

- Q20. Did God leave all mankind to perish in the estate of sin and misery?
A20. **God, having out of his mere good pleasure, from all eternity, elected some to everlasting life, did enter into a covenant of grace to deliver them out of the estate of sin and misery, and to bring them into an estate of salvation by a Redeemer.**

Scripture References: Ephesians 1:4-7; Titus 1:2, 3:4-7; Galatians 3:21-22; Romans 3:20-22, 8:28-30; John 17:3-6

- DQ1: Who decided to initiate the redemptive ministry?
- DQ2: When was the decision regarding the redemptive ministry made?
- DQ3: According to whose desire did the redemptive ministry unfold?
- DQ4: Who completes the redemptive ministry?
- DQ5: What is given to the redeemed?
- DQ6: What is eternal or everlasting life?
- DQ7: To what kind of covenant did God enter with the elect?
- DQ8: What does it mean to be an elect?
- DQ9: What does God give to the elect?
- DQ10: What is the covenant of grace?
- DQ11: Who is this Redeemer?
- DQ12: Why is a Redeemer necessary?
- DQ13: What is meant by the estate of salvation?

Notes:

We have seen the exceeding sinfulness and misery of sin previously. We also learned that man has reached a point of no return due to his sin resulting in total depravity. What we are about to learn here is how God tirelessly planned and worked to redeem bring totally undeserving sinners. What an amazing thought!

God, in His good pleasure, did not leave the eternally condemned sinners to perish but had prepared a way for such sinners to receive eternal life. This is the good news of hope and salvation in Jesus Christ.

It is important for us to understand that it is God who initiates, works and completes our redemption. God gave man the covenant of life (works) to give life to man. Yet, man chose to violate the covenant and sinned resulting in man's destruction and misery. Man went off in his own way by turning his back against God. The way of man led him to eternal damnation and

punishment. No man could avoid destruction and misery of hell nor extricate himself from such conditions. Indeed, as we have already stated, our redemption is wholly within the control of God and is possible only by His election and grace.

As we already studied, the covenant of life (works) was God's way of providing life to man. God's purpose was for man to have life, dwell with Him eternally, and to establish man to inherit the Kingdom of God as lawful heirs with Christ. Instead, what God was forced to do because of His own requirement of justice was to bring punishment and death upon the covenant breaker. Yet, it would be a mistake to think that the covenant of life caused such a terrible thing to man.

God, so lovingly and out of His agape love, gave His precious breath of life to man and all that man did return to God was the pain of betrayal of His love. Thankfully, God's love for man never died and has opened and showed a way sinner could come to Him to dwell with Him.

There is nothing man could do to aid God at the time of creation. Man's very existence was totally by God's grace and His own doing. Sinful man also is in no position whatsoever to do anything about his own redemption. All he can do is simply to wait for the hand of God to save him. Man is utterly and totally dependent upon God for his salvation. Just as it was totally the work of God at the first creation, it is totally the work of God in His re-creation of a sinful man into a righteous man. This is what we call grace of God.

The Bible tells us that God has planned to bring sinful man into salvation and give him life from before the foundation or creation of the world. This is both surprising and not surprising. It is surprising because God would do so much to restore the relationship between God and sinful man who so thoroughly betrayed Him. It is not surprising at all in the sense that God's redemption effort only proves that God's original purpose and plan for man never changed. It also shows that God was not caught off guard regarding the need for a redemptive plan for man.

God personally ensures His election is firmly and finally conferred upon man. Consequently, God's election leads to eternal life without an exception. But, do we really understand "eternal life"? It is referring to a life of eternity as in time? Often, we understand eternal life as a time concept. But, eternal life cannot be understood in the context of time. What is the true meaning of eternal life? Let us consider the definition of it given to us by Jesus Christ in His prayer to the Father in John 17:3. Please write out the entire verse below:

What is the meaning of eternal life? Is it a time concept? Or is it a relational concept? Indeed, it is essential for us to understand the distinction between eternity and eternal life. Eternity is a time concept. Eternal life, according to Jesus Christ, is a relational concept. Therefore, redemption is a relational concept. We are redeemed not so much at a particular time but by entering into the relationship with God in and through Jesus Christ. Time is meaningless to God. God made time for finite man. Time, among other things, teaches man that he is indeed finite. Redemption is expressed not in terms of time but in terms of relationship. It is in and through Christ Jesus, we have relationship with God, i.e., salvation. How can you have this relationship? By knowing God and his Son Jesus Christ!

So, an appropriate question is: Do you have eternal life today? How did you come to have eternal life?

Your ability to answer these two questions is critical. QA20 describes a two-prong approach of God's redemption plan. First, God chooses His elect or those He will redeem. Second, God is in total control of the entire process of God's redemption plan. This is why to be chosen is to receive God's grace.

Let us revisit the Five Points of Calvinism again.

- Total Depravity
- Unconditional Election
- Limited Atonement
- Irresistible Grace
- Perseverance of the Saints

God's election is unconditional. This is why it is secure, firm and final. "Election" means "an act of the sovereign God, from before creation, to choose those He had in mind to redeem, not on the basis of worthiness of man but out of His deep love and compassion."

To talk about election is to say that there is a limit in terms of who will be counted in the number of the redeemed. It also clearly teaches that no one can enter into redemption by his or her own actions or works.

Think deeply about God's election. God's election is totally dependent upon His decision. We enjoy salvation because we have been elected. Election explains God's grace very well. Everyone is equally undeserving of God's grace. Original sin has infected every human being and everyone is born a sinner. No one can qualify for salvation. Thus, one cannot boast about one's election or salvation as if he or she had anything to do with it. The person who is not chosen is no less worthy than those who have been chosen. The choice belongs to the sovereign God of grace. Therefore, those who are in Christ Jesus must not be boastful about them. (Ephesians 2:8) Rather, humility in sin order. Think of God's grace and be thankful.

Jesus told the disciples that they did not choose Him but that He chose them. (John 15:16) Also mediate Ephesians 1:4-5 deeply and write down what the Lord is telling you below:

Many are troubled by the doctrine of election. Why is it that God would choose one but not the other? What is forgotten when the question is asked is that no one deserves salvation. No one is qualified. Therefore, punishment is in order for sinners. Yet, for those who receive forgiveness, God's grace is shown.

God's election and grace always go hand in hand. What is God's grace? "Grace" means "those, who are utterly undeserving and unqualified, would avoid eternal punishment and enjoy God's

goodness.” In short, grace is receiving something wholly undeserved. Mercy, on the other hand, is not receiving something absolutely deserved.

God gave the covenant of grace to His elect. What is the covenant of grace? The covenant of grace is a unilateral covenant/promise of God which purports to save man after man fell into sin. The focus of this covenant is on the person and work of Christ Jesus. So, the covenant of grace is referring to salvation by faith in Jesus Christ. Furthermore, God’s grace cannot be explained or understood apart from Christ’s incarnation.