

ELECTION IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

by A. Philip Brown, II

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Bob Jones University

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Introduction

While the Psalmist extols the enviable happiness of the man God chooses to dwell in His courts (Psa. 65:4), theologians have stood at the temple gate for centuries arguing over the nature and grounds of God's choice. Though dogmatically motivated treatments of this doctrine abound, few have paid much heed to the OT data.¹ Many systematic theologies interpret the OT data in the light of their understanding of the NT,² and even some biblical-theological treatments evidence a strong systematic bias in their handling of the evidence³. Nonetheless, election is a significant aspect of OT theology,⁴ deserving a biblical-theological examination of its semantics, objects, grounds, purposes, consequences, and preservation.

The Semantic Domain of Election

The primary term for election in the Old Testament is *bachar* "to choose."⁵ Contrary to English usage of "to elect," *bachar* has common currency in non-theological contexts. For example, men *chose* wives (Gen. 6:2), Lot *chose* the valley of the Jordan (Gen. 13:11), Joshua *chose* men to fight (Exod. 17:9), and David *chose* five smooth stones for his slingshot (1 Sam. 17:40). Nonetheless, *bachar* denotes a discriminating selection from among the available options regardless of its context.⁶ Key among the other terms⁷ associated with election are *bha 'ahab* (Deut. 7:7; 10:15; Mal. 1:2-3)⁸ and *yada'* (Gen. 18:19; Job 34:4; Amos 3:2; Hos. 13:4-5).⁹ Several common appellative phrases also imply election: 'My people' (Exo. 3:7, 10; 7:4; Isa. 1:3; Amos 7:8), 'servant of Yahweh' (Deut. 32:36; Jer. 25:9), 'people of Yahweh' (Deut. 32:36, 43; Jud. 5:11), and a 'people of Yahweh's special possession' (Exo. 19:5; Deut. 7:6; 14:2; 26:18; Psa. 135:4; Mal. 3:17). Beyond the words or phrases associated with election, certain relationships in Scripture picture God's choice of His people: marriage (Hosea, Jer. 2:17; 3:11-22; Eze. 16, 23; Isa. 50:1; 54:5, 8, 10; 62:4-5) the father-son relationship (Exo. 4:22; Deut. 14:1; Hos. 11:1; Isa. 63:16; 64:7-8), and the potter and clay imagery (Jer. 18:1ff; Isa. 64:8). On the discourse level,

the passages that develop the OT doctrine of election most fully are Deuteronomy 7:6-8, 9:4-6, 2 Samuel 7:8-16, and Isaiah 41:8-16, 42:1-9, 43:1-3, 44:1-5.¹⁰

The Objects of Election

The objects of divine election fall into three categories: things/events, individuals, and corporate entities. God chose Aaron's rod (Num. 17:5), a specific kind of fast (Isa. 58:5-6), and the punishments for those who have chosen their own ways (Isa. 66:3-4). The most frequently mentioned, non-personal object of God's election is the location where God would choose to place His name. Out of thirty-one occurrences of *bašar* in Deuteronomy, twenty-one have "the place" as their object.¹¹ Early in Israel's history that place was Shiloh (Psa. 78:60; Jer. 7:12). Other places of God's choosing include the city of Jerusalem (1 Kgs. 8:44, 48; 11:32, 36; 14:21; 2 Kgs. 23:27; 2 Chr. 6:34, 38; 12:13), the temple (2 Chr. 7:16; 33:7), and Mt. Zion (Psa. 78:68; 132:13).

Numerous individuals, some of which may be grouped by classes, are the objects of God's choice: Abram (Neh. 9:7), Isaac (Gen. 17:19), Moses (Exo. 3:4-10; Psa. 106:23), Aaron (1 Sam. 12:6; Psa. 105:26); *judges*: Gideon (Jud. 6:11-15), Samson (Jud. 13:3-5), Barak (Jud. 4:6-9), Samuel (1 Sam. 3:4ff); *kings*: Saul (1 Sam. 9:16; 10:24), David (1 Sam. 16:1, 12), Solomon (2 Chr. 28:5, 6), Jeroboam (1 Kgs. 11:29ff); *prophets*: Amos (Amos 7:15), Hosea (Hos. 1:2), Jeremiah (Jer. 1:410); *national leaders*: Pharaoh (Exo. 9:16), Cyrus (Isa. 45:1), Nebuchadnezzar (Jer. 26:6ff), Zerubbabel (Hag. 2:23). Of particular theological significance is Yahweh's choice of the Messiah or Servant of Yahweh (Isa. 28:16; 42:1, 6; 49:1, 5, 6).

