

WHY GOD DID NOT CHOOSE ALL SOULS: NEW SCRIPTURAL EVIDENCE

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Abstract

An analysis of Scripture uncovers a new model of God's election and predestination of souls, which fits under the umbrella of the Calvinist theologies, but where this model involves an answer to the long-standing question of why God chose some, rather than all. It will be explored how before souls were elected (or condemned), God looked at them and knew them in a pre-election state, which God used to predestine each soul in physical reality. This analysis reveals why it could be no other way but where God only would choose some, rather than all souls during the physical embodiment stage of the soul, and the vexing centuries-old Calvinist question of why God elected some not all has an answer.

Preliminaries

In this article I argue for a new Biblical interpretation of election and predestination, wherein I will arrive at a new Calvinist interpretation which shows *specifically why* God only chose some rather than *all* souls. I will argue that Calvinists have not sufficiently explored a few critical Scriptural concepts in specific passages (discussed below), and when one does, a few hitherto undiscussed theological concepts are revealed, giving an entirely new answer to why God only chooses some. In these passages, a theology of predestination and election involving God's *pre-election* knowledge of the soul is revealed, where of all the souls God creates, a large percentage *can only be* predestined for condemnation while they are embodied in the physical world. This theology specifically answers why God chose only *some* souls to believe (John 13:18), rather than all. This partiality of choosing by God has been a puzzling unanswered question in theology for centuries. Calvinists

are often quite honest in admitting that they have no idea as to any answer for why God only chose some. Sproul's response to this is a blatant *I have no idea*:

The question remains. Why does God only save some? If we grant that God can save men by violating their wills, why then does he not violate everybody's will and bring them all the salvation? . . . The only answer I can give to this question is that I don't know. I have no idea why God saves some but not all. I don't doubt for a moment that God has the power to save all, but I know that he does not choose to save all. I don't know why. (Sproul 1986, 25)

Calvinists, who believe that God has absolute sovereignty, generally cannot make use of the philosophical conundrum of free will in giving answers as to why there is suffering and evil, and why some rather than all souls are chosen by God. This article offers a Scriptural answer as to why God only chose some souls—an answer which is *not* based on any information about a person's embodied existence in physical reality, including any of their actions or supposed free will decisions while living out the life they were predestined. Two philosophical investigations are primary in leading to this new theological model: (a) a perhaps gradual-unnoticed, but also momentous, shift through history of the way the word "foreknowledge" was used and understood, where it appears there was an inversion of the meaning of the word through time; and (b) a failure to understand that Scripture shows us that the *creation* of any soul occurs specifically *before* election and predestination of that soul, rather than the creation and election of the soul occurring simultaneously. These issues unveil why GOD only chose some, not all souls.

Election

The important theological topics of pain, evil, suffering, and so forth, are typically explained via the philosophy of decision theology (free will theology). The arguably non-Biblical concept of *free will* has seemingly overtaken Christianity at all levels, where it is believed to be a core component of reality, which can help us in understanding the big issues of physical reality. The alleged *free will decisions*—purported uncaused enigmas—are used to explain evil, pain, sin, predestination, and why God chose some not all. But in this article I take it very seriously

that the Bible is quite unclear, or even *silent* on, anything like a clear philosophy of free will decisions in humans. There is an asymmetry between the prominence of free will decisions occurring, as discussed in Scripture, versus the emphasis it is given by Christians at all levels. A theology where God creates humans' inner minds (as discussed in Scripture, Luke 11:39–40), rather than the human creating their own mind (which is not discussed in Scripture, and which would be doing the work of God), is a theology that does not rely on the paradox of human-caused free will decisions.

Arminian Election Involves a Human Having Two Non-Identical Futures

We can know that election cannot be based on anything from the future, or the embodied existence of a person in physical reality (e.g., 2 Tim. 1:9), which could also give credit for salvation to humans, instead of to God's supernatural grace. And we know that humans cannot choose God first: He chose us, and humans did not choose Him (John 15:16). And thirdly, if God looks into the future of the embodied life of a person and sees if the person *chooses Him* or not, where if the person does, they are then chosen by God (the classical Arminian view), this leads to a paradox, described as follows. Since the person is elected and predestined *after* his life is already lived (by God's foreseeing the person's future), and *then* analyzed in order to be predestined (and therefore live a second time?), does the person live two lives, one not predestined and the other predestined, that are meant to be considered a single life, in some way? How can there be a life that is lived in order to predestine that life? Doesn't that involve the following sort of contradiction: God sees your life before it's predestined, wherein you initially have life as *not* predestined, which God examines, so as to determine your predestined life (nonlogical). So as stated, the person has *two* lives, in some sense—but are they the same life? The same person? Unless the person is to, in some sense, live that life over again, once as not-yet-predestined and the second time as predestined (if such a reincarnation-like scenario is even possible), one wonders what the point of the second life would involve. But more likely, wouldn't the person have a *different* life and future constructed for them by God in the second life, based on the person being predestined *after* his capacity to believe in God (according to

his free will) was revealed by the first not-yet-predestined life? The person has, in some way, two non-identical futures for one life in time (contradiction). In other words, if God looks to see a person's actions and beliefs while they are living the embodied life in the physical world, to see if they should be chosen or not, and where the person's life (second life) then is constructed (predestined) based on that election that resulted from the future embodied knowledge of the person, the person has two different futures: both a future God sees before predestination and where God does not hold absolute sovereignty, *and* a future God predestined after the person is chosen, which is a contradiction, since a person can only have one life,¹ not two non-identical lives and futures in a situation that doesn't involve reincarnation. This apparent two-lives contradiction is what the classic Arminian-Wesleyan theology of predestination involves. Much more could be said about this brief introduction, but from this point onward in this article, Arminian predestination theology, and predestination theology, where God looks at a human life before it is created, to determine if the human chooses God, is disregarded as involving contradiction, and being non-Scriptural.

