

## Spiritual History of Jehovah's Saints

Psalm 66:16

*I will declare what God has done for my soul.*

### Part 2:

#### What God the Father Has Done for My Soul

The salvation of Jehovah's saints involves all three Persons in the Holy Trinity. Our salvation is of God the *Father* with regard to its *origination*, and of God the *Son* with regard to its *acquisition*, and of God the *Spirit* with regard to its *application*.

Most of the deeds attributed to God the Father in the salvation of His people were performed by Him before He created the physical universe:

- “before the foundation of the world” (Ephesians 1:4; 1 Peter 1:20);
- “before time began” (2 Timothy 1:9; Titus 1:2 – “before eternal times” in Greek text);
- “from eternity” (Acts 15:18);
- “from the beginning” (2 Thessalonians 2:13) – or more precisely ...
- “from everlasting, from the beginning, before there was ever an earth” (Proverb 8:23).

These deeds of God the Father considered below, being from eternity, are therefore eternal, and are not to be considered as chronological in order. While there is evidently an order to them in God's mind (as evidenced in Romans 8:28-30 & 1 Peter 1:2, e.g.), the order of all of them is not cited in Holy Scriptures. I therefore will not attempt to order them.

But of this I am absolutely certain, that from eternity ...

**I. God the Father foreknew me.** When I say He *foreknew* me, I do not mean He had *prescience* or *prior knowledge* about me. God has that knowledge of everyone because of His omniscience. For “God ... knows all things” (1 John 3:20). Nevertheless, He will say to many at the final judgment, “I never knew you” (Matthew 7:23; cp. 25:12).

In contrast to the people whom God “*never knew*” are “His people whom He *foreknew*” – knew from eternity (Romans 11:2). He *foreknew* them in the sense of saying “You are mine!” and entering into an intimate relationship with them (see “knew” in Matthew 1:25a) before the foundation of the world. This resulted in them being said to be “elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father” (1 Peter 1:2).

And “whom He *foreknew*, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren” (Romans 8:29f). Since God the Father *foreknew* me, I was chosen to salvation

in Jesus Christ and predestined to be just like Him, and am presently being conformed to Jesus Christ.

**II. God the Father loved me.** I here cite two texts: Jeremiah 31:3 and John 17:24.

1. God tells His saints in Jeremiah 31:3, “Yes, I have loved you with an everlasting love ....” His love to me is “everlasting” not only into the *future* but also into the *past*. God will love me when time is ended because He loved me before time began and in every moment in time.

2. Jesus Christ acknowledged in John 17:24, “Father, ... You loved Me before the foundation of the world.” Since God loved Christ before the foundation of the world, and since I was chosen and accepted in Christ before the foundation of the world (Ephesians 1:4-6), God also loved me in Christ before the foundation of the world.

Therefore, since God's love to me is eternal, there has never been, and never will be, a moment when God hated me.

**III. God the Father purposed my salvation.** All “those who love God” are “the called according to His purpose” (Romans 8:28).

God's *purpose* is His eternal and immutable decree. With regard to His people it is called “the purpose of God according to election” (Romans 9:11) and “the eternal purpose which He accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord” (Ephesians 3:11). Accordingly “He 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 given to us in Christ Jesus before time began” (2 Timothy 1:9).

God in old eternity purposed to save His people, and in time saved them *on purpose*. He left nothing to “chance” or dependent on them. All whom God purposed to save from eternity are considered by Him to be eternally *foreknown*, *predestined*, *called*, *justified*, and *glorified* (Romans 8:28-30).

Since I love God, I am assured that He from eternity purposed all things to work together for my good.

**IV. God the Father predestined me.** God's *predestination* is His “foreordination or predetermination” – “whatever Your hand and Your purpose *determined before* to be done” (Acts 4:28).

God's *predestination* is directly related to His *foreknowledge* in Romans 8:29: “whom He *foreknew*, He also *predestined*.” God's foreknowledge is therefore the ground not only of *election* (as in 1 Peter 1:2) but also of *predestination*. God *foreknew* His people before

the foundation of the world, and then chose them to salvation and predestined the blessings He would bestow to them. For example:

1. God predestined me to be *His adopted child* (Ephesians 1:5): “having predestined us to adoption as sons by Jesus Christ to Himself”.

I am by nature a child of the devil Satan (John 8:44). But God predestined that I would be delivered from Satan and become His adopted son, and that I would know Him as “Abba, Father” (Romans 8:15 / Galatians 4:6).

2. God predestined me to be *Christ-like* (Romans 8:29): “whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren.”

Christ is perfect; His people are predestined to be like Him. The predestined are therefore told, “Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him” (1 John 3:2).

3. God predestined me to be *called, justified, and glorified* (Romans 8:30): “Moreover whom He predestined, these He also called [in salvation]; whom He called, these He also justified [declared righteous]; and whom He justified, these He also glorified [transformed to be like Christ in His glory].”

4. God predestined me to an *eternal inheritance in heaven* (Ephesians 1:11): “In Christ also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestined according to the purpose of Him who works all things according to the counsel of His will.”

**V. God the Father chose me.** All whom God foreknew before the foundation of the world were also then by Him singled out from the rest of humanity and by Him decreed to be sanctified and justified, and saved. This glorious doctrine is emphasized in two New Testament texts.

1. Divine election to *holiness and righteousness* is set forth to all the saints and faithful in Christ Jesus in Ephesians 1:1-4: “... the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ ... chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love.” Regarding “holy and without blame”:

i. God chose His people to be “holy”, or *sanctified*. They are by Him separated from the world and consecrated to Himself.

ii. God chose His people to be “without blame”, or *justified*. God declares them to be righteous and not under legal condemnation.

2. Divine election to *salvation* is set forth to all

believers in 2 Thessalonians 2:13-14: “But we are bound to give thanks to God always for you, brethren beloved by the Lord, because God from the beginning chose you for salvation through sanctification by the Spirit and belief in the truth, to which He called you by our gospel, for the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.” Here we see that God not only chose His people to salvation but also predestined the means by which they would be saved.

God’s elect therefore rightly praise Him in confessing to Him, “Blessed is the man You choose, and cause to approach You” (Psalm 65:4).

**VI. God the Father highly favored me to be eternally joined to Christ** (Ephesians 1:4-7): God’s predestined and chosen people are taught that “He made us accepted in the Beloved. In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins.”

All who are in Christ from before the foundation of world have been graced with the blessings found in Him. For none in Christ is unredeemed, unforgiven, unholy, unrighteous, or otherwise in danger of damnation.

This is true because all such blessings are “through Christ’s blood” – through the blood of “the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world” (Revelation 13:8). In God’s decree from eternity, all who are “accepted in the Beloved” are “approved in Christ” (Romans 16:10) and “complete in Him” (Colossians 2:10).

These are blessings saints cite when we say, “I will declare what God the Father has done for my soul.”

When a saint enumerates what God the Father has done for his soul, he declares that God the Father foreknew me; loved me; purposed my salvation; chose me to salvation; predestined me to be His adopted child, to be Christ-like, and to be called and justified and glorified; and highly favored me to be eternally joined to Christ.

– Daniel E. Parks