

Appointed to Condemnation?

by Leon King

The other part of this article speaks about God's choosing some out the masses of mankind unto salvation. What about the ones who were not chosen to salvation? Several passages of Scripture give us insight into the present condition and eternal destiny of those not chosen to salvation before the world was.

These words are very unsavory to the condemned of the world, but are an encouragement to those who are the Lord's sheep. Arthur Pink wrote a chapter in his book, *The Sovereignty of God*, on the subject of reprobation. His book was originally published by I. C. Herendeen in 1930. It was republished by Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, Michigan, in 1984. Another publisher, The Banner of Truth published the book at a later date and left out the chapter on reprobation.

This omission could have been an oversight, but the writer of this article doubts that it was. Rather, it reflects a general trend in the thinking of the general populace. Fewer and fewer people appear to believe the truth of the God of the Bible. Instead, many have "created gods in their own image and after their likeness." Few, in our day, really believe such verses as these:

Isaiah 45:7 *I form the light, and create darkness: I make peace, and create evil: I the LORD do all these things.*

Amos 3:6 *Shall a trumpet be blown in the city, and the people not be afraid? shall there be evil in a city, and the LORD hath not done it?*

We have seen that God chose some to salvation. This fact alone leaves us with the truth that he did not choose others. The names of those chosen in Christ were written in the Lamb's book of life before the foundation of the world; while those who were not chosen were omitted. The Scriptures point to positive reprobation and not merely that some men were not chosen to salvation. Here is a passage which states this truth:

1 Peter 2:7-8 *Unto you therefore which believe he is precious: but unto them which be disobedient, the stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner, And a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence, even to them which stumble at the word, being disobedient: **whereunto also they were appointed.***

Jesus Christ, the savior of sinners, is precious to the believers. But, for those whose who are disobedient and unbelieving, He is a stone of stumbling, a rock of offence. The disobedient stumble, strike against, beat against the word of God. They do not believe it. They do not want to believe it. They will never believe it. When God's word is presented to them in such truth that it cannot be denied, they stumble at it and try to make it say something which it does not say. From a human standpoint, we wonder why men hear but will not believe the truth. The irony of this is that unrepentant wicked men and women were appointed to this stumbling and beating against the word of God. They are reprobates – being reprobated by God. What do we mean by the term "reprobate?"

The word reprobate comes from a Greek word which is also translated as "castaway and rejected" in our King James Bible. Our text from 1 Peter 2:7-8 says "*whereunto also they were appointed.*"

No less than six times is this Greek word translated appoint in our Bible. A list of the other five times the word "appoint" is used from this same Greek word follows:

Mt 24:51 And shall cut him asunder, and **appoint** him his portion with the hypocrites: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

Lu 12:46 The lord of that servant will come in a day when he looketh not for him, and at an hour when he is not aware, and will cut him in sunder, and will **appoint** him his portion with the unbelievers.

1Th 5:9 For God **hath** not **appointed** us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ,

2Ti 1:11 Whereunto I am **appointed** a preacher, and an apostle, and a teacher of the Gentiles.

Heb 1:2 Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath **appointed** heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds;

The *Oxford English Dictionary* defines the word "appoint" as: To come, or bring matters, to a point; agree, arrange, settle. To come to a point about a matter in discussion, to agree, settle, arrange definitely. To bring oneself to the point or resolution; to make up one's mind, resolve, determine.

Someone decided about the persons reprobated. That someone was God. God is the author of both election and reprobation. Those who are disobedient - who stumble at God's word, are appointed or arranged to this condemnation. Men may not like this arrangement, but it is true nevertheless. Were this passage in First Peter an isolated one, we might have cause to doubt. It is not the only place where this truth is set forth.

The very same idea is stated in the second chapter of Second Peter where the subject is false prophets and false teachers. In the Old Testament era, false prophets arose, so the Holy Spirit warned us of the church age that false teachers would arise among us bringing in damnable heresies. We are told that many would follow their pernicious ways. Pernicious means to have the quality of destroying; or tending to destroy, kill, or injure. Let us read the first three verses of Second Peter 2.