Expanding Calvinist Election Theology

And that means we are then left with something like a general Calvinist unconditional election, where God chose some, not all, humans, and where that was not based on any behaviors or actions or beliefs or anything else during the embodied life in the physical reality by the embodied soul. Condemnation and salvation during the physical existence is known by God apart from anything about the soul's embodiment in physical reality, leading to a sort of absolute *salvation-by-grace* theology. The problem is that with this sort of an election theology, which would fall under a Calvinist umbrella, it is standard to find people believing it involves a cruel God who tortures multitudes of His creatures for eternity and without clear reason. So, if there is a clear but unknown Scriptural reason that can make some sense of why God condemns some but not all, it would be important to know that.

In this article I will argue for a new interpretation of Scriptural predestination, where we will find that there *is* a clear but hitherto undiscussed Scriptural explanation for why God elects some, not all. This theology involves the position that God first created all souls, every

possible soul, in a sort of totalistic, or of a fullness, where everything *that can be created is created*, and where after² that He elected some of those souls according to the degree of God-likeness each soul had in their pre-election state, wherein He saw which souls He could put His Spirit into while embodied in the physical reality. From this pre-election knowledge of the soul, where God saw and knew each soul (discussed more below) in its pre-election state, and predestined each soul based on the foreknowledge He had of every soul (which is the pre-election knowledge of the soul). God knew the inner texture and nature of each soul in its pre-elected state, and by this He predestined each soul, for His purposes, into the faith-building trail of physical-temporal reality (2 Tim. 1:9). In different words, God took the structure of each soul, and by analyzing each *before* the world (Ephesians 1:4) and before predestining them, God used each soul's structure to create a reality for them to live and interact within, and to be prepared for afterlife by God. This period between creation of the soul and its being elected, is what I will refer to as "foreknowledge," in reference to God's foreknowledge of the soul. Therefore, "foreknowledge" means *knowing from the very beginning*, or from the very beginning state. No awareness of, or concern with, the future of that origin-point of the soul after that moment, is needed or utilized in God knowing that soul *completely*. That appears to be the original usage of the concept of "foreknowledge" in Christianity, as we will see. God knows each soul in its absolute *totality*, at the pre-election origin-period, before election and predestination. And "foreknowledge" did not originally mean *knowing the future*, which is what current views of foreknowledge, at all levels of Christianity, appear to involve. Rather, God looked at and fully *knew* all souls, at the very beginning, and could consequently predestine them purely via their soul-structure, which was viewed by God before the world (the original usage of "foreknowledge" in the Old English language). But usage of "foreknowledge" shifted, and came to mean, from the beginning God knew a person's future and could consequently predestine them based on it. Those two concepts of foreknowledge—knowing from the beginning vs. knowing the future—are opposites, wherein only one can be right, and *which* is correct has profound implications in theology, as will be reasoned below.

The Calvinist knows that election is not based on future information about an embodied existence, but as stated, the Calvinist has no (*known*) reason for why only some souls are chosen. Calvinists apparently have to discover the if there is a Scriptural account about God's knowledge of souls *after* their creation and *before* their election or non-election (a stage of the soul between its creation and its election/non-election), which would be knowledge (fore or before knowledge) that God could have used in predestining souls. To my knowledge, the Calvinist typically assumes that (a) the creation of the soul and (b) its being elected (or not elected) are an *identical* happening in some way. Below we will find that is not in accord with Scripture, (a) and (b) are a sequential, a two-step process, and therein we will find the hitherto unseen reason God only chooses some.

Foreknowledge Is Not Future Knowledge

According to Merriam-Webster, the word "fore" has the following definitions: in, toward, near the front, at an earlier time period, situated in front of something else, prior in order of occurrence, before, earlier, beforehand, situated at the front, and most interestingly, *front part*. These definitions are speaking about a starting point, a first position, and that which is earlier, or earliest. And likewise when analyzing "fore" as a prefix, according to Dictionary.com, the prefix "fore" is "from fore (adv.), which was used as a prefix in Old English and other Germanic languages with a sense of 'before in time, rank, position,' etc., or designating *the front part* or *earliest time*" (Italics added). If we take these two definitions of "fore," and put them in front of the word knowledge, to create a definition of "foreknowledge" this way, we get what I call the *inception* definition of "foreknowledge."

(i) *The inception definition of "foreknowledge":* knowledge of the earliest time. (Definition derived from prefix "fore.")

Why would we create the definition of "foreknowledge" this way? Dictionary.com states that "foreknowledge" was first recorded in the earlier parts of the 1500s from the merger of "fore" and "knowledge," fore+knowledge. We will find below that earliest usages of προέγνω (proginosko, "foreknew"), such as in Romans 8:29, in Old English match the inception definition of "foreknowledge"—which is apparently not how the word is used today in all levels of Christianity (today

“foreknowledge” is used as a word for future telling, or clairvoyance-like mentation). For purposes of this article, we are then focusing on *knowledge* of the *earliest state of the soul*: its very beginning. If this were the original definition of “foreknowledge,” then it has undergone a philosophical shift at some point through the past, since the inception definition is not how it is used in theological studies and Christian ministry today. If the inception definition is how the word “foreknowledge” was intended to be defined as, that would mean God’s foreknowledge in Romans 8:29 is God’s knowledge of the soul at its *earliest time or state*, such as at its creation/origination.

The aforementioned philosophical shift of the definition of “foreknowledge” would have been roughly a shift of inversion, where there definitions became opposites. I believe this is how I see the Christian world, from theologians to church-goers, using the word “foreknowledge”:

(ii) *The clairvoyance definition of “foreknowledge”*: knowledge of the future before it happens; knowing the future. (Definition derived from usage by theologians.)