Within the category of corporate entities, two kinds of sub-groups may be distinguished: non-genetic groups and genetic-groups.¹² God's choice of non-genetic groups includes any "nation or kingdom" (Jer. 18:7-10), the Persian army (Isaiah 13:3), and Assyria (Isa. 10:5-6). God's choice of genetic-corporate entities encompasses six specific groups: all humanity as Noah's seed in the Noachian covenant (Gen. 9:9-17); (2) the nation of Israel - elected in God's choice of Abraham's seed (Gen. 17:7-8), Isaac's seed (Gen. 17:19), and Jacob's seed (Gen. 28:13-15); (3) the tribe of Levi (Num. 3:12ff; 16:5, 7; Deut. 18:1-5; 21:5),¹³ (3) the Aaronic line (Exo. 28:1-2; Num. 16:40; 17:5; 2 Sam. 2:28, 30); (5) the house of Phinehas (Num. 25:11-13); and (6) the Davidic line (2 Sam. 7:8ff).¹⁴

The Grounds of Election

The basis for God's choice is frequently unmentioned in the OT, however, those grounds of divine election that are revealed fall into two categories: merited and unmerited election. To designate election as merited means that God's choice was based on some good found in the elected person. Examples of merited election are Noah who "found grace" in God's sight (Gen. 6:8),¹⁵ Phinehas, whose righteous deed in killing Zimri and Cosbi was the ground of his election (Num. 25:11-13),¹⁶ and the Levites, whose steadfast loyalty to the covenant during the golden calf incident, appears to be the grounds of God's choice (Deut. 33:8-10).¹⁷ With regard to the place where Yahweh was to set His name, its merit lay in its serviceability, that is, the centrality of its location.¹⁸

The clearest examples of unmerited election involve Abraham, Jacob, and Israel.¹⁹ God's revelation that Abraham was an idolater highlights the unmerited nature of his election (Jos. 24:2). God's choice of Jacob prior to his birth excludes all possibility of merit (Gen. 25:23).²⁰ The grounds for God's choice of Israel were, negatively, not because of their numbers (Deut. 7:7) or righteousness/uprightness of heart (Deut. 9:5) and in spite of their smallness (7:7), stubbornness (Deut. 9:6), and rebellion (Deut. 9:7). Positively, God chose Israel because of love for them (Deut. 7:8; 13:5), for their fathers (Deut. 4:37), and because of His oath to the fathers (Deut. 9:5).

The Purposes of Election

The OT reveals four purposes for which God elects individuals or groups: service, salvation, blessing, and reflection of God's character. First and foremost, OT election is God's choice of an individual or group to fulfill His purpose or accomplish a task.²¹ God chose various individuals to be judges, prophets, leaders, or kings. God chose Aholiab and Bezalel and filled them with His spirit to make the tabernacle furnishings (Exo. 31:1-6). Aaron and his seed were chosen to serve as priests (Num. 16:5; 17:20). According to Isaiah Israel was chosen, in part, to praise the Lord (Isa. 43:21). Cyrus' election was to fulfill God's promise of Israel's restoration to the land and the rebuilding of the temple (2 Chr. 36:23; Ezra 1:2; Isa. 45:1ff). God refers to the Persians as those He has consecrated (vdqm) to bring the Day of Yahweh upon Babylon (Isa. 13:3), and the Assyrians were elected "to capture booty and to seize plunder, and to trample [a godless nation] down like mud in the streets" (Isa. 10:5-6).

Service and salvation, as purposes of election, blend in the election of Abraham and his seed.²² Abraham was chosen to be a blessing to all nations (Gen. 12:3; 18:18)²³ and in order that he should instruct his children to walk in Yahweh's way (Gen. 18:19).²⁴ The nation of Israel was the elect instrument through which God intended to mediate the promised Abrahamic blessing (salvation) to the whole world; thus Yahweh calls them "a kingdom of priests" (Exo. 19:6), "witnesses" (Isa. 43:10, 12), and "My servant" (Isa. 44:1). Isaiah 43:10 contains the most explicit statement of God's salvific purpose in the election of national Israel: "Ye are my witnesses, saith the LORD, and my servant whom I have chosen: that²⁵ ye may know and believe me, and understand that I *am* he." Election's salvific purpose climaxes in the person of the Servant of Yahweh. He is chosen to bring Jacob back to Yahweh (Isa. 49:5), to be a light to the Gentiles (49:6), to be a covenant for the people (49:8), to set captives free (49:9) and to suffer for man's salvation (Isa. 52:13-53:12).

