

THE DECREES OF GOD.

The London Confession of Faith of 1646 states in clear terms that God decreed all things that shall come to pass.

1. London Confession, 1644: "God hath decreed in himself before the world was concerning all things, whether necessary, accidental or voluntary, but with all the circumstances of them, to work, dispose, and bring about all things according to the counsel of his own will, to his glory (Yet without being the author of sin, or having fellowship with any therein.)

2. Scripture: a. Isa. 46:9-10 "Remember the former things of old: For I am God and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand and I will do all my pleasure."

Eph. 1:11 "In whom we also have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will." **Rm. 11:33** "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God? How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out."

Psa. 115:3 *"But our God is in the heavens: he hath done whatsoever he hath pleased."*

Psa. 135.6 *Whatsoever the Lord pleased, that did he in heaven, and in earth, in the seas, and all deep places."*

Psa. 33:11 *"The counsel of the Lord standeth forever, the thoughts of his heart to all generations."* NOTE: The Hebrew word translated counsel in **Psa. 33:11** is the same word which is translated purpose in **Isa. 14:26 (ASAH)**.

{The London Confession was put forth by the Particular Baptist churches of England, and they said "God hath decreed in himself before the world was concerning all things, whether necessary, accidental or voluntary with all the circumstances of them, to work, dispose, and bring about all things according to the counsel of his own will, to his glory: (Yet without being the author of sin, or having fellowship with any therein)."

The Particular Baptist Confession of London (1644) clearly states "God hath decreed in himself before the world was concerning all things.

"Therefore, whoever calls this heresy is calling the true and scriptural churches heretical".

1. The Particular Baptist churches believed God had decreed in himself all things before the world was created.

POINT #2

God's foreknowledge covers all events which shall ever come to pass upon the earth, but God's foreknowledge is based upon his decrees.

God hath decreed all things that shall come to pass.

1. **Isa. 14:24** "The Lord of hosts hath sworn, saying, surely as I have thought so shall it come to pass: and as I have purposed, so shall it stand."

2. Notice: The things which come to pass are the things which God has decreed or sworn that shall come to pass.

2. Nothing will come to pass on the earth if God had not commanded it.

1. **Lam. 3:37** "Who is he that saith, and it cometh to pass, when the Lord commanded it not."

The purpose of God necessarily preceded all other acts and is therefore called God's eternal purposes (Eph. 3) the determinate counsel of God (Acts 2:23),

God's fore- knowledge, elections, decrees, etc., all root themselves in his predetermination, "determinate counsel" and foreknowledge. It is impossible for God to foreknow anything that he has not predetermined shall be ..."

NOTE:

1. The Bible teaches that God has sworn and decreed all things that shall come to pass. (Isa. 14:24).
2. But nothing comes to pass when the Lord has not decreed it. (Lam. 3:37)
3. Therefore whatsoever comes to pass upon the earth is according to the decrees of God.

1. God's foreknowledge covers all things from the beginning to the end Isa. 46:10 "Declaring the end from the beginning and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, my counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure."
2. But God's foreknowledge is based upon what he has decreed "It is impossible for God to know anything that he has not predetermined."
3. Therefore everything that God foreknows will happen and can only come to pass because he has decreed it shall come to pass.

The Bible does not teach that God elected those to be saved whom he foreknew to repent and believe on Christ, but for argument sake, we will just suppose

this is true; however, since God's foreknowledge is based upon his decrees, it follows that those who repent and believe do so because God decreed that this would be a fact; therefore, God decreed who would repent and believe, and thus he decreed who would be saved.

The elect are chosen according to the foreknowledge of God.

1. I Pet. 1:2 "Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father through sanctification of the spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ."

"It is impossible for God to foreknow anything that he has not predetermined."

1. God elected all his people according to his foreknowledge. (I Pet. 1:2)

2. But the foreknowledge of God is based upon his decrees.

3. Therefore God has decreed the salvation of all those he elected.

God has decreed all things according to his "most wise and holy counsel of his own will, freely and unchangeably, all things whatsoever come to pass; yet so as thereby is God neither the author of sin nor

hath fellowship with any therein, for the manifestation of his glory."

Philadelphia Confession, Chapter III.

God has decreed all things according to his most wise and holy counsel.

1. Matt. 10:29-30 "Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? And one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father. But the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear ye not therefore, ye are of more value than many sparrows."

2. Rm. 8:28 "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called, according to his purpose."

Because God hath decreed all things, the people of God are protected.