To give just one of many examples that could be given for how the clairvoyant view of foreknowledge is used by theologians instead of the inception view, *Baker’s Evangelical Dictionary of Biblical Theology’s* first sentence of their online “foreknowledge” entry reads: “In his omniscience God knows what the future holds both for individuals and for nations.”

The two definitions of “foreknowledge” just given, the inception view and the clairvoyant view, are opposites: one is about the first point (or earliest point), and the other would appear to be about a future that has not yet happened. God, being omniscient, would, have knowledge of what is going on in both situations (at the inception of the soul, and the not-yet-existent future of the soul), but being opposites, only at most one of the definitions can be correct.

I will show below that while theologians have utilized (ii) the clairvoyance definition of “foreknowledge,” the Bible, on the other hand, is in fact utilizing (i) the inception definition of foreknowledge. This confusion about the word “foreknowledge” is largely why there has been confusion about election and predestination for centuries. Theologians seemingly did not consider that there is a state of the soul

that God knows about *before* it was elected or predestined, and instead it has been ubiquitously concluded that “foreknowledge” followed the clairvoyance definition and was about looking into the future from the deep past ((ii) clairvoyance view), and not about completely knowing an entity at its origin.

The first lines of Roy’s *How Much Does God Foreknow?*, he starts off his book with (ii) the clairvoyance definition of “foreknow”: “God knows the future! His foreknowledge has rightly been prized by Christians of all generations. Much of the confidence, hope and joy of the Christian life traditionally been based on the conviction that God knows the future” (Roy 2006, 9). Roy goes on to discuss how juxtaposing this clairvoyant foreknowledge with the idea that humans have freedom (self-freedom) is the primary problem with the concept of foreknowledge, where the deleting of the non-Biblical concept of free will avoids this purported problem.

And there is no explanation of how the word and prefix, “fore,” came to be pointed at the future, as in the clairvoyance definition, rather than to an origin, as with the inception definition.

God correctly inspired the word “foreknew” in Romans 8:29 into human Bible writers and translators, but man did not stick to its definition (the inception definition), and flipped “foreknowledge” into its opposite (the clairvoyance definition). On the one hand, perhaps it would take a professional etymologist to uncover if and where (i) the inception definition was replaced by (ii) the clairvoyance definition at some point in the past, *but* it is not terribly difficult to find shifts going on after, the time of Old English language, from (i) inception to (ii) clairvoyance. Just a small amount of investigation will reveal, on multiple fronts, evidence that a flip *from* (i) the inception definition *to* (ii) the clairvoyance definition seemed to take place. It is interesting that the very first Bibles in English did not involve this inversion from (i) to (ii), and stuck more to (i) the inception definition in translating. For example, consider the 1599 Geneva Bible (GNV) translation, which seemingly involves the inception, not the clairvoyance usage:

28 Also we know that all things work together for the best unto them that love God, even to them that are called of his purpose.

29 For those which he knew before, he also predestinated to be made like to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren.

30 Moreover, whom he predestinated, them also he called, and whom he called, them also he justified, and whom he justified, them he also glorified. (Romans 8:28–30, GNV)

Verse 29 in the Wycliff Bible (WYC) is:

29 For those that he knew before [For why and whom he knew before], he before-ordained by grace to be made like to the image of his Son, that he be the first begotten among many brethren.

In verse 29, the word “foreknew” is not used, and instead in the GNV, “those which he knew before” is used. It seems this is more in-line with (i) the inception definition, for the following reasons. If I say I knew *x before*, it is different than saying I knew *x after*, or presently. It is as if I am saying *I knew x from an earlier point*. And above the inception definition of “foreknowledge” was *the knowledge of the earliest time*, which could be adjusted to read, the knowledge of *earlier* time. The GNV and likewise the WYC, are in-line with both the prefix “fore” and (i) the inception definition of “foreknew.” Are the first two English language Bibles being in-line with the inception definition of “foreknowledge” in Romans 8:29 an indication that the definition, at that time, for the word “foreknowledge” utilized the inception definition at an earlier time? The New International Version, based on a different original manuscript than the WYC, GNV, and King James Version (KJV), uses “For those God foreknew,” where “foreknew” is the past tense of “foreknow.” The New King James Version, New Revised Standard Version, Holman Christian Standard Bible, New American Standard Bible, Revised Standard Version, and English Standard Version (ESV) also use the past tense, “foreknew.” That tells us that these translations, by using the past tense, involve the philosophical position that the *knowing* that was carried-out by God was *in the past*, which is also inline with the (i) inception definition. And the KJV uses “did foreknow,” the “did” making the phrase also the past tense. The New Living Translation is the only translation among the most widely read of the newer translation that are not based on the Textus Receptus that does not use “foreknew,” and it instead uses “For God knew his people in advance,” which is the clairvoyance definition. So all but a

few Bibles use are inception formulations, and it is thus the analysis of the word that involves the clairvoyance definition.

As an aside, note, secondly, in the GNV, how one can very clearly note the ordering in verse 29, where (a) *first* souls were created (we know they were created, in some degree, at the point God knows them, which is before the foundation of the world (Eph. 1:4) where they have to be in existence to at least some degree in order to be known), and (b) *then* they were predestined. That there is a difference between (a) soul creation and (b) election and predestination, that these were different phenomena at different times, is a major ingredient in what reveals as to why God only choosing some, not all, souls is the only way that creation by God would happen.

