

Election

According to Catechism
reference 4.5

Excerpt From: New Apostolic Church. "Catechism of the New Apostolic Church."

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Election?

- “Election is rooted in God's will to call forth individual human beings or groups for a purpose determined by Him, thereby making them accountable to Him.”
- Excerpt From: New Apostolic Church. “Catechism of the New Apostolic Church.”

Election in the Old Testament

“Already in the creation we see a reference to divine election, which is linked to a responsibility resulting from it. Out of all His creatures, God elected man and gave him the task of making the earth subject to him. The special position man has been granted is clear from the Wisdom of Solomon 2: 23: "For God created man to be immortal, and made him to be an image of his own eternity." In the course of the Old Testament plan of salvation, the significance of this election is especially apparent in the case of Noah, Abraham, and the people of Israel.”

Election in the Old Testament

- “When God decided to eradicate mankind from the earth (Genesis 6: 1-8), He promised to deliver Noah. Noah made this election sure by doing all that God commanded him to do. As a result, Noah and his family—and thereby the human race—were saved from destruction.
- **Abraham** was elected so that all the families of the earth would be blessed through him (Genesis 12: 3). God's promises to him were passed on to Isaac.
- Of the latter's two sons, Esau, as the firstborn, should have been the rightful recipient of the blessing, however, **God elected Jacob and blessed him** (Genesis 28: 13-15). This shows that no one can lay claim to God's grace of election and that it cannot be comprehended by human understanding.”

Election - Old Testament

- “The people of Israel came forth out of the twelve sons of Jacob. God called them to become the people of His covenant: "For you are a holy people to the Lord your God; the Lord your God has chosen you to be a people for Himself, a special treasure above all the peoples on the face of the earth. The Lord did not set His love on you nor choose you because you were more in number than any other people, for you were the least of all the peoples; but because the Lord loves you" (Deuteronomy 7: 6-8). The **origin of election is thus God's love.**
- From among the people of Israel, God also elected certain individuals who proclaimed His will, and who had been predestined by Him to fulfil particular tasks. These included Moses and Joshua, as well as several judges, kings, and prophets.”

Election in the New Testament

- “Jesus elected the Apostles from among His disciples and sent them to all the nations in order to teach and baptise (Matthew 28: 19-20; Luke 6: 13).
- The Lord elects the people of the new covenant from among both Jews and Gentiles.
- Those who make their election sure accept the gospel believingly and allow themselves to be baptised with water and the Holy Spirit.
- In 1 Peter 2: 9 we read as follows concerning the people of the new covenant: "But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvellous light."
- From this it also follows that all those who belong to the people of the new covenant are obliged to bear witness—in both word and conduct—of the favours they have received from God (2 Peter 1: 10-11).”

God's free election by grace

- **“Election is a gift of God** that is either accepted in faith or rejected in unbelief.
- **No one can earn election through deeds**, much less lay claim to it. It cannot be explained by reason. Divine election is a mystery of God that can only be grasped “in faith. God grants election to those whom He has foreordained (Romans 9: 10-20).
- **Human beings are not forced to accept or secure God's election.** It is the individual's own decision whether or not to believe and heed the divine call and faithfully fulfil the tasks assigned to him.
- In this respect, there exists an area of tension—which cannot be resolved—between God's act of election through grace (which is independent of human conduct) and man's free decision to accept or reject God's election.
- God elects human beings for their own salvation as well as for the salvation of others. They are chosen to work along in His plan of salvation. Whenever God elects someone, this election is linked to a task or purpose.”

God's free election by grace

- **“Therefore those who have been baptised and who profess Jesus Christ as their Lord and Saviour are called and elected to be Christian.** They are to spread the gospel. Beyond that, those Christians who are reborn out of water and the Spirit have fulfilled the condition for becoming firstlings. It is from this group that the bride of Christ is prepared in order to comprise the royal priesthood in the kingdom of peace (see 10.6).
- By no means can the doctrine of election be taken to mean that an individual's actions are predetermined from the start, or that a human being has no decision-making power at all [2]. Rather, this freedom of choice is an essential element of man's being. Likewise it cannot be concluded that the election of one person to the bridal congregation signifies the rejection of those who have not been chosen for this purpose. Rather, all human beings have access to future salvation—all the way up to and including eternal fellowship with God in the new creation.”

