts are not our thoughts, neither are His ways our ways (**Is 55:8**).

It should not surprise us then that the contents of the bible conflict with the carnal mind—which is at odds with God. We, therefore, do not appeal to our understanding or the popular trends of the day, rather we prayerfully and humbly submit to the teachings of Scripture. And the scripture is not ambiguous nor unclear on this doctrinal truth. Nor is it in isolation to a few “obscure” biblical passages. It is all over the scripture. Moreover, it is in perfect harmony with the character and nature of God and systematic theology.

Why is this doctrine so despised?

1. Partly because man has to acknowledge the fact that his salvation is an act of God. He wants to have some responsibility—even if it is only a minor part—for having believed. He wants some credit for having made a right choice.
2. It seems unfair that God, at His own discretion, chose some to be saved and not others.
   1. At the core of those thoughts is an expression of the fallenness of man and pride
   2. Is God unfair?
      1. NEVER!
      2. God is not to be judged on “His fairness” by human standards
      3. Do we really think that some imposed standard contrived by fallen sinful man would be a higher standard than that of an infinitely eternal holy God?
      4. God’s justice is intrinsic to who He is
         1. The source of His justice is His own free will
         2. Whatever He wills is just

**Psalm 97:1-2**—*The Lord reigns, let the earth rejoice; Let the many islands be glad.* ***2****Clouds and thick darkness surround Him; Righteousness and justice are the foundation of His throne.*

**Isaiah 55:8-9**—*“For My thoughts are not your thoughts, Nor are your ways My ways,” declares the Lord.* ***9****“For as the heavens are higher than the earth, So are My ways higher than your ways and My thoughts than your thoughts.”*

**Psalm 115:3**—*But our God is in the heavens; He does whatever He pleases.*

* + 1. Our just penalty for sin is eternal separation from God. We therefore are focused on His mercy and grace
    2. So “fairness” is not the measure by which we determine this truth

**The features of God’s election**

1. **The condition**

**1 Peter 1:1a***—Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ* ***,*** *To those who reside as aliens, scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia*

1. *Those who reside as aliens*
   1. Earthly residents as temporary residents
   2. Foreigners or refugees
2. *Scattered throughout* various locations
   1. *Scattered* (diaspora)—from which we get the word dispersion
   2. Throughout various cities in Asia minor *(modern day Turkey)*
   3. It is also true that believers are spiritual aliens in this world

**2:11**—*Beloved, I urge you as aliens and strangers to abstain from fleshly lusts which wage war against the soul.*

**Philippians 3:20***—For our citizenship is in heaven, from which also we eagerly wait for a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ*

**Hebrews 11:13-16***—All these died in faith, without receiving the promises, but having seen them and having welcomed them from a distance, and having confessed that they were strangers and exiles on the earth.****14****For those who say such things make it clear that they are seeking a country of their own.****15****And indeed if they had been thinking of that country from which they went out, they would have had opportunity to return.****16****But as it is, they desire a better country, that is, a heavenly one. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God; for He has prepared a city for them.*

**Hebrews 13:14***—For here we do not have a lasting city, but we are seeking the city which is to come.*

* 1. The geographical areas mentioned speak to the wide circulation of the epistle
  2. Additional churches in Asia Minor would also be mentioned in Revelation 2-3 some 30 years later (Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamum, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia, and Laodicea)
  3. These pagan regions were hostile to the gospel

1. **Point:** although they were rejected by society and treated harshly in these regions, they were nevertheless chosen by God
   1. That should center their thinking
   2. They can face extreme persecution in triumphant hope

**4:13**—*but to the degree that you share the sufferings of Christ, keep on rejoicing, so that also at the revelation of His glory you may rejoice with exultation.*

**4:16***—but if anyone suffers as a Christian, he is not to be ashamed, but is to glorify God in this name.*

**Hebrews 10:34-35***—For you showed sympathy to the prisoners and accepted joyfully the seizure of your property, knowing that you have for yourselves a better possession and a lasting one.****35****Therefore, do not throw away your confidence, which has a great reward.*

1. **The essence**

**1 Peter 1:1b***—…who are chosen*

1. Chosen (eklektos)—

**2:9**—*But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God’s own possession, so that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light;*