In looking at the GNV and the WYC, listed above, in these earliest English Bibles, the words “foreknew” or “foreknow” are not utilized, where virtually the same statement is used in each Bible. “those that he knew before.” With this wording, it appears one cannot automatically conclude that *those he knew before = knowledge of their futures*—nothing in the left side of that equation automatically prompts one to move to the right side. In fact, it sounds more like (i), as in the GNV, where an earlier time of knowing is being referred to, which is (i), and which is the opposite of (ii) clairvoyance and looking into the future.

And extremely interesting is Luther’s Bible (LUTH1545), which is in German, but when I put it in Google translate, this is what comes up:

29 For what he has seen before, he has also ordained, that they should be equal to the image of his Son, that the same may be the firstborn among many brethren. (Romans 8:29 [LUTH1545])

Quite interesting is the past tense “seen before”—as if God saw something very early on (“before”), wherein the usage of προέγνω (proginosko) in Romans 8:29.

And the history of the word “foreknew” is also extremely revealing in showing how (ii) the clairvoyance definition replaced (i) the inception definition. If one looks up the etymology of “foreknew,” that will lead to “foreknow” and “foreknowledge,” and tracing the histories of those leads to the word “foreknowing,” wherein which will lead further back to the words “forewitan” and “forwiten.” When we investigate the histories of “forewitan” and “forwiten,” the (i)-to-(ii) flip from inception to clairvoyance definitions of “foreknowledge” can

seemingly be spotted. The histories of those words lead back to another word, “forewete,”³ where “forewete” is defined as “to know, determine, or settle *beforehand*.” This is the (i) the inception definition. It would have to read like this to be the clairvoyant definition: “knowing the future from earlier or starting times.” Definitions of “foreknowledge” are not as precise as the two definitions above. “To know beforehand,” which is part of the Merriam-Webster definition,⁴ is a definition of “foreknowledge” that could be interpreted as either (i) the inception definition, or (ii) the clairvoyance definition, as follows: (i) he knew from the beginning, or (ii) he knew *the future* from the beginning. Adding “the future” appears to be the difference between (i) and (ii), and which makes (ii) indeed a future-telling definition. But (i) need not be clairvoyant, it makes no mention of the future. Adding a concept of futurity greatly changes “foreknowledge.” With a future concept, the knowing is then future-pointed, rather than a knowing of origin, appears to be departing from the Scripture—from both the Bibles based on the Textus Receptus, and those Bibles based on the later-found manuscripts (Codex Vaticanus, and Codex Sinaiticus). If no concept of future is found in προέγνω, in either set of Bibles, then how did futurity get inserted into the concept of “foreknowledge?”

Going back to the Old English word, “forewete,” defined as “to determine beforehand” or “to settle beforehand,” the future-knowing clairvoyance does not exist in those, those not in-line (ii), but rather involve (i) the inception definition. There is a removal of the future-knowing in the definition of “foreknowledge” which is found in (ii) the clairvoyance definition usage, and without clairvoyance, there is no future knowing; there is only *fore-knowledge*, *earliest* knowledge (pre-election knowledge). And more interestingly, “to settle (things) beforehand” is as if to set things *form the start*. If I am going to *settle* business matters beforehand, it means I am going to take care of those matters at the start, before some other matters even commence, where the first set of matters needs to be settled before the second set is tended to. This has nothing to do with knowing the future, and it is akin to setting up a plan at the start of some action or endeavor. And “to determine beforehand” is also not looking into the future, but is to know something from the start. As we will see below, “to settling beforehand” and “to determine beforehand” are precisely what we will

find God doing, as revealed in Scripture, between creation of souls and electing and predestining them.

In this article, hereafter I will conclude that these points, as well as the Arminian two non-identical life-futures contradiction discussed above, show that the word “foreknowledge” was intended to be defined by (i) the inception definition, not (ii) the clairvoyance definition—which will Scripturally reveal in the next section why God only chose some, not all. God did not use looking into the future with a clairvoyant knowledge, but rather, He foreknew (before knew, at-the-start knew) things in their earliest pre-election, pre-predestined state. This difference leads to a difference in understanding of what “foreknowledge” denotes, and this misuse of the word “foreknowledge” is one of the key reasons that election and predestination are misunderstood, leading to the Calvinist and Arminian conceptions of election and predestination, which have caused division and confusion and great anger for Christians (and for non-believers as well) for centuries.

The question is this: How did fore+knowledge, which is the Old English *forewete*, defined by (i) the inception definition, become definition (ii), the clairvoyance definition, at some point deep in the past? This is like substituting the beginning moment with a future moment in the stream of time, and inserting the future moment in that beginning slot. Meanings are inverted, and philosophical understanding is flipped. Applying (i) the inception definition to “foreknew” would mean that Romans 8:29 is about God looking at the soul right at its origin, its first moment, before its election and its embodiment, right at its origin, as if there was understanding of the matrix of the soul in a pre-elected state. There is virtually no information I could find on how (ii) the clairvoyance definition, rather than (i) the inception definition became accepted. This is a major question, since our understanding of election and predestination in Romans 8:29 depends on the interpretation of “foreknew,” and since if we apply the inception definition to προέγνω (*proginosko*, “foreknew”) in Romans 8:29, we have a new interpretation and theology of election and predestination, which would involve quite different ways of seeing reality, as compared to the free will theologies that dominate overwhelmingly (is an alternative ever really discussed?), and where one of the outcomes of a theology involving (i) the inception definition of “foreknowledge,”

is that a clear reason as to why God only chose some emerges, as I will clarify below.

