

Things that God Does to Fulfill His Promises to Abraham: Elects

What does God tie to the concept of election? What does God elect to be for certain people? What is His criteria?

And I will establish my covenant between me and you and your offspring after you throughout their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you and to your offspring after you. (Gen 17:7, ESV)

For I have chosen him, that he may command his children and his household after him to keep the way of the LORD by doing righteousness and justice, so that the LORD may bring to Abraham what he has promised him.” (Gen 18:19, ESV)

4) ‘You yourselves have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how I bore you on eagles’ wings and brought you to myself. 5) Now therefore, if you will indeed obey my voice and keep my covenant, you shall be my treasured possession among all peoples, for all the earth is mine; 6) and you shall be to me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.’ These are the words that you shall speak to the people of Israel.” (Ex 19:4-6, ESV)

14) A king's wrath is a messenger of death, and a wise man will appease it. 15) In the light of a king's face there is life, and his favor is like the clouds that bring the spring rain. 16) How much better to get wisdom than gold! To get understanding is to be chosen rather than silver. (Prov 16:14-16, ESV)

Why does God choose a human being?

6) “For you are a people holy to the LORD your God. The LORD your God has chosen you to be a people for his treasured possession, out of all the peoples who are on the face of the earth. 7) It was not because you were more in number than any other people that the LORD set his love on you and chose you, for you were the fewest of all peoples, 8) but it is because the LORD loves you and is keeping the oath that he swore to your fathers, that the LORD has brought you out with a mighty hand and redeemed you from the house of slavery, from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt. 9) Know therefore that the LORD your God is God, the faithful God who keeps covenant and steadfast love with those who love him and keep his commandments, to a thousand generations, (Deut 7:6-9, ESV)

But the Lord said to Samuel, “Do not look on his appearance or on the height of his stature, because I have rejected him. For the Lord sees not as man sees: man looks on the outward appearance, but the Lord looks on the heart.” (1 Sam 16:7, ESV)

How does the Old Testament shape your understanding of divine election in the New Testament?

11) “But when the king came in to look at the guests, he saw there a man who had no wedding garment. 12) And he said to him, ‘Friend, how did you get in here without a wedding garment?’ And he was speechless. 13) Then the king said to the attendants, ‘Bind him hand and foot and cast him into the outer darkness. In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.’ 14) For many are called, but few are chosen.” (Matt 22:11-14, ESV)

1) I ask, then, has God rejected his people? By no means! For I myself am an Israelite, a descendant of Abraham, a member of the tribe of Benjamin. 2) God has not rejected his people whom he foreknew. Do you not know what the Scripture says of Elijah, how he appeals to God against Israel? 3) “Lord, they have killed your prophets, they have demolished your altars, and I alone am left, and they seek my life.” 4) But what is God's reply to him? “I have kept for myself seven thousand men who have not bowed the knee to Baal.” 5) So too at the present time there is a remnant, chosen by grace. 6) But if it is by grace, it is no longer on the basis of works; otherwise grace would no longer be grace. 7) What then? Israel failed to obtain what it was seeking. The elect obtained it, but the rest were hardened, 8) as it is written,

“God gave them a spirit of stupor, eyes that would not see and ears that would not hear, down to this very day.” (Rom 11:1-8, ESV)

28) And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose. 29) For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers. 30) And those whom he predestined he also called, and those whom he called he also justified, and those whom he justified he also glorified.

31) What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? 32) He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all, how will he not also with him graciously give us all things? 33) Who shall bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. (Rom 8:28-33, ESV)

4) For we know, brothers loved by God, that he has chosen you, 5) because our gospel came to you not only in word, but also in power and in the Holy Spirit and with full conviction. You know what kind of men we proved to be among you for your sake. 6) And you became imitators of us and of the Lord, for you received the word in much affliction, with the joy of the Holy Spirit, 7) so that you became an example to all the believers in Macedonia and in Achaia. (1 Thes 1:4-7, ESV)

7) So the honor is for you who believe, but for those who do not believe, "The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone," 8) and "A stone of stumbling, and a rock of offense."

They stumble because they disobey the word, as they were destined to do.

9) But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light. 10) Once you were not a people, but now you are God's people; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy. (1 Pet 2:7-10, ESV)

Is there a contradiction here? This passage implies that God's choice of a person precedes their faith in God.

2) For if a man wearing a gold ring and fine clothing comes into your assembly, and a poor man in shabby clothing also comes in, 3) and if you pay attention to the one who wears the fine clothing and say, "You sit here in a good place," while you say to the poor man, "You stand over there," or, "Sit down at my feet," 4) have you not then made distinctions among yourselves and become judges with evil thoughts? 5) Listen, my beloved brothers, has not God chosen those who are poor in the world **to be** rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom, which he has promised to those who love him? (Jam 2:2-5, ESV)

When encountering a possible contradiction, consider a lexicon study. In this case, look up "rich." In all instances, the Greek term is used as an adjective, except in James 2: 5 where the ESV translation uses "to be rich." The King James Version translates James 2:5 in a manner consistent with all other biblical uses and consistent with the Abrahamic Covenant (Gen 17:7).

5) Hearken, my beloved brethren, Hath not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which he hath promised to them that love him? (Jam 2:5, KJV)