Divine election may also have as its purpose the bestowment of blessing. Jeremiah 18:9-10 speaks of God's choice to build, plant, and bless a nation or kingdom without any specific task attending that choice. Reflection of God's character is the final purpose for election that is explicitly mentioned in Scripture.²⁶ God chose Israel to be a holy nation (Exo. 19:6; Deut. 7:6; 14:2) and to show forth His glory (Isa. 43:7).

The Consequences of Election

The consequences of election may be summarized in terms of privilege and responsibility. To be chosen by God, whether merited or not, is to receive one of the highest conceivable honors.

David expresses the magnitude of this honor in his prayer acknowledging God's election of him and his seed (2 Sam. 7:18-29; cp. Psa. 65:4). Though all the elect are necessarily honored, not all receive the same privileges. The prophet was privileged to receive divine revelation (Jer. 1:9). Elect judges and kings were empowered by the Spirit (Jud. 3:10; 6:34; 14:6; 1 Sam. 10:10; 16:13). The privileges attending Israel's election were many: they became God's special possession (segulah: Exo. 19:5; Deut. 7:6; 14:2; 26:18; Psa. 135:4; Mal. 3:17), they were the recipients of God's law (Deut. 4:8), God's special presence dwelt in their midst (Exo. 40:34-38; Lev. 26:11ff.; Deut. 4:7), they were God's "inheritance" (Deut. 4:20; 32:9), they received God's unique care and protection (Deut. 32:10-11), and God promised to bless them (Deut. 28:1-14).

Privilege brings responsibility, and one of the responsibilities attending divine election is the obligation to respond to that election in faith and obedience (Deut. 4:37, 40; 7:6, 11). On several occasions Israel is summoned to respond to God's election by choosing to serve the Lord (Exo. 19:4-8; Deut. 10:15-16; 30:19; Jos. 24:14, 22) and to love Him (Deut. 10:15; 11:1). Election demands righteousness of conduct (Amos 3:2; 9:7; Jer. 18:7-10), loyalty to God's law (Lev. 18:4ff.), and "resolute non-conformity" to the surrounding world (Lev. 18:2; 20:22; Deut. 14:1ff.; Eze. 20:5-7).²⁷ Failure in the responsibilities of election had two observable results in the OT: chastisement (Lev. 26:14-39; Deut. 28:15-68; Amos 3:2) and/or revocation of the election. Examples of God's reversal of His election span all three types of election: things - the chosen place of His dwelling: Shiloh (Psa. 78:60), the temple (Jer. 7:14; 26:6), and Jerusalem (2 Kgs. 23:37); individuals - Saul (1 Sam. 15:23, 26), Jeroboam (1 Kgs. 14:7ff), and Baasha (2 Kgs. 16:2); corporate entities - Eli's house as part of the Aaronic priesthood (2 Sam. 2:31-33),²⁸ Northern Israel (2 Kgs. 17:15-20; Jer. 3:8; cp. Hos. 11:8), and the "nation or kingdom" of Jeremiah 18:7-10.²⁹

The Preservation of Election

The first explicit reference to God's preservation of a select group within national Israel is 1 Kings 19:18, "I have been reserving in Israel 7,000 men, all those whose knees have not bowed to Ba'al and all those whose lips have not kissed him." Among the prophets, Micah prophesied that Yahweh would cause the remnant to reign in Mt. Zion forever (4:7). It is Isaiah, however, who develops this theme more thoroughly than the other prophets,³⁰ and he is the first to refer to this remnant as "elect" (Isa. 65:9).³¹ Other remnant passages include Joel 2:32; Jeremiah 6:9, 31:7; Ezekiel 9:8; 11:13-17; Micah 2:12; and Zephaniah 2:9; 3:13.

The Jews, encouraged by the false prophets, misconstrued God's promised preservation of His elect as an unconditional guarantee of their national security (Mic. 3:11; Jer. 23:9ff.). Jerusalem was God's chosen place; therefore, it was safe (Jer. 7:1-15). Amos' response was that Israel's election and special relationship with God demanded that she be judged for her sin (3:2). The possession of election through birth into the covenant community did not automatically make one part of the remnant. Only those who had called upon Yahweh in saving faith were members of the elect remnant (Joel 2:32).