Puzzling that two forms of the same word could have diametrically opposite meanings. It is also puzzling that there has been so little discussion over this confusion between (i) the inception definition and (ii) the clairvoyance definition. And it is difficult to find any writer in the past few hundred years to agree with this idea that (ii) the clairvoyance definition is the opposite of what we would expect to find the fore+knowledge to denote. I do not know of many examples of where (i) the inception definition is discussed or utilized with respect to Romans 8:29. Perhaps one example is from the University of California journal, *Bibliotheca Sacra.*, 1892, where we find L. S. Potwin writing:

In Romans xi. 2—"God hath not cast away his people which he foreknew,"—the prefix "fore" seems to denote not "looking into the future," but simply "before now," the writer looking back into the past. (Potwin 1892, 340)

Grudem, in his *Systematic Theology*, also appears to possibly lean toward (i) the inception definition of "foreknowledge": "Therefore in Romans 8:28, 'those whom he *foreknew*' is best understood to mean 'those whom he long ago *thought of in saving relationship to himself*'" (Grudem 1994, 676–77). (Later we will see that Grudem comes very close to the same conclusions I reach in this article about why God chose some, but Grudem did not put all the pieces together to see what had been uncovered, which is God's pre-election awareness of the soul that was used to elect and predestine souls.)

Why Does God Elect Only Some, Rather Than All?

Perhaps the most urgent issue in this study is to find a Scriptural answer as to why God only choose *some* souls, rather than all of them. This issue could be one of the most prominent issues in leading people away from Christianity, since the answer often given is a Calvinist answer, which is that God simply chooses *some*, the rest are not chosen, and no further explanation is given. This can (incorrectly, as we will find in this section) leave people assuming God is a cruel, nonlogical tyrant. But we will next discover that there always has been a (hitherto unseen) Scriptural answer as to why God saves some and not all human souls. This article involves the thesis that Scripture involves the

following position (that will be clarified in this section): humans are vessels created initially without sin, in a pre-election state before the world. God cannot create sin and therefore cannot create people with sin lest He also create that sin. Sin was not in the world until at least the time of the world being created (Romans 5:13).⁵

This would indicate that God would have known His created humans *before* they were sinful, in a pre-election not-embodied soul state, which would include humans at their earliest state of existence, where conclusions about the structure and nature of each individual human soul could have been settled and determined beforehand (forewete), (a) then (b) (or (b) follows (a), hereafter written as (a) → (b)):

Soul Creation Before Predestination of Souls

An analysis of Scripture will reveal that there is a difference between (a) soul creation on the one hand, and (b) election and predestination on the other, (a) and (b) were different phenomena at different positions in the chain of events, allowing a gap between (a) and (b), in whatever way God might want or need a gap, in order to look at and settle beforehand His pre-election knowledge of the structure of each soul He created, so as to proceed with predestining them accordingly. The (a) pre-election structure of the soul God would have seen forewete in order to (b) place souls within His temporal-physical reality where they best fit based on the structure of each given soul, as determined by God's plan of predestination. Below we will find that this shows us why God only chose some, not all.

Our analysis to this point has brought us to the following argument:

1. Soul creation happened before election and predestination, (a) → (b).
2. Predestination was not based on God knowing the future, but rather on determination beforehand (forewete), based on (i)-type foreknowledge (inception definition) of (a) the first state of the soul, and therein God's pre-election knowledge of the soul before it was elected, predestined, or associated with sin.
3. Conclusion A: God knew (foreknew) the pre-election state of the soul at the time of (a) soul creation, in order to therefore (b) determine beforehand decisions about electing and predestining.

It appears we can also locate this ordering, (a) → (b), in Scripture. First, analyzing Romans 8:29 KJV (“For whom he did foreknow, he *also* did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son . . .”), the word “also” indicates the likelihood of two steps, (a) *also* (b), which could be written, (a) in addition to (b), or (a) → (b). *In addition to* is the dictionary-definition of “also,” and the dictionary-definition of “addition” involves the act of introducing *something else*, which reveals the two-step process of (a) → (b) in verse 29. So, we can see that Scripture contains reference to the (a) → (b) scenario where souls are first created, where there was a state of pre-election of the soul that was known and seen by God, and He determined and settled His conclusions about each soul by what He knew and saw about each soul beforehand (what He knew about each soul before they were (b) elected and predestined).

Romans 8:29 is not the only verse revealing the apparent distinction between (a) and (b), and of a two-step (a) → (b) ordering. To give another example, 1 Peter 1:2 may also reveal the (a) → (b) gap and ordering, where this verse heavily indicates the ordering: one happens, then the next, or (a) *then* (b):

2 Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace unto you, and peace, be multiplied.
(1 Peter 1:2, King James Version [KJV])

This verse explicitly shows the ordering of (a) → (b), how (a) pre-election knowledge of the soul by God was apparently *required* for (b) election and predestination, to happen, where according to what God saw about each soul (“Elect *according to* the foreknowledge”), determined how they were to be predestinated in physical reality.

Merriam-Webster’s dictionary defines the preposition “according to” as (1) in conformity to, (2) as stated or attested by, (3) depending on. Each of these indicate that (a) foreknowledge (forewete) and (b) election are distinct. For example, (3) “depending on,” requires two entities or situations, in order for one to *depend on* the other, y according to x (unless dependency is a situation of self-dependency, but that would mean we would say election depended on election, y according to y, which is not what is referred to in Romans 8:29, or in 1 Peter 1:2). And if I insert the definition of “foreknowledge,” which

above we found should be defined as (i) *pre-election knowledge* of the soul, and if I replace “according to” with its definition (*depending on*) into 1 Peter 1:2, here is how the verse reads:

2 Elect [depending on] the [pre-election knowledge] of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace unto you, and peace, be multiplied. (1 Peter 1:2, KJV)

We again see here, as with Romans 8:29, that Conclusion A, which below will reveal the specific reason why God will only choose some not all, has been resting in Scripture all-along. And also inserting the literal meaning of “forewete” here is how the verse reads:

2 Elect [depending on] the [settling and determining beforehand] of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace unto you, and peace, be multiplied. (1 Peter 1:2, KJV)

Humans are elected and predestined specifically by the pre-election soul knowledge (foreknowledge) God had of souls when (a) He created them.

