

Reprobation: Supralapsarian or Infralapsarian?

I. Definitions

1. Reprobation *n.* - 3. *Theol.* Rejection by God; the state of being so rejected or cast off, and thus ordained to eternal misery. (Opposed to *election* in the Calvinistic doctrine of predestination: cf. *reprobate* *adj.* 4 and *v.* 2.)
 - A. Reprobate *adj.* - 1. Rejected or condemned as worthless, inferior or impure. 2. Depraved, degraded, morally corrupt. 3. Rejected by God; lost or hardened in sin. 4. *absol.* Those who are rejected by God, and thus excluded from participation in eternal life with Him. (Opposed to *the elect.*)
 - B. The Bible defines *reprobate* as "rejected by God" (**Jer 6:30**).
 - C. Reprobate *v.* 1. *trans.* To disapprove of, censure, condemn. 2. Of God: To reject or cast off (a person or persons) from Himself; to exclude from participation in future bliss. (Cf. *reprobation* 3.)

II. The doctrine of reprobation as described in the above definitions, that God has rejected some people and ordained them to eternal misery, is true and Biblical, if one crucial fact is maintained: *that God did so viewing man as already fallen.*

1. There are two views concerning election and reprobation:
2. Supralapsarianism
 - A. Supralapsarian *n.* - A name applied to those Calvinists who held the view that, in the divine decrees, the predestination of some to eternal life and of others to eternal death was antecedent to the creation and the fall: opposed to *Infralapsarian*.
 - B. Put simply, supralapsarianism says that before man fell into sin in the garden of Eden, and *viewing them as unfallen*, God chose to save some of humanity to eternal life (election) and damn the rest to eternal punishment (reprobation).
 - C. This view of reprobation is false, which will be proven later.
3. Sublapsarianism or Infralapsarianism
 - A. Sublapsarian *n., adj.* - Infralapsarian
 - B. Infralapsarian *n.* - A. A term applied in the 17th c. to Calvinists holding the view that God's election of some to everlasting life was consequent to his prescience of the Fall of man, or that it contemplated man as already fallen, and was thus a remedial measure: opposed to *Supralapsarian*. The Supralapsarian view makes Predestination anterior or logically superior to the Fall, and views the creation, fall, and saving of some, as parts of God's eternal purpose. Infralapsarian is generally used as synonymous with Sublapsarian, the earlier and, in English writers, the more usual term. But some distinguish the two, associating Sublapsarian with the view that the Fall was foreseen, and Infralapsarian with the view that it was permitted, by God.
 - C. Put simply, infralapsarianism says that before men fell into sin in the garden of Eden, and *viewing them as fallen* in His omniscience, God chose to save some of humanity to eternal life (election) and damn the rest to eternal punishment (reprobation).
 - D. This view of reprobation is true, which will be proven later.

III. The concept of Reprobation is Biblical

1. Reprobates are rejected of God (**Jer 6:30**).

2. Reprobates do not have the Spirit of Christ dwelling in them (**2Co 13:5**) and are therefore none of His (**Rom 8:9**).
3. Reprobates are men of corrupt minds who resist the truth (**2Ti 3:8**).
4. Some reprobates profess that they know God, but in works they deny Him (**Tit 1:16**).
5. Sometimes God's children act like reprobates (**2Co 13:7**).
6. God will give people over to a reprobate mind if they reject what they know of Him (**Rom 1:28**).