* 1. That was true for Israel in the OT

**Deuteronomy 7:6**—*For you are a holy people to the Lord your God; the Lord your God has chosen you to be a people for His own possession out of all the peoples who are on the face of the earth.*

**Psalm 105:43***—And He brought forth His people with joy, His chosen ones with a joyful shout.*

**Psalm 135:4***—For the Lord has chosen Jacob for Himself, Israel for His own possession.*

* 1. That is the pattern in the Scripture
  2. It is true of the NT saints

**Ephesians 1:11**—*also we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to His purpose who works all things after the counsel of His will,*

**2 Thessalonians 2:13**—*But we should always give thanks to God for you, brethren beloved by the Lord, because God has chosen you from the beginning for salvation through sanctification by the Spirit and faith in the truth.*

**Romans 8:29-30**—*For those whom He foreknew, He also predestined to become conformed to the image of His Son, so that He would be the firstborn among many brethren;****30****and these whom He predestined, He also called; and these whom He called, He also justified; and these whom He justified, He also glorified.*

**1 Corinthians 1:27**—*but God has chosen the foolish things of the world to shame the wise, and God has chosen the weak things of the world to shame the things which are strong*

**Ephesians 1:4-5**—*just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we would be holy and blameless before Him. In love****5****He predestined us to adoption as sons through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the kind intention of His will,*

**Ephesians 2:10**—*For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them.*

**Colossians 3:12**—*So, as those who have been chosen of God, holy and beloved, put on a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience;*

**1 Thessalonians 1:4***—knowing, brethren beloved by God, His choice of you;*

**Titus 1:1***—Paul, a bond-servant of God and an apostle of Jesus Christ, for the faith of those chosen of God and the knowledge of the truth which is according to godliness,*

* 1. Jesus’ teaching on election

**John 6:37-45**—*All that the Father gives Me will come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will certainly not cast out.****38****For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me.****39****This is the will of Him who sent Me, that of all that He has given Me I lose nothing, but raise it up on the last day.****40****For this is the will of My Father, that everyone who beholds the Son and believes in Him will have eternal life, and I Myself will raise him up on the last day.”* ***41****Therefore the Jews were grumbling about Him, because He said, “I am the bread that came down out of heaven.”****42****They were saying, “Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? How does He now say, ‘I have come down out of heaven’?”****43****Jesus answered and said to them, “Do not grumble among yourselves.****44****No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him; and I will raise him up on the last day.****45****It is written in the prophets, ‘And they shall all be taught of God.’ Everyone who has heard and learned from the Father, comes to Me.*

**John 13:18**—*I do not speak of all of you. I know the ones I have chosen; but it is that the Scripture may be fulfilled, ‘He who eats My bread has lifted up his heel against Me.’*

**John 15:16**—*You did not choose Me but I chose you, and appointed you that you would go and bear fruit, and that your fruit would remain, so that whatever you ask of the Father in My name He may give to you.*

**Luke 10:20**—*Nevertheless do not rejoice in this, that the spirits are subject to you, but rejoice that your names are recorded in heaven.”*

**Luke 18:7**—*now*, will not God bring about justice for His elect who cry to Him day and night, and will He delay long over them?

**John 17:6,9, 12, 24**—“*I have manifested Your name to the men whom You gave Me out of the world; they were Yours and You gave them to Me, and they have kept Your word...****9****I ask on their behalf; I do not ask on behalf of the world, but of those whom You have given Me; for they are Yours; …* ***12****While I was with them, I was keeping them in Your name which You have given Me; and I guarded them and not one of them perished but the son of perdition, so that the Scripture would be fulfilled….* ***24****Father, I desire that they also, whom You have given Me, be with Me where I am, so that they may see My glory which You have given Me, for You loved Me before the foundation of the world.*

**Matthew 24:22**—*Unless those days had been cut short, no life would have been saved; but for the sake of the elect those days will be cut short.*

(see also vv**24, 31; Mark 13:20**)

* 1. God has chosen people out of the world

**Revelation 5:9***—And they \*sang a new song, saying, “Worthy are You to take the book and to break its seals; for You were slain, and purchased for God with Your blood men from every tribe and tongue and people and nation.*

**7:9***—And they \*sang a new song, saying, “Worthy are You to take thebook and to break its seals; for You were slain, and purchased for God with Your blood men from every tribe and tongue and people and nation.*