In discussing Romans 8:29, Grudem, in his *Systematic Theology*, seems to possibly arrive at Conclusion A.

But this verse can hardly be used to demonstrate that God based his predestination on foreknowledge of the fact that a person would believe. The passage speaks rather of the fact that God knew persons (“those he foreknew”), not that he knew some fact about them, such as the fact that they would believe. (Grudem 1994, 676)

Grudem may not have known what he was close to describing in Scripture, which is that souls were created before being predestined, which can further reveal as we will uncover, why God chose some not all souls.

And in looking at and knowing souls as deeply and truthfully as possible in the pre-election state of the soul, the Bible tell us specifically *what* God was looking for in order to make his analysis for consequently performing election (or condemnation) and predestination? The following verse offers that specific answer:

64 But there are some of you that believe not. For Jesus knew from the beginning who they were that believed not, and who should betray him. (John 6:64, KJV)

Notice that this verse indicates that Jesus knew this information *from the beginning*, and that can only mean at one specific time: pre-election knowledge of the soul. There is no reference of knowing *from* the future, or *because of* the future, or by making analysis of supposed free-willed beings decisions of the future. This verse does not state, “For Jesus knew from the beginning *by making use of the future to discover* who they were that believed not.” If you know from the beginning, from the *pre-election* knowledge of the soul, you have no need to *also* know from the future, since the job was already done “from the beginning.” And it is safe to say there is no supporting Scripture that could be referred to as supporting the addition of anything like the italicized addition into John 6:64 earlier in this paragraph.

Scripturally, the definition of “believing [in Christ]” can arguably be (at least partially) attributed to “*and as many as were ordained to eternal life believed,*” (were chosen) (Acts 13:48, KJV). It would seem safe to assert, by the wording of Acts 13:48, that first the choosing (electing) happens, and *after that* the believing. The Creator knows by soul-analysis, before the world, who will and will not believe. The choosing happens at the *beginning* (and where there is only *one* beginning), and that is why Jesus *knows* from the beginning—not from the future. John 6:64 does not mention the future, so why should one believe this verse involves reference to the future, or involves (ii) the clairvoyance use of the word “foreknowledge”? From what has been written in this article to this point, it appears to be cleaner and more sound to just stay with what the Scripture says, not to invent the idea that John 6:64 involves any future concept, and to allow “from the beginning” in John 6:64 to denote the pre-election stage, and phase, of the soul’s existence, from the origin-point of (a) soul creation, before and up to, but not including, when (b) election and predestination occurred. I do not know of any part of the Bible that can be interpreted to say otherwise, and to say like this: “from the beginning God used the future . . .” God knew the soul at that point (“from the beginning”), and He knew all He needed to know about the soul, just by *seeing* it (to use Luther’s direction of translation), where its deep inner being,

its structure and quality in its pre-elected state, could *only* be fully known to God who is omniscient, without having to look into the future, and without having to look beyond the pre-electional point of (a) soul inception. All that was needed was (a) pre-election knowledge of the soul for and before (b) election and predestination. In other words, from the information and knowledge of the structure of the pre-elected soul—perhaps how similar or dissimilar a given soul was to Him—Jesus knew from that point who is to be elected and who is not, just by a deep knowing of the soul’s texture in its first moment. The “believed not” in “who they were that believed not” must point to the earlier event, “chosen not,” or “ordained not,” and thus the “believed not” in 6:64 appears to be a reference to which souls Jesus analyzed, saw (as deeply as can be seen), in the pre-election phase.

God Creates All Souls

The following passage from Scripture could be interpreted to be about the idea that God created *every possible* soul that could exist:

16 For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him:

17 And he is before all things, and by him all things consist. (Colossians 1:16–17, KJV)

Typically, I believe, “all things” is interpreted as meaning something like this: *everything that happens to exist*, or, *all the things that exist in our world*—which is typically believed to be the finite set of items that a human believes exist, will exist, or have existed roughly within or restricted by the bounds of the reality they experience. But “all things” seems better interpreted to mean: *everything exists*, or *everything that possibly could exist does exist*, perhaps in accord with a modal realist interpretation of reality as being all possible modal worlds.⁶ “All things,” *panta* (πάντα), in Colossians 1:16, is the substantive,⁷ and thus points to *panta* denoting the set of *the all*, of the *totality*, that can exist, the complete and maximal set of all possible items in the set of all possible realities, rather than the set of what is believed to exist finitely and not as a totality, leading to a modal realist Calvinism of totality and fullness.

And there seems to be more evidence that Scripture points to something akin to a modal realist model of reality, according to the following simple logical argument, which utilizes verses for each of its premises:

1. God is uncreated.
2. God is unchanging, but God is, in some way, *increasing, growing, or increasing in power and greatness* (John 3:30, αυξανω, αυξάνω, also see Luke 2:52), at an unchanging rate, from eternity to eternity.⁸
3. “Out of the abundance [περισσεύματος, περισσεύματος] of the heart the mouth speaketh” (Matt. 12:34), implies that God is always speaking, from eternity to eternity, being the God of infinite love, of all love (1 John 4:7–8).
4. God creates throughout eternity (Rev. 4:11),
5. When God speaks, realities and/or worlds, and their contents, are created (such as in Genesis 1).
6. Conclusion B: Therefore, God creates infinite sets of items (specifically, all possible worlds, realities, and items, of any sort), creating the *totality* of, and a *fullness* of, all created things.