1. Lk. 21:18-19 "But there shall not a hair of your head perish. In your patience possess ye your souls?"

1. God has decreed all things according to his most holy and wise counsel for the manifestation of his glory (Philadelphia Confession of Faith, Chapter III).

2. But all things work together for good to them who are the called according to his purpose.

3. Therefore God has decreed "all things" that shall happen in the lives of his elected people.

1. The Bible declares that a little sparrow cannot fall to the ground except God wills it to fall. (Matt. 10:29-30)

2. But the people of God are of more value than sparrows. (Matt. 10:29-30)

3. Therefore nothing can come into the lives of the people of God except God has decreed it shall be.

{Although God decreed all things; yet so as thereby is God neither the author of sin (James 1:13; I Jn. 1:5) nor hath fellowship with any therein}.

NOTE: God is not the author of sin.

1. James 1:13 "Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man; but every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust and enticed."

NOTE: God is not the author or cause of sin.

1. I Jn. 1:5 "This then is the message which ye have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is light and in him is no darkness at all."

1. God is not the author of sin, nor does he tempt any man to sin.
2. But the lust in the heart of man causes him to sin. James 1:15.
3. Therefore sin comes from man and his wicked nature and not because God is the author of it.

God has a will, and all things are worked out according to his holy will, yet he is not the author of sin.

NOTE: The Bible is God's declared will.

1. I Thess. 4:3 "For this is the will of God, even your sanctification, that ye should abstain from fornication."
2. II Tim. 2:15 "Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth."

NOTE: God has a permissive will; in other words, he will permit people to do things which are against his declared will.

1. Jn. 19:11 "Jesus answered to Pilot thou couldest have no power at all against me except it were given to thee from above: Therefore he that delivered me unto thee hath the greater sin."

NOTE:

1. God's permissive will is seen as Pilate is permitted to crucify Christ.
2. God permits man to sin against God because he even permits the sinner to live and move and have his being. (Acts 17:28).

NOTE: God has a secret will which is known only to God.

1. James 4:13 "Go to now, ye that say today or tomorrow we will go into such a city, and continue there a year, and buy and sell and get gain: Whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow ... For that ye ought to say, if the Lord will, we shall live, and do this or that."

2. Deut. 29:29 "The secret things belong unto the Lord our God, but those things which are revealed belong to us and to our children forever."

1. The Bible clearly declares God worketh all things after the counsel of his will. Eph. 1:11.

2. But the Bible declares that God has (1) a declared will (2) a permissive will and (3) a secret will.

3. Therefore all things are working according to God's declared will, or his permissive will, or according to his secret will.

{From eternity God foresaw all the events of the universe as fixed and certain. This fixity and certainty could not have had its ground either in blind fate or in the variable wills of men, since neither of these had an existence. It could have had its ground in nothing outside the divine mind, for in eternity nothing existed besides the divine mind}.

NOTE: The divine mind is eternal, and it is perfect in knowledge.

1. Rm. 16:23 "... according to the everlasting God."
2. Psa. 90:2 "... from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God."
3. Due. 34:27 "The eternal God is thy refuge."

NOTE: The mind of God is perfect and without flaw; therefore, the mind of God knows all things the nature of God put into it.

1. Isa. 46:9-10 "I am God, and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times, the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure."

2. Isa. 14:24 "The Lord hath sworn, saying, surely as I have thought, so shall it come to pass."

1. The mind of God is eternal, because God is eternal and it was the only thing in eternity. (Deut. 34:27; Rm. 16:26; Psa. 90:2).

2. But what God "thought" is what comes to pass. (Isa. 14:24).

3. Therefore every thing which comes to pass in time is according to an all wise, holy, and righteous God's thoughts.

1. God's decrees are hated by rebellious man but loved by the people of God. Dan. 4:35 "This matter is by the decree of the watchers, and the demand is by the word of the Holy ones: to the intent that the living may know that the Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will, and setteth up over it the basest of men."

2. But God's decrees are for the best and highest good. Psa. 18:30 "As for our God his way is perfect." Deut. 32:4 "He is the Rock, his way is perfect."

3. Therefore people who hate the eternal decrees of God are guilty of hating the perfect works of God.

{In eternity there could have been no cause of the future existence of the universe, outside of God himself, since no being existed but God himself;

therefore, in eternity God FORE-ORDAINED that the creation of the world and the institution of its laws would make certain its actual history even to the most insignificant details which means this world is under the all wise supervision of a holy and righteous God}.