2 Peter 2:1-3 *But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction. And many shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of. And through covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you: whose judgment now of a long time lingereth not, and their damnation slumbereth not.*

How does this fit in with our theme of reprobation? As we read on in chapter 2 of Second Peter, we come to verse twelve which says:

*But these, as natural brute beasts, **made to be taken and destroyed**, speak evil of the things that they understand not; and shall utterly perish in their own corruption;*

This verse is too plain to be misunderstood. God reprobated these false prophets and false teachers. They were made to be taken and destroyed. In other words, they were created for this very purpose. This thought agrees with the writer of the Proverbs:

Proverbs 16:4 *The LORD hath made all things for himself: yea, even the wicked for the day of evil.*

There are two kinds of people in the world. Some are called "vessels of mercy" while others are named "vessels of wrath." All, whether a vessel of mercy or vessel of wrath came from the same lump. That means they came from the same source; Adam. The vessels of mercy shall see God's glory for they were prepared unto glory. On the other hand, the vessels of wrath were said to be fitted to destruction. Let us read from Romans 9:

Romans 9:21-24 *Hath not the potter power over the clay, of **the same lump to make one vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonour?** What if God, willing to shew his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much longsuffering the **vessels of wrath fitted to destruction:** And that he might make known the riches of his glory on **the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory,** Even us, whom he hath called, not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles?*

What shall we say? Is God unrighteous? As Paul said, "God forbid." May it not be. God has compassion on whom he will have compassion – He shews mercy on whom he wills, while he hardens others.

Still not convinced? Let's take a look at Jude 1:4. This speaks of the evil men who creep in among God's people unawares.

Jude 1:4 *For there are certain men crept in unawares, **who were before of old ordained to this condemnation**, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ.*

These filthy dreamers who defile the flesh and despise dominion creep into the Lord's churches. These are the seed of the serpent. All the while, they know nothing of Bible truth and spiritual things, but constantly deny plain statements of Scripture and try to beguile unstable souls. Notice, dear reader, God says they "*were before of old ordained to this condemnation.*" What does that mean? It means exactly what it says. These wicked men were created for the day of evil. These vessels of wrath were fitted to destruction. They were made to be taken and destroyed.

These are spots in the church's feasts of charity. They are carried about by every wind of doctrine; they are "without fruit, twice dead, plucked up by the roots." They are like the troubled sea ever casting up mire. Their glory is in their shame. They are wandering stars – never stable – totally undependable. They are murmurers, complainers, walking after their own lusts – who speak great swelling words. They are admirers of men's persons because it provides gain for them. These separate themselves – sensual. They have not the Spirit of God – for they are dead in sins. They follow their own ungodly lusts or desires. These are brute beasts. They know nothing spiritually, but what they do know – naturally, in these things, they corrupt themselves. These are the reprobates appointed to disobedience, unbelief, and destruction.

A young acquaintance recently asked the writer, "How can I know for sure that I am one of God's elect? Or, one of the reprobates?" "The answer is very simple," the writer replied, "just look at the plain statements of the Scriptures and see which category you fall into." These passages were pointed out to him:

John 3:16 *For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.*

John 3:18 *He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.*

John 3:36 *He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him.*

Mark 16:16 *He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.*

When it was pointed out to him that these passages contained a positive side and a negative side, he began to see. "These are not offers; they are simple statements of fact," we said. Those who believe are not condemned. Their belief of the truth is positive proof that their names are written in the Lamb's book of life from before the foundation of the world. In other words, the believers are the elect. They are not elect because they are believers, but they are believers because they are of God's elect. The negative side is: Those who do not believe are damned. They are condemned already. Their names are not written in the Lamb's book of

life from before the foundation of the world. They were appointed to this condemnation.