I call this *fullness Calvinism*. God created the works and lives of people at the (b) step, when He predestined souls, where the (a) step, soul creation, was before (b), where according to the model of this article, (a) soul creation, and all aspects of the pre-election phase of the soul, are independent of anything to do with the soul after the pre-election period—from the (b) phase and after, including all the works of a person during their embodied existence as a living soul in physical reality. Predestining souls, (b), gives an individual soul a path, a life-course, in embodied physical reality.

God’s Undirected Creation of The Totality of Souls

But (a) soul creation, *before* (b) the predestining of souls, appears to not be as carefully directed of a creation process by God as one may at-first assume. If it is not caused by, result of, or tied to, any works or events from the (b) predestination stage and after, in a physical setting of any sort, then what is soul creation based on, and why is it

caused to be *this* way or *that*? I do not believe the Bible gives an answer to that question, and if not, it may be most apropos in doing Bible analysis, to theorize that this lack of mention is not an accident, and there was nothing causing a soul to be this way or that while it was being created and during the pre-election time. At the (a) pre-election phase, there might *not have been anything* in particular at all that God based initial soul creation on, other than knowing and creating every possible one in that infinite set. In other words, God may not have initially, specifically directed souls to be created in any specific way, such as being chosen or unchosen, and rather, He may merely have created the *totality*, the *fullness*, of the set of all possible souls (since He is the Creator of *all* things: *all* that can exist), where in creating every human soul that was, is, or will be created.

In the set of all possible souls, each soul will be non-identical to any other soul, and ultimately the qualities and natures of the souls in the totality of souls will widely vary. If all souls are created—every soul that could possibly exist—after they are created and then predestined, eventually being embodied in worlds over the course of eternity, there would be no reason for God to plan for one soul to have intense suffering during embodiment, and another not to. Since every soul is going to be created *anyway*, it would not be logical for God to direct their creation purposely before the (b) election stage, such as by choosing one to suffer and another to have a life of pleasure. Doing so would be trying to arrange what was already in-place, like trying to help the a rock fall to the earth when dropped—as if it wouldn't happen anyway. All souls that He will create will exist regardless of Him directing their origination to be this way or that, so God directing souls to be a specific way during their creation stage would be overdetermination. If all souls exist, no direction of creating one soul one way and another some other way is needed, since every possible one merely exists by God creating the totality of souls in His being (John 1:13, Eccl. 12:7). The mere *creation of all souls* would seemingly be sufficient for God at the (a) soul-creation step. God created all souls, firstly, to merely *know* them all (in the pre-election state, the first stage of Biblical creation of the human, see note 9 above) throughout eternity,⁹ which would entail it is not the case that God would direct them in any way in the (a) stage. For this reason, the process of soul creation at the pre-election

stage appears to be almost like a quasi-random event, for lack of better words, where the directedness of a person's (b) predestined life-course occurs not with (a) soul creation, but rather later, with (b) election and predestination. This entails that God's creation of souls involved an infinite fairmindedness at the (a) soul-origination phase, and it was not until the (b) step of predestination that Scripture tells us humans were created for salvation or condemnation, by God looking at them, and therein (fore)knowing them, at that initial (a) step, in order to determine beforehand how to elect and predestine all the souls.

Only Some Souls Are Indwelt During Embodiment

And here lies a central issue in the thesis of this article. In the set of all possible souls, across the infinity of souls created in God's creating all the realities from eternity to eternity, there will be a spectrum of *all* the infinite souls, that God would be aware of, which comprises a spectrum of all the souls, in that they will each have a quality of being more similar to God, to less similar. This property-spectrum will lead to an array of souls that are from (0) least like God to (1) most like God, for example—analogous to the densely infinite set of numbers on the number line from 0 to 1. In this spectrum, there will be a changeover-point, some sort of flip in the spectrum, where souls change from being such that they are similar enough to God that He can put His Spirit into them, to the other sort, who are dissimilar enough to Him to where He cannot put His Spirit into them, in order to receive (or not receive) faith while they were embodied in the physical Creation. Consequently, those He deems He can put His spirit into can be chosen for salvation—all of which is determined beforehand, known from the beginning—by only looking at the pre-election knowledge of the soul. Those He will not indwell are too dissimilar to Him, and are not chosen for salvation while embodied.¹⁰ So, it is not God's mistake or cruelty that only *some* souls will be chosen, and the remainder will not be chosen, while embodied. Rather, it is a product of what is involved with the totality of an infinity of items of any sort: they will have spectrums of properties of various sorts.¹¹ God's process of choosing and not choosing souls for salvation is not due to God being a cruel tyrant, but is due to God's infinite love in creating the totality of souls through eternity so that He can save them, via putting His Spirit into them.

Now consider another argument:

1. God created an undirected set of souls, of all souls that possibly could be created.
2. Conclusion A (above).
3. Not all souls *seen* by God in the pre-election (a)-step were determined and settled as being salvific (that is, not all souls were *seen*, by God, to be of the quality capable of being indwelt during embodiment based on their soul-structure at the (a)-step).
4. **Conclusion C:** only some souls will be chosen, since not every soul was capable of being indwelt.

The above reasoning would seem to indicate that humans are predestined based not on choices or works, and it seems we must conclude that before works, the technical *structure*, for lack of better words, of any given soul would reveal if that soul is savable or not (if it is similar enough to God to enable God to put His Spirit into the soul or not to make it salvific). We have already found that, after (a) the creation of souls, God would have looked into them (this is the pre-election soul-knowing that is not based on any works or choices in the future embodied life) and seen that not all of them were such that He could put His Spirit into them, and *ipso facto*, some were known, according to their deep inner structure, that they were not to be chosen, while the rest were seen by God to be chosen, where He could put His Spirit into them and therefore (b) predestine them into physical reality accordingly.

