

Hebrews 4:7-13

The concern of the writer of Hebrews for those who have not come to a saving faith in Messiah Jesus is captured in the repeat of the warning from chapter 3:7-8. There is a limit to God's offer of salvation. Continued, repeated, rejection can result in one not being able to respond to the gospel as the Spirit of God would no longer convict - John 16:8.

In verses 7-11 the writer exhorts those who are "professors" but not "possessors" to put their trust wholly in the Lord. In verses 12-13 the Word of God will penetrate to the depths of man's being and He who knows everything will be your judge in the last day.

7 Again, he limiteth a certain day, saying in David, To day, after so long a time; as it is said, To day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts.

"limiteth" is ὁρίζω horizo, hor-id'-zo

to mark out or bound ("horizon"), to appoint, decree, specify:--declare, determine

"limiteth" is the same word as "predestined" without the "pre"

"Predestined" is προορίζω proorizo, pro-or-id'-zo

"to limit in advance, i.e. predetermine:--determine before, ordain, predestinate."

What should we understand about God "limiting" and "predestinating"?

First, see the last page **PREDESTINE (and adoption) AS USED IN THE BIBLE** to consider how "predestine" is used in the Bible.

Second, the "limit" here is that God's patience is not endless. Continued rejection will result in God essentially saying "Okay, have it your way." Salvation is not something that should be put off. When an individual understands the gospel the need is to respond immediately. There are at least two reasons for this. 1) we have no guarantee of tomorrow and 2) God's spirit could be removed from His pre-salvation work.

2 Corinthians 6:2 *(For he saith, I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succoured thee: behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.)*

James 4:13-14 *Go to now, ye that say, To day or to morrow we will go into such a city, and continue there a year, and buy and sell, and get gain: (14) Whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away.*

Genesis 6:3 *And the LORD said, My spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh: yet his days shall be an hundred and twenty years.*

Psalms 106 Vs. 10 - 15; 21-25

8 For if Jesus had given them rest, then would he not afterward have spoken of another day.

Jesus is Joshua and rest did not come through Israel going into the promised land.

God speaks of a future day when the "rest" would be provided.

9 There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God.

"People of God" in the context refers to the Jewish people, His "chosen people." Being Jewish, though, does not provide passageway into God's salvation and, ultimately, His kingdom.

The context of the passage is a warning to Jewish people to come to true, saving faith. They are being told that the opportunity still is open (see Hebrews 4:1).

Rest is spiritual and speaks of salvation - Matthew 11:28-29.

"Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls."

10 For he that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God *did* from his.

God resting (doing no more work) after working for six days is used as an illustration for us that we need to cease from trusting in our own works if we want to be saved.

Salvation is through faith not works - Ephesians 2:8-9

11 Let us labour therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief.

Labour σπουδαζω spoudazo {spoo-dad'-zo} - 1) to hasten 2) to exert one's self, give diligence

Labour doesn't mean we work to get saved. One needs to be diligent in finding out how one enters into God's rest and then make sure it is done. An unsaved person is exhorted to make sure he gets saved. Matthew 7:13-14; Luke 13:23-24

"Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it."

"Then said one unto him, Lord, are there few that be saved? And he said unto them, Strive to enter in at the strait gate: for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able."

12 For the word of God *is* quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and *is* a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

Psalm 138:2 - *"I will worship toward thy holy temple, and praise thy name for thy lovingkindness and for thy truth: for thou hast magnified thy word above all thy name."*

The Word of God is foundational in its importance in the work of evangelism. The Word of God is:

Living - 1 Peter 1:23; John 6:63

"Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever."

"It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life."

Active - the Word of God is always doing something

Sharper - it is the most potent weapon available

Piercing - the word of God alone is able to speak to the spirit.

1 Thessalonians 5:23: *"And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ."*

Soul is the mind and emotions. Marrow is where the life resides not in the joints.

Discerning - the Word of God can bring a person into confrontation with their innermost thoughts and intents. They are brought under conviction through the Word of God.

13 Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight: but all things *are* naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do.

God sees and knows everything (omniscient)

1 Chronicles 28:9 *"...for the LORD searcheth all hearts, and understandeth all the imaginations of the thoughts: if thou seek him, he will be found of thee; but if thou forsake him, he will cast thee off for ever."*

1 Kings 8:39 *"Then hear thou in heaven thy dwelling place, and forgive, and do, and give to every man according to his ways, whose heart thou knowest;"*

Revelation 20:11-12 *"And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works."*

PREDESTINE (and adoption) AS USED IN THE BIBLE

Predestination, *proorizo* (bold in the verses) in the Greek, is used only six times in the New Testament.

Acts 4:28 *"to do whatever Your hand and Your purpose **determined** before to be done.*

This has to do with God's plan for Jesus and has nothing to do with believers.

1 Corinthians 2:7 *But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, the hidden wisdom which God **ordained** before the ages for our glory,*

This has to do with God's plan of the Gospel, the hidden wisdom, being revealed at a certain point in time and has nothing to do with the "predestination" of believers.

The other four verses are the only times "predestination" is used in regard to believers. We will start with the two in Ephesians.

It is important to study *predestination* and *adoption* together as both are closely united. Birth and adoption are two different concepts in both the physical and spiritual realm. Birth gives life whereas adoption affects an already existing life. Adoption in the Greek means *son placed* not *son made*.

Ephesians 1:5 *having **predestined** us **to adoption** as sons by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will,*

Notice from the first four verses of chapter one that believers are being addressed. People that are already saved. Verse 5 says we are predestined to adoption **as sons**. We are predestined **not to be** sons but **as sons**, we already are sons and as sons we are predestined. We are predestined to adoption.

Galatians 4:4-5 *But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, To redeem them that were under the law, that **we might receive the adoption of sons.***

This speaks of the same truth that because we are sons we will receive the adoption - "adoption of sons".

What is the adoption? **Romans 8:23** tells us what the adoption is: *Not only that, but we also who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, eagerly waiting for the adoption, the redemption of our body.*

Adoption is the redemption of our bodies. In other words all believers, "we...who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, are "predestined" to have a glorified body one day. This is eternal security. It takes place when we are resurrected.

Ephesians 1:11 *In Him 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,*

The context of "predestined" in this verse (see verse 10 also) is that believers end result is already established along with an inheritance. The text here is speaking of what God had planned, predestined, for those that are believers, in the future.

Romans 8:29 *For whom He foreknew, He also **predestined** to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren.*

This verse is a close parallel to Eph. 1:5 and Romans 8:23. Notice those *whom He foreknew*, obviously speaking of believers, God has "predestined" to *be conformed to the image of His Son*. That means we will have a body like his and be like him (this doesn't mean we become God). Our body will be perfect like his, our thoughts will be perfect like his, etc.

Romans 8:30 *Moreover whom He **predestined**, these He also called; whom He called, these He also justified; and whom He justified, these He also glorified.*

God has "predestined" believers thus he has called them, justified them, and will glorify them. This verse does not teach that we are "predestined" to be saved. Believers are "predestined" to be glorified one day and God has called, justified, and glorified them. It would be wrong to equate "call" with predestination. There are plenty of verses that say God has "called" all men and yet not all respond. There are passages where men resist the conviction of the Holy Spirit. They were "called" but didn't respond positively.

Predestination, when it applies to people, has to do with believers being one day glorified. It has nothing to do with unbelievers being predestined to be saved. Yet, this is what many believe. A study of the above verses would argue against this belief. Predestine(d) or predestinate should always be used in the way the Bible uses it, speaking of believers and their ultimate destiny which is heaven and their glorification.