Conclusion

Two aspects of the OT's development of election seem to support the conclusion that OT election is "*primarily a corporate concept*" and that "references to elect individuals find their significance" within the covenant community.³² (1) the shift in focus from individual to corporate election with the progress of revelation, and (2) both Deuteronomy and Isaiah, the primary books in which the nature and ramifications of election are expounded, focus on the corporate aspect of election. However, it should be noted that God's choice of individuals, whether singly or as heads of an elect family, runs throughout OT revelation.

In conclusion, at least two parallels between OT and NT election suggest themselves for consideration. First, election that brings men into a covenant relationship with God always involves holiness (Gen. 17:1; Exo. 19:6; Eph. 1:4 - "He chose us in Him to be holy and blameless"). Second, Isaiah's statement that the Servant of Yahweh would see his "seed" suggests that the Servant is himself the elect head of a genetic-corporate entity (Isa. 53:10). If this is true, Paul's repeated "in Christ" phraseology would find its parallel in the genetic-corporate election of the OT: Christ is the chosen head, and all His offspring are elect.

Endnotes

¹For a discussion and suggestive bibliography of the concept of election in ANE sources, see H. H. Rowley, *The Biblical Doctrine of Election* (London: Lutterworth Press, 1950), 16-17.

²No theological camp is guiltless in this regard. A survey of the following Reformed and Arminian sources uncovered only minor treatments of the OT data at best. G. C. Berkouwer, *Divine Election*, trans. Hugo Bekker (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1960); Charles Hodge, *Systematic Theology*, 3 vols (London: James Clarke & Co. Ltd., 1960); Millard J. Erickson, *Christian Theology* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1985); John Miley, *Systematic Theology*, 2 vols (New York: Hunt & Eaton, 1892); H. Orton Wiley and Paul T. Culbertson, *Introduction to Christian Theology* (Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 1946).

³J. Barton Payne's treatment of election evidences his reformed theological perspective both in the data discussed and not discussed (!) and in its conclusions. *The Theology of the Older Testament* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1962). See, for example, his treatment of Jacob and Esau, 179-80.

⁴Horst Dietrich Preuss, in his new OT theology, proposes that God's election of Israel "for communion with his world and the obedient activity required of this people" is "the fundamental structure of Old Testament faith." *Old Testament Theology*, trans. Leo G. Perdue (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1995), 1:25. Compare Th. C. Vriezen's similar comment that Israel's election is the theological foundation of her "theocracy, exclusivity, centralized worship center, and rigorous ethical demands on both the national and personal levels." *Die Erwählung Israels*, 47, cited in Preuss, 33.

⁵*Bachar* occurs 172 times in 164 verses in the OT. Strangely, H. Wildberger only identifies 146 occurrences: 32 times in non-theological contexts, 83 times in theological contexts of which 67 had God as the subject. "bachar to choose," *Theological Lexicon of the Old Testament* (TLOT), ed. Ernst Jenni and Claus Westermann, trans. Mark E. Biddle (Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson Publishers, 1997), 1:211. The most significant cognate, *bachir*, occurs 13 times, always modifying an object of God's choice (2 Sam. 21:6; 1 Chr. 16:13; Psa 89:3; 105:6, 43; 106:5, 23; Isa. 42:1; 43:20; 45:4; 65:9, 15, 22). *eklegomai*, *eklektos*, and *haireomai* are the words used to translate *bachar* in the LXX.

The words *barar* (*qal* – 1 Chr. 7:40; 9:22; 16:41; Neh. 5:18; Isa. 49:2) and *barah* II (1 Sam. 17:8) also mean "to choose, select." These terms, however, contribute no theologically significant information to the study of election.

⁶TLOT, 2:75; Emile Nicole, "bachar," *New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology and Exegesis* (NIDOTTE), ed. Willem A. VanGemeren (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1997), 1:638. A full exploration of whether God's choice of an individual implies the consequent rejection of others is beyond the scope of this paper, though a surface reading of the data appears to indicate that it does. The following verses in which *bachar* and *ma'as* "to reject" occur together would provide a starting point for this investigation: 2 Kgs. 23:27; Job 34:33; Psa. 78:67; Isa. 7:15, 16; 41:9; Jer. 33:24.