IV. Who fitted the reprobate for destruction?

1. Supralapsarianism says that the fall of man was part of God's eternal purpose, making God responsible for the fall, which is false.
 - A. God is not the cause of sin.
 - i. People that sin and say that they were predestined to do so are liars (**Jer 7:8-10**).
 - ii. God has never commanded people to sin, nor has the thought of it ever come into His heart (**Jer 7:31**), nor has it come into His mind (**Jer 19:5; Jer 32:35**).
 - B. God creates evil, not in the sense of *sin*, but in the sense of *punishment for sin* (**Isa 45:7**).
 - i. Consider the following verses that refer to evil as judgment:
 - ii. God does judgment in a city (**Amo 3:6**).
 - iii. God set His face against Jerusalem for *evil* (**Jer 21:10**).
 - iv. God's planned destruction of Israel was called *evil* (**Exo 32:10-14**).
 - v. God's planned overthrow of Nineveh was called *evil* (**Jon 3:4 c/w Jon 3:10**).
 - vi. The Lord smote Benjamin, bringing *evil* upon them (**Jdg 20:41**).
 - C. God has made the wicked for the day of evil in this sense (**Pro 16:4**).
 - i. This *evil* is not sin that God has made the wicked for.
 - ii. Neither is this saying that God made some men to be damned.
 - iii. This *evil* is speaking of judgment that God uses the wicked to accomplish.
 - iv. The wicked are God's hand and sword that He uses for His purposes (**Psa 17:13-14**).
2. The scripture says that Adam, not God, was responsible for the fall (**Rom 5:12**).
3. By nature, all mankind are of the same fallen lump as a result of Adam's sin (**Rom 9:21; Eph 2:3**).
 - A. Lump *n.* - 1. a. A compact mass of no particular shape; a shapeless piece or mass; often with implication of excessive size, protuberant outline, or clumsiness.
 - B. The *lump* was fallen mankind, a shapeless, clumsy, worthless pile of clay.
 - C. There was never a time in their existence when mankind was not fallen (except for Adam and Eve before the fall).
 - D. Therefore, the *lump* of mankind, of which vessels of honour and vessels of dishonour were made, was *fallen* mankind.
 - E. Being in this lump makes one a reprobate by default, like Esau who was hated and rejected by God before he was even born (**Rom 9:11-13**).
4. *Adam*, not God, fitted all men to destruction (**Rom 9:22 c/w Rom 5:12**).
 - A. Notice how **Rom 9:22** doesn't say that God fitted the *vessels of wrath* to destruction.
 - B. But notice how it is specifically said that *God* prepared the *vessels of mercy* for glory (**Rom 9:23**).

- C. All God had to do to make *vessels of dishonour* was to leave them in their fallen condition in the lump (**Rom 9:21**).
- D. God would have been unjust to decide to send people to hell, *viewing them as unfallen*, because they would have no sin for which to die (**Rom 6:23**).

V. When did God choose to elect the elect and to reprobate the reprobate?

1. God elected a portion of mankind to be saved from their sins (**Eph 1:4**).
 - A. God *ordained* the elect to eternal life (**Act 13:48**).
 - B. God *appointed* the elect to obtain salvation by Jesus Christ (**1Th 5:9**).
2. This election happened before the foundation of the world (**Eph 1:4**), which was before man fell into sin (**Gen 3:6**).
 - A. The fact that God chose His elect that they *should* (past tense of *shall*) *be holy*, means that they were not holy when He chose them, which demands that He chose them *viewing them as fallen*.
 - B. In this condition, God predestinated His elect to be His children through adoption by Jesus Christ (**Eph 1:5**).
 - C. God also predestinated them to obtain a heavenly inheritance (**Eph 1:11**) and to be glorified and conformed to the image of Christ (**Rom 8:29-30**).
 - D. Eternal salvation is the only thing which the scripture says that God predestinated men to.
 - E. The scripture nowhere says that God predestinated men to go to hell before fall.
 - F. God didn't need to predestinate the reprobate to go to hell because Adam chose their destination for them when he sinned and passed his fallen nature to them.
3. God did *of old ordain* the reprobate to condemnation (**Jud 1:4**).
 - A. Ordain v. - II. To appoint, decree, destine, order. 10. *trans.* To appoint (a person, etc.) to a charge, duty, or office.
 - B. The condemnation came as a result of Adam's sin (**Rom 5:18**).
 - C. God made vessels of dishonour from the fallen lump of mankind who were condemned by Adam's sin (**Rom 9:21 c/w Rom 5:12**).
 - D. They were made to be taken and destroyed (**2Pe 2:12**).
 - E. In that God elected some men to eternal salvation *viewing them as fallen* (**Eph 1:4**), He therefore also of old ordained the reprobate to condemnation *viewing them as fallen*.
 - F. Their judgment and damnation has been a long time in coming (**2Pe 2:3**).
 - G. The wicked who don't believe *are condemned already* (**Joh 3:18**).
 - H. The wicked were *appointed* to stumble at the word and be disobedient to it (**1Pe 2:8**).
 - i. Appoint v. - II. To determine authoritatively, prescribe, decree, ordain. 7. *trans.* To determine authoritatively, prescribe, fix (a time, later a place) for any act.
 - ii. God did so by determining to let them continue in their fallen condition.

VI. No sinner has a right to condemn or question God for choosing to save some men and leave the rest in their sins (**Rom 9:20-24**).

1. God is sovereign and does according to His own will and none can say unto Him, "What doest thou?" (**Dan 4:35**).
2. God's counsel will stand and He will do all His pleasure (**Isa 46:10**).