



# Predestination and Free Will

(Fatalism, Gnostics, Pelagians)



# Problem Description

- Do we have free will or God has predestined us to heaven or Hell?
- Do we receive God's salvation due to our actions?
- Is God's grace responsible for everything?
- Does God choose those who are saved?



# We are Predestined

- **Exo 4:21** And Jehovah said to Moses, When you go to return into Egypt, see that you do all those wonders which I have put in your hand before Pharaoh; but **I will harden** his heart, that he shall not let the people go.
- **Rom 9:11** (for *the children* had not yet been born, neither had done any good or evil; but that the purpose of God **according to election might stand**, not of works but of Him who called,)
- **Rom 9:21** Does not the potter have power over the clay, from the same lump **to make one vessel to honor and another to dishonor?**



# We are Predestined

- **Eph 1:3** Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenlies in Christ;
- **Eph 1:4** according as He chose us in Him before *the* foundation of *the* world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love,
- **Eph 1:5** **having predestined us to the adoption** of children by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will,



# We are Predestined

- **Eph 1:11** in whom also we have been chosen to an inheritance, being **predestinated** according to the purpose of Him who works all things according to the counsel of His own will,
- **Rom 9:18** Therefore He has mercy on whom He will *have mercy*, and whom He will, He hardens.



# Opinion 1

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- Man is predestined to heaven or hell
- God chose whom to love and whom to reject before creating them.
- Our actions are irrelevant, since our fate has been decided (predestined) before the creation of the world
- Fate is the act of God in our lives, don't fight it but rather accept it.



# Issues with opinion 1

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- If God has chosen whom to honor, what is their advantage and why reward them.
- If God chose some to be vessels of wrath, why would He punish them.
- Conclusion can lead to God is unfair



We are free creatures

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# We are free

- **Deu 30:19** I call Heaven and earth to record today against you. I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing. Therefore, **choose life**, so that both you and your seed may live,
- **Pro 1:29** instead they hated knowledge and **did not choose** the fear of Jehovah.



# We are free

- Isa 1:19 **If** you are willing and obedient, you shall eat the good of the land;
- Isa 1:20 but **if you refuse** and rebel, you shall be devoured *with* the sword; for the mouth of Jehovah has spoken.



# We are free

- Mat 7:21 Not everyone who says to Me, Lord! Lord! shall enter the kingdom of Heaven, **but he who does** the will of My Father in Heaven.
- Mat 7:22 Many will say to Me in that day, Lord! Lord! Did we not prophesy in Your name, and through Your name throw out demons, and through Your name do many wonderful works?
- Mat 7:23 And then I will say to them I never knew you! Depart from Me, those working lawlessness!
- Mat 7:24 Therefore whoever **hears these sayings** of Mine, **and does them**, I will liken him to a wise man who built his house on a rock.



# We are free

- Mat 23:37 O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the *one* killing the prophets and stoning those who are sent to her, how often would I have gathered your children together, even as a hen gathers her chicks under *her* wings, **and you would not!**
- 1Pe 1:17 And if you call on *the* Father, who without respect of persons **judges according to the work of each one**



## Opinion 2

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- We are free to do what we want.
- Those who receive salvation deserve it because of their good work
- We can grow spiritually due to our struggle and hard work.



## Issues with Opinion 2

- If God's grace completely depends on our will, how can a sinful person repent on his/her own being under the yoke of satan?
- God created us all being different, with different abilities.
- Conclusion can lead to God is unfair



How to reconcile both set of verses?

The Bible is not contradicting itself



# Mixing up

- There is a need to separate between
  - Salvation
  - Grace
- Call for salvation
- Acceptance of salvation
- Answering God's call
- Obeying to the Holy Spirit



# Salvation

- **Salvation to Man is free.**
- **No one deserve that God Himself would come and die for us on the cross**
- **No one deserves the new nature given freely through the sacraments**



- Psa 14:3 *All have gone aside, together they are filthy; there is none who does good, no, not one.*
- Jam 2:10 For whoever shall keep the whole Law and yet offend in one *point*, he is guilty of all.