The conclusion above implies that Judgement Day will happen, but also has *already* happened:

18 Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only Son of God. (John 3:18, ESV)

In creating souls *not* based on any future knowledge about their embodied life, and instead only based on the structure and template of the pre-elected soul at the (a)-step, God creates/created the totality of souls without trying to make them any specific way, and by their soul template, He (b) chose each for the most fitting embodied life in a reality among the set of all possible worlds. This is a purely Calvin-

ist scenario, which gives Scriptural explanation for why God chose some not all, and the reasoning above should end the long-standing dislike many have regarding the basics of the Calvinist metaphysics that appears to exist in the Bible.

Conclusion

It is ubiquitously claimed that Calvinism and Wesleyanism are the two ends-of-the-line, and no further, deeper analysis into Scripture exists. For example, Horton writes:

How then can we do justice to both sets of proof texts? We often hear Christians say, “Well, they have their verses, and we have ours”—as if to suggest that the Scriptures are unclear and indeed contradictory. If it is true that there are “eternal security” verses and “Arminian” verses in the Scriptures, then we can no longer consistently affirm that God’s Word tells one story or that it is unified by divine authorship. (Horton 2002, 29)

But as introduced in this article, there is a simple but deeper interpretation, as just uncovered, bringing us to a new interpretation of election and predestination, that takes us deeper into election and predestination theology, shedding light on some of the unknowns of Scripture, such as why God chose some not all.

Notes

1. I say this using the Biblical view where a person has no reincarnation, transmigration of souls, other than the single shift from physical world to afterlife.
2. The dominant view by philosophers today is not that God is eternal-timeless, but that He is temporal and everlasting (see Ganssle 2018, the introductory section and Section 1). But given verses such as Isaiah 57:16, this is a more recent development, as philosophers of earlier times stuck more to the atemporal categorizations of God. Scholars such as Augustine and Aquinas held the eternal-timeless view (ibid.). The theology developed in this article does not depend on any specific philosophy of time, nor is it strengthened or weakened by any existing philosophy of time. I am only concerned with the Scripture I am analyzing, and theologies of time are not relevant for my purposes in this article.
3. *The Modern Dictionary of the English Language*, vol. 2, of 1906 (1894), has “forewitan” in the definition of “forewete.” (p. 2172).

4. Quite interestingly, the Merriam-Webster full definition of “foreknowledge” appears to (somehow) involve both (i) the inception definition of “foreknowledge,” but also the clairvoyance definition. Here is the Merriam definition: “to have previous knowledge of : know beforehand especially by paranormal means or by revelation.” The first is the inception definition, the second is the clairvoyant. So apparently the definitions of this world can move around, moving in inversions.
5. Although Genesis 1:26 tells us that man was created during the first week, it should however be concluded that souls were created, in some way, also before the first week, before the world (and presumably not in physical reality, since souls are born of God, which could mean to come from God, see John 1:13, Eccl. 12:7), due to verses such as Eph. 1:4, and 2 Tim. 1:9. But since Scripture also points to the creation of humans during the first week, in time, Scripture seems to point to a multi-staged creating of humans, by God. We can see Scriptural evidence of this stage-like creation in how the Bible indicates that humans were created in at least three stages: (1) before the world, in that God knew us before the world (we have to be real, in some sense, for Him to know us). (2) During the first week, on the Sixth Day, where the aspect of creating of humans at that stage was making man in the *Imago Dei*, for all humans. And (3), where later, when humans became “living souls” (Gen. 2:7), when the soul becomes associated with and/or inside of, a physical human body. For all of these reasons, I assert that the best way to consider human creation by God is via something more in line with this sort of multi-staged view.
6. See Lewis 2001.
7. See Robertson 1934, 763.
8. This would not lead to there being more God, so to speak. God is infinite, so if He increases at a fixed rate, He increases from infinite to infinite: unchanging in fixed increase.
9. If one takes the Bible for what it says in verses such as Eph. 1:4 or 2 Tim. 1:9, taking it to its logical conclusion, it appears that one has to conclude that human souls are created, but where they exist all through eternity, since God would know them always (He can’t not know them, I would presume, since if that were the case He would not know all things). If this is the case, then God knows all times which exist, in some unfamiliar sense, in the mind of God: “Love believeth all things,” 1 Cor. 13:7 AKJV.
10. This Calvinistic situation does not, however, prohibit God from later (after embodiment) refining all the souls, even the eternally condemned souls, by plucking them out of the flames (Ps. 79:11, Zech. 9:11, 1 Cor. 3:15, Jonah 2:6–7, among others) in order to change (save) them, such as by baptizing them with fire after embodiment (Luke 3:16, 1 Cor. 3:15), to make them like Him, and thus refining them with fire into salvation, unasked (see Isa. 65:1). There is copious Scripture to support the idea that God will save all the souls (1 Tim. 3:2: “And God will have all men to be saved,” KJV), by pulling them out of the fire, out of the pit, out of the state of eternal burning. According to these points, a “Calvinist universalism” would follow, where while some souls are not chosen

at the (a)-step, and living through embodiment as condemned, they nevertheless apparently can be refined and saved (made salvific) after the embodiment, such as via a refinement by fire at the end of the world (Mal. 3:3, Zech. 13:9). Verses such as 1 Cor. 3:15, 1 Cor. 5:5, Luke 3:16, Zech. 9:11, and many other (very little discussed) verses, would seem to indicate that something like such a two-step (before time, and then on the Last Day) “Calvinist universalism” may be the correct interpretation of Scripture.

11. This also can answer why there is sin in the Creation of the perfect God: in the aforementioned spectrum, there must inescapably exist spectrums like this—souls in a descending scale of most to least like God—and thus there will be situations where people, not being God, cannot act perfectly like him, and thus inevitably must sin—where this can get extreme in the souls that are very dissimilar to God, and which by their soul structure must be replete with destructive sinfulness.

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