**John 10:16***—I have other sheep, which are not of this fold; I must bring them also, and they will hear My voice; and they will become one flock with one shepherd.*

**Acts 15:14***—Simeon has related how God first concerned Himself about taking from among the Gentiles a people for His name.*

* 1. Other NT passages

**Matthew 24:22, 24, 31**—*Unless those days had been cut short, no life would have been saved; but for the sake of the elect those days will be cut short…****24****For false Christs and false prophets will arise and will show great signs and wonders, so as to mislead, if possible, even the elect. …* ***31****And He will send forth His angels with a great trumpet and they will gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of the sky to the other.*

**Luke 18:7**—*now, will not God bring about justice for His elect who cry to Him day and night, and will He delay long over them?*

**James 2:5**—*Listen, my beloved brethren: did not God choose the poor of this world to be rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom which He promised to those who love Him?*

**John 6:37-45**—*All that the Father gives Me will come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will certainly not cast out.****38****For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me.****39****This is the will of Him who sent Me, that of all that He has given Me I lose nothing, but raise it up on the last day.****40****For this is the will of My Father, that everyone who beholds the Son and believes in Him will have eternal life, and I Myself will raise him up on the last day.”* ***41****Therefore the Jews were grumbling about Him, because He said, “I am the bread that came down out of heaven.”****42****They were saying, “Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? How does He now say, ‘I have come down out of heaven’?”****43****Jesus answered and said to them, “Do not grumble among yourselves.****44****No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him; and I will raise him up on the last day.****45****It is written in the prophets, ‘And they shall all be taught of God.’ Everyone who has heard and learned from the Father, comes to Me.*

**Acts 13:46-49**— *Paul and Barnabas spoke out boldly and said, “It was necessary that the word of God be spoken to you first; since you repudiate it and judge yourselves unworthy of eternal life, behold, we are turning to the Gentiles.****47****For so the Lord has commanded us, ‘I have placed You as a light for the Gentiles, That You may bring salvation to the end of the earth.’”* ***48****When the Gentiles heard this, they began rejoicing and glorifying the word of the Lord; and as many as had been appointed to eternal life believed.****49****And the word of the Lord was being spread through the whole region.*

1. The chosen are expressions of the Father’s love for the Son
   1. All whom the Father gives, the Son receives
   2. The Son keeps them and raises them to Eternal life

**John 5:21**—*For just as the Father raises the dead and gives them life, even so the Son also gives life to whom He wishes.*

1. Done by God’s sovereign purpose and grace

**2 Timothy 1:9**—*who has saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace which was granted us in Christ Jesus from all eternity,*

1. As seen in the Book of Life

**Revelation 13:8***—All who dwell on the earth will worship him, everyone whose name has not been written from the foundation of the world in the book of life of the Lamb who has been slain.*

**Revelation 17:8***—“The beast that you saw was, and is not, and is about to come up out of the abyss and go to destruction. And those who dwell on the earth, whose name has not been written in the book of life from the foundation of the world, will wonder when they see the beast, that he was and is not and will come.*

***20:12, 15****—**And I saw the dead, the great and the small, standing before the throne, and books were opened; and another book was opened, which is the book of life; and the dead were judged from the things which were written in the books, according to their deeds… And if anyone’s name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.*

***21:27****—…and nothing unclean, and no one who practices abomination and lying, shall ever come into it, but only those whose names are written in the Lamb’s book of life.*

1. God has set His affection on a remnant whom He would redeem, save, and conform into the image of His Son

**1 John 4:10**—*In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins.*

**Romans 10:20***—And Isaiah is very bold and says, “I was found by those who did not seek Me, I became manifest to those who did not ask for Me.”*

Cf. **Romans 8*:28-29***

1. **The source: the foreknowledge of God**
2. **The means: by the sanctifying work of the Spirit**
3. **The purpose: to obey Jesus Christ**
4. **The eternal security: and be sprinkled with His blood**
5. **As a result: may grace and peace be yours in the fullest measure**

**Conclusion**

The richness of God’s election will transform the daily life of the believer who genuinely understands its meaning and divine purpose. We are aliens chosen of God for His sovereign will. Our understanding of His gracious provision humbles us and motivates us to have grateful hearts and obedient lives knowing that His divine forgiveness is ours and the spiritual blessings and privileges He affords us give us hope for what is to come.