# Salvation

- Salvation is paid in advance.
- Not enforced on people: freely given, freely accepted
- **Joh 3:15** so that whosoever believes in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.
- **Joh 3:16** For God so loved the world that He gave His only-begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.



# God's will

- **1Ti 2:3** For this *is* good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior,
- 1Ti 2:4 who **will have all men to be saved** and to come to the knowledge of the truth.
- **Eze 18:32** For I have no delight in the death of him who dies, says the Lord Jehovah. **Therefore turn and live.**



# God reconciled us to Himself

- 2Co 5:19 whereas God was in Christ **reconciling *the* world to Himself,**

# Not everyone will accept God's call for reconciliation



- Mat 23:37 O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the *one* killing the prophets and stoning those who are sent to her, how often would I have gathered your children together, even as a hen gathers her chicks under *her* wings, **and you would not!**
- The parable of the wedding (Math 22)
- The parable of the 10 virgin (Math 25)



# How does it work?

- God has created each of us with a separate free will.
- Each of us starts with different set of initial conditions (our family, Male vs Female, Country of birth, Physical attributes).
- The parable of the talents, each one took different number of talents (1,2,5) (Math 25).
- What we do with our talents depend on our choices.



- Due to my weakness I will not be able to reach God by myself.
- He comes to help me to make the right choices and the correct decisions.
- Each of us differs in the amount by which we struggle to be filled from God.
- God gives us back according to our response to His Grace in us



# My Free will

- My Free will must wills what God's will.
  - **Php 2:13** For it is God who works in you both **to will** and **to do** of *His* good pleasure.
  - Joh 1:11 He came to *His* own, and *His* own received Him not.
  - Joh 1:12 But as many as **received Him**, He gave to them authority to become the children of God, to those who believe on His name



## After I receive

- **Php 4:13** I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.
- **1Co 15:10** But **by the grace of God** I am what I am, and His grace which *was* toward me has not been without fruit, but **I labored more abundantly than all of them**; yet not I, but the grace of God with me.



- 1Ch 29:14 But who *am* I, and who my people, that we should be able to offer so willingly after this sort? **For all things *are* from You, and we have given to You that which is Your**



# How to explain Pharaoh, Esau?

## ■ Rain

- As the rain falls on both good crops and weeds, it causes both to grow.
- We can attribute the good fruits to the rain
- We can attribute the weeds to the rain.
- Same source, two different outcomes depending on the soil.



## example 2

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### ■ The Sun

- As the sun shines on the good soil and soil filled with filth
- The sun causes the crops to grow and brings good smell
- The causes the filth to generate bad odor.
- Same action two different outcomes depending on the soil



## example 3

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- Heat
  - The heat causes wax to melt and wet clay to harden.



# Esau and Jacob

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- Events for Esau and Jacob
- One chose God, the other did not.
- God used the hardening of the one to bless the other



# Pharaoh

- Same events for Moses, Pharaoh, Egyptians, and Jews.
- Some believed in God
- Others refused God.
- God did not stop Pharaoh from his hardened heart in order to show His glory to the Jews and the Egyptians.



# What does it mean to be predestined

- **God, through His foreknowledge of how would we respond to His calling, selected us.**
- **Rom 8:30** But whom He **predestinated**, these He also called; and whom He called, those He also justified. And whom He justified, these He also glorified.



# God's grace

- God's grace works with each one of us.
- Each of us have the full freedom to cooperate, react to it, or totally ignore it.
  - **Eph 4:30** And **do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God**, by whom you are sealed until *the* day of redemption.
  - **2Ti 1:6** Therefore I remind you to inflame anew the gift of God, which is in you by the putting on of my hands.



The END

St. Mary Coptic Orthodox Church,  
East Brunswick, NJ. USA