NOTE: There was only God in eternity, and no cause of the future existence of the universe, outside of God himself, since no being existed but God himself.

1. Isa. 46:9 "Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me."
2. Rm. 11:34 "For who hath known the mind of the Lord? Or who hath been his counselor."

NOTE: God's foreknowledge of all events is based upon his wise and holy decrees to create the world.

1. Isa. 46:10 "There is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure."

NOTE: God has decreed all things to make certain the history of the world even to the most insignificant details.

1. The insignificant sparrow cannot fall to the ground without God's permission. Matt. 10:29
2. The insignificant birth of a slave baby in the land of Egypt was to change world history.
Acts. 7:20 "In which time Moses was born and was exceedingly fair."

{The Greek word translated "exceedingly fair" is ASTEIOS and it means a child of destiny}.

3. Eph. 1:11 "In whom we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will."
4. For the safety and his all wise and holy purpose all things come to pass. Rm. 11:36 "For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: whom be glory forever."

1. In eternity there could have been no other cause but God, since he was the only being in eternity. (Isa. 46:9; 57:15)

2. But God's mind is eternal and for his Holy and all wise purpose this holy mind decreed all things. (Rm. 11:36)

3. Therefore all things which were decreed in eternity are for the good, holy and all wise God of his righteous rule over his creation.

{God's eternal purpose and decrees are for his glory, and to promote his holy and righteous will}.

NOTE: The will of God is perfect and eternal because God is perfect and eternal.

Rm. 12:2 "... that ye may know what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God."

Rm. 16:26 "According to the commandment of the eternal God."

NOTE: God uses wicked people to fulfill his eternal will which is based upon

God's eternal decrees.

1. God's will is based upon his mind and its decrees.

Psa. 33:11 "The counsel of the Lord standeth forever, the thoughts of his heart to all generations."

2. God has decreed to use wicked people to fulfill his holy will.

Rev. 17:17 "For God hath put in their hearts to fulfill his will and to agree, and give their kingdom unto the beast, until the words of God shall be fulfilled."

1. God's will is perfect and eternal because God is perfect and eternal. (Rm. 12:2; 16:23).
2. The wicked people do many evil things such as killing the wicked. But the wicked people do evil things such as the killing of wicked people during the tribulation. (Rev. 17:17).
3. Therefore God permits wicked men to promote his holy and righteous will.

{God's secret will permits evil people to commit wicked acts because He has decreed the free acts of men in order to govern and control the supervision of his universe; otherwise, Satan would have more power to obstruct and defeat the purpose of God than God has to bring complete redemption to his people}.

NOTE: God's secret will permits wicked people to commit wicked acts.

1. God permitted Herod to slaughter the babies of Bethlehem: Matt. 2:16 "Then Herod ... sent forth and slew all the children that were in Bethlehem, and in all the coasts thereof, from two years old and under."

2. God permitted the King of Egypt to kill the baby boys in Egypt. Ex. 1:22 "Pharaoh charged all the people, saying, every son that is born ye shall cast into the river."

NOTE: God has decreed the free acts of men in order to govern and control his world and fulfill his purpose.

1. Rev. 4:11 "Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created."

2. Psa. 135:6 "Whatsoever the Lord pleased, that did he in heaven, and in earth, in the seas, and in all deep places."

NOTE: God has decreed all things in order to be a complete ruler over his universe; otherwise, Satan and his forces would overcome and God's redemption would not be victorious.

1. God is perfect and he does not change because he is perfect.

James 1:17 "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, in whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning."

2. Because God hath decreed all things the devil's defeat is certain.

Rev. 20:10 "And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever."

NOTE:

1. God has decreed to permit the free acts of men, even wicked men in order to protect his people from the devil. (Matt. 2:16; Ex. 1:22)

2. Wicked people do very wicked things such as killing people. (Rev. 17:17)

3. Therefore God has decreed all things for his perfect and holy purpose to make sure the redemption of his people and the sure defeat of the devil.

We grant that God decrees primarily and directly, he governs his acts of creation, providence and grace; but we claim that this involves also a secondary and indirect decreeing of the acts of free creatures which he foresees will result therefrom.

NOTE: God's decrees involve also secondary causes.

1. The Philadelphia Confession of Faith, Chapter III says: "Yet so as thereby is God neither the author of sin (James 1:13; I Jn. 1:5) nor hath fellowship with any

therein; nor is violence offered to the will of the creature, nor yet is the liberty of contingency of second causes taken away, but rather established.