- “Acceptance of one's election in faith means following Jesus Christ conscientiously. Election also has eschatological effects: when Jesus Christ establishes His kingdom of peace as the King of all kings, the royal priesthood will proclaim the glad tidings of salvation in Christ to all human beings. Those who participate in the first resurrection are elected to this purpose (Revelation 20: 6).
- Human beings demonstrate that they have made this election sure by accepting this grace in belief and by remaining loyal to God and His work.
- Election is an act of God's love. He remains faithful to His elect. No external influences are capable of separating them from the love of God (Romans 8: 29, 37-39).”

Summary

- “Election is founded upon the will of God. God calls individuals for a specific purpose decided by Him. Out of all His creatures, God has chosen human beings and given them a commission, namely to subdue the earth. ”
- “No one can lay claim to God's electing grace, nor can it be comprehended by human contemplation. This is demonstrated by many examples in the Old Testament. (4.5.1; 4.5.3)
- Out of the circle of His disciples Jesus called the Apostles and sent them into the entire world with the commission to teach and baptise. God then elected the people of the new covenant from among both Jews and Gentiles. (4.5.2)
- Election is a gift of God's love, which is either accepted in faith or rejected in unbelief. This freedom to choose is intrinsic to man's being. Acceptance of one's election in faith signifies following Jesus Christ diligently. (4.5.3)

Summary

- God chooses human beings for their own salvation as well as for the salvation of others. Whenever God elects someone, there is a certain task or purpose associated with it. (4.5.3)”
- “Election does not mean that the actions of human beings are predetermined. (4.5.3)
- [2] Election is frequently associated with the doctrine of predestination. Predestination was at various times interpreted as divine providence of fate upon an individual human being. However, predestination does not relate in a definitive way to the course of human life on earth, but to the fact that God has predestined human beings for salvation.”
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Questions and Answers

253. What is the basis for our election?

- Election is always rooted in God's will.
- No one can influence the decision of God.

254. Why does God elect people?

- God calls people or groups of people out of humanity because He has a specific purpose in mind for them, He thereby makes them responsible to Him.

255. Are there examples of election in the Old Testament?

- Yes. Already in the creation there is a reference to divine election: of all His creatures, God elected man and gave him the commission to make the earth subject to him.
- Many other examples of election can be found in the Old Testament:
 - **Noah** was elected to build the Ark
 - **Abraham**, Isaac, and Jacob were elected so that all families of the earth would be blessed through them.
 - **Moses** was elected to lead the people of Israel out of slavery in Egypt, and Joshua was elected to bring them to the Promised Land.
 - The people of of **Israel** had also been elected: - Deuteronomy 7:6-8 also Wisdom of Solomon 2:23

256. Are there examples of election in the New Testament?

- From among His disciples, Jesus elected the Apostles and sent them into all the world with the commission to teach and baptise. Thus the election of the people of God is no longer limited to Israel, but incorporates all who believe in Jesus, whether Jew or Gentile. Thus the people of new covenant has been chosen by God (cf. 1 Peter 2:9)
- Peter was elected to a special function in the church, namely the Petrine office.

257. Can anyone lay claim to election by God?

- No. No one has any right to God's election because it is rooted in God's free decision.
- Election cannot be comprehended with human reason.

258. What does election signify from the perspective of the gospel?

- From the perspective of the gospel, election is a gift of God's love.
- Human beings have the freedom to decide whether to accept or reject this gift.
- Election by God does not mean that the actions of human beings are predetermined.

259. What is the result of accepting this election?

- God elects human beings for their own salvation as well as the salvation of others.
- Whenever God elects anyone, there is a certain task or responsibility associated with it. Acceptance of one's election in faith means following Jesus Christ, the author of salvation, conscientiously. This involves arranging one's life in accordance with the gospel.
- Election also has effects for the future; when Jesus Christ establishes His Kingdom of peace, the royal priesthood will proclaim the glad tidings of salvation in Christ to all human beings. Those who partake in the first resurrection are elected to this task.