⁷Preuss, 1:31, identifies the following words as components of the semantic field of election: 'to call, appoint' (*qara'*: Exo. 31:2; 35:30; Isa. 41:9; 43:1; 48:12; 49:1; 51:2), 'to separate' (*badal*, hiph.: Lev. 20:24; Deut. 10:8; 1 Kgs. 8:53), 'to seize' (*chazaq*: Isa. 41:9, 13; 42:6; 45:1; Jer. 31:32), 'to desire' (*avah*: Psa. 132:13), 'to redeem' (*ga'al*: Exo. 6:6; 15:13; Ps. 74:2; 77:16; 106:10; Isa. 44:22f.; 48:29; 51:10; 52:3; 63:9), 'to freely purchase' (hdp: Deut. 7:8; 9:26; 13:5;

15:15; 21:8; 24:18), ‘to purchase’ (*qanah*: Deut. 32:6; Psa. 74:2; 78:54; Isa. 11:11), and ‘to take’ (*laqach*: Gen. 24:7; Exo. 6:7; Deut. 4:20; 30:4; Josh. 24:3). Nicole, *NIDOTTE*, 640, notes the elective sense of “to seek” (*baqash*) and “to command” (*tsavah*) in 1 Sam. 13:14, and of anointing (*mashach*, *mashiach*: 1 Sam. 24:6, 10; Psa. 132:17; Isa. 45:1). “To sanctify” (*qadash*) and “to appoint” (*nathan*) also belong to this domain (cf. Jer. 1:5; Isa. 13:5). On the broader conceptual level, there is some overlap between the subjects of election and the covenant. This overlap, in terms of the New Covenant, provides a key interface to the NT doctrine of election and salvation. I. Howard Marshall, *Kept by the Power of God: A Study of Perseverance and Falling Away* (1969; repr., Minneapolis: Bethany Fellowship, Inc., n.d.).

⁸ *bachar* and *'ahab* occur together in the following verses: Deut. 4:37; 10:15; Psa. 47:5; 78:68; Isa. 41:8. Love is usually the motivation for election (cf. Deut. 4:37), though in Mal. 1:2 it seems to be used at the least with the implied sense of “to choose.”

⁹ There is some disagreement over whether *yada'* denotes ‘to choose’ or not. “Select, choose” is part of William L. Holladay’s seventh sense of *yada'*, and he cites Gen. 18:19 in support of this sense. *A Concise Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1971), 129. J. Barton Payne, 179, states, “‘to know’ carries the idea of elective grace and is equivalent to saying ‘choose’ (Exo. 1:8; 33:12; Hos. 13:5; Amos 3:2),” 179. On the other hand, Roger T. Forster and V. Paul Marston deny that a direct equation can be made between *bachar* and *yada'*. They conclude that *yada'* denotes the initiation or creation of “a special relationship” (Gen. 18:17-19; Hos. 13:5; Amos 3:2) or “a thorough understanding” of someone (Jer. 1:5-6). *God’s Strategy in Human History* (Minneapolis: Bethany House Publishers, 1973), 182-188. Terrence E. Fretheim comes to the same general conclusion: “This usage [*yada'* as a “special relationship”] does not focus on election in a narrow way, but on the relationship in its fullest sense (Exo. 33:12; Jer. 1:5; Amos 3:2).” “*yada'*,” *NIDOTTE*, 2:411. Forster and Marston do recognize, however, that choice, while only an incidental semantic component, is necessarily involved in the development of a special relationship. Therefore *yada'* should be considered part of the vocabulary of election, though “to choose” should not be listed as one of its senses. (See, however, Job 34:4 where *bachar* may be equivalent to *yada'*, but, contextually, *yada'* could also denote “to perceive, determine.”)

¹⁰ Key psalms that reflect on this theme are 68, 79, 105, and 106.

¹¹ Preuss, 29. Deut. 12:5, 11, 14, 18, 21, 26; 14:23, 25; 15:20; 16:2, 7, 11, 15, 16; 17:8, 10; 18:6; 26:2; 31:11. Cf. also Jos. 9:27; 2 Chr. 7:12.

¹² This term distinguishes those corporate entities that are family-related from those which are not (e.g., the nation or kingdom of Jer. 18:7-10). This distinction becomes significant when the revocability of election is considered.

¹³ Israel’s election is often cited under the name “Jacob”: Gen. 25:23; Isa. 45:4; Mal. 1:4.

¹⁴ A noteworthy connection exists between God’s election of corporate entities and His election of individuals: all genetic-corporate elections spring from the prior election of an individual.

¹⁵ The idiom “to find grace (*chen*)” means to produce, by means of pleasing behavior or character, a favorable opinion of oneself in another’s eyes (Gen. 18:3; 33:8; 47:9, Jud. 6:17, etc.). Noah’s righteous life was the basis of his election as the man to save the world (Gen. 6:9; 7:1). Since Noah’s election was not to personal salvation, there is no contradiction with the Biblical doctrine of justification by faith alone. From a systematic theological perspective, we may say that Noah found grace only because God’s regenerating grace had come to him, enabling him to be righteous.