NOTICE: The Philadelphia Confession of Faith, Chapter III states:

1. The liberty and contingency of second causes. a. Acts 4:27-28 "For the truth against thy holy child Jesus whom thou hast anointed, both Herod, and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together. For to do whatsoever thy hand and counsel determined before to be done." b. Jn. 19:11 "Jesus answered, thou couldest have no power at all against me, except it were given to thee from above; therefore he that hath delivered me unto thee hath the greater sin."

1. God had decreed all things as The Philadelphia Confession of Faith states in Chapter III "*God* hath decreed in himself from all eternity, by the most wise and holy counsel of his own will, freely and unchangeably all things whatsoever come to pass."
 2. But this involves the free acts of free creatures and secondary causes. Acts 4:27-28; Jn. 19:11.
 3. Therefore the free acts of Pilate, Herod, and others were decreed by God.

1. The Bible states that Pilate, Herod and others crucified Christ because they actually wanted to

crucify him. Jn. 19:10 "Then said Pilate unto him, speakest thou not unto me?"

Knowest thou not that I have power to crucify thee, and power to release thee."

2. But God decreed to permit Pilate and Herod to do what they wanted to do.

3. Therefore Herod and Pilate and the Gentiles were gathered together for to do whatsoever the hand and counsel of God determined to be done.

1. The Bible states Pilate, Herod, and the Gentiles acted freely in the crucifying of Christ.

2. But some people would put a force or power upon Pilate, Herod and the Gentiles to stop him.

3. These people then would seek to hinder free agency and force Pilate against his will to set Christ at liberty.

In the eternal mind of God (Isa. 57:15; 14:24) there is an eternal purpose or plan (Eph. 3:11) which is to redeem a people (Eph. 1:4-6) and bring them into glory (Rm. 8:28-30); since in the eternal mind of God all the conditions, causes, acts of free creatures with all contingencies thereof also were known to exist, the almighty God in his wisdom decreed all things with the purpose of bringing his redeemed people home to glory.

NOTE: God's mind is eternal and free, and it was not forced or coerced by any power because there was no power or being besides God in eternity.

1. God is eternal and his mind is eternal. Isa. 57:15
2. Whatever God thought in his being, he decreed to be his purpose. Isa. 14:24

NOTE: The eternal purpose was in God's eternal mind, and this purpose is the election of his people; it also provides for their births into the human family and their salvation in time; but this purpose never ends but brings His redeemed people home to glory and eternity future. They will bring glory to God which will be the zenith of his decrees.

1. Eph. 3:11 "According to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus.
2. Rm. 8:28-31 "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God to them who are the called according to his purpose. For whom he did foreknow, them he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover whom he did predestinate them he also called; and whom he called, them he also justified; and whom he justified, them he also glorified."

3. Eph. 1:4 "According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world that we should be holy and without blame before him in love having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will.

THINGS TO CONSIDER:

1. In order for his redeemed people to be born into the human family, God decreed all things to protect his eternal purpose. a. Jer. 1:5 "Before I formed thee in the belly, I knew thee; and before thou comest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations. b. I Kings 13:2, "A child shall be born unto the house of David, Josiah by name." (This was 300 years before the baby was born, yet God named him.)

2. In order to protect his eternal purpose, God has decreed storms, wars, death, earthquakes and whatever must be in order to bring his redeemed people home; Rev. 19:1-6 says, "And after this these things I heard a great voice of much people in heaven saying, Alleluia, Salvation and glory, and honor, and power, unto the Lord our God: For true and righteous are thy judgments: For he hath judged the great whore, which did corrupt the earth with her

fornication, and hath avenged the blood of his servants at her hand."

1. God's mind is eternal and free because God is eternal and free. (Isa. 57:15; 14:24)

2. But as God was not coerced or forced to do anything but from his own eternal "thought" came his eternal purpose. (Isa. 14:24) 3. Therefore the eternal purpose of God is not dependent on any action other than the thoughts of God's eternal mind.

1. God's eternal purpose is to elect, redeem and glorify a people and bring them home to be with him. (Rom. 8:28-31; Eph. 1:4)

2. But for all these things to be certain, God had to decree the birth, the life, the salvation, the glorification of these people. (Jer. 1:5; Eph. 1:4, I Kings 13:2)

3. Therefore all things as earthquakes, wars, floods and ten thousand second acts were planned in order to fulfill the certain glorification of the redeemed people of God.

Rev. 19:1-6.

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