¹⁶Payne, 178-79, in his section on individual election, lists Abel, Enoch, and Shem as recipients of divine favor based upon their “ethical superiority.” While it is true that God accepted, in the case of Abel’s sacrifice (Gen. 4:4-7; Heb. 11:4), or chose these individuals, Enoch to miss death (Gen. 5:22-24; cf. Heb. 11:5) and Shem to be progenitor of the line through which the Messiah would come (Gen. 9:26-27; 11:11, 27), yet in each of these instances the primary characteristic of OT election is missing: a consequent task or responsibility due to their election. It seems preferable, then, to distinguish between the reception of divine favor/blessing and divine election with its consequent responsibilities.

¹⁷Payne, 374-75.

¹⁸John N. Oswalt, “rxb,” *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*, ed. R. Laird Harris (Chicago: Moody Press, 1980): 100.

¹⁹David’s reference to God’s choice of his line to reign forever over Israel (2 Sam. 7:21 “For the sake of Your word, and according to Your own heart, You have done all this greatness”) could also be viewed as a statement of unmerited election, though the language is not as explicit as in these three cases.

²⁰Note that in this passage the election of Jacob and rejection of Esau is presented entirely in corporate terms: “Two nations are in your womb; And two peoples will be separated from your body; And one people shall be stronger than the other; And the older shall serve the younger” (Cp. Mal. 1:2-3). Thus God viewed His choice of Jacob primarily as an election of the nation of Israel.

²¹Rowley, 45; Klein, 33-34. Payne bases his contention that OT election was primarily “to salvation and not merely to service of status” upon the idea that “the fundamental promise of the testament is that of personal reconciliation.” While it is true that the purpose of God’s covenant with Israel was ultimately salvific (Isa. 43:10), Payne’s contention fails on three counts: (1) the Mosaic covenant itself does not promise regeneration to those who keep it, (2) every individual Israelite was a recipient of the covenant, yet not all Israelites were saved, and (3) the explicit emphasis of the OT data concerning the purpose of election is upon the service for which the elect have been chosen.

²²This salvific purpose may also be inferred from God’s choice of Noah and Shem, though the OT data is not as clear as it is regarding Abraham.

²³Geerhardus Vos’s succinct observation that “the election of Abraham, and . . . of Israel, was meant as a particularistic means towards a universalistic end,” encapsulates, I believe, the essence of God’s purpose in salvific election. *Biblical Theology: Old and New Testaments* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1948), 77.

²⁴It seems that individual election may have salvation as its consequence, but the OT contains no explicit record of God choosing an individual to be saved. God’s choice to reveal Himself to Abram and to make him the head of a nation resulted in Abraham’s salvation, yet God chose Cyrus and revealed Himself to him, yet there is no indication that he was regenerated. The OT data does not seem support the idea that personal salvation is the necessary consequence of individual election.

²⁵“That” translates *lm’n*, which expresses either purpose or result. LXX: *hina*.

²⁶Klein, 43.

²⁷J. I. Packer, “Election,” *New Bible Dictionary*, ed. J. D. Douglas, (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1962), 358.

²⁸Note that God had promised to establish Eli’s house “forever” (*'ad-'olam*: 1 Sam. 2:30)!

²⁹From the evidence it appears that non-genetic corporate election is revocable. All OT instances of genetic corporate election, however, appear to be irrevocable: Jacob > nation of Israel (Jer. 31:37); David > His line (2 Sam. 7:16); Phinehas > His line; the sons of Levi > the Levites; Aaron > Aaronic priesthood. Yet individual election within that genetic-corporate election is revocable. (Saul, Jeroboam, Eli's house, non-remnant Israel).

³⁰Isa 1:9; 6:13; 10:20-22; 11:11, 16; 37:4, 31; 46:3; Isa. 65:8-10. He even named his son Shear Jashub (7:3), "a remnant will return" (Rowley, 74).

³¹For a lengthy treatment of the remnant motif in the OT and its theological significance, see Gerhard F. Hasel, *The Remnant: The History and Theology of the Remnant Idea from Genesis to Isaiah* (Berrein Springs, Mich.: Andrews University Press, 1972). See also Payne, 184-188; Oehler, 506-508.

³²Klein, 35 [*italics his*].

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