

# **GOD'S ETERNAL PLAN AND PURPOSE CONCERNING ALL THINGS WERE EXECUTED (ACTUALIZED BY HIS DECREE) IN ETERNITY**

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God's purpose in eternity is in fact His accomplishments, which were indeed enacted (actualized) by His Decree in eternity. One's recognition of this fact renders the extent of all depictions of actions in time as solely manifestations of such. When this cogitation is properly embraced, God's purpose is solidly entrenched in His sovereignty, ordered by His omniscience (infinite wisdom), ratified by His omnipotence (limitless power) and cemented by His inherent immutability (inability to change) and can never fail. This is demonstratively documented by the proper scriptural exegesis of God's purpose and its eternal fulfillment being of the same extent in Romans 8:28-30. Paul reveals to the enlightened mind that the foreknowledge enjoined the foreordained, the foreordained enjoined the called, the called enjoined the justified and the justified enjoined the glorified all by enactment by His eternal Decree. In this light, congruency and concomitancy exude the distinction of eternity's characteristic of non-sequential application.

In this sense, God's perception of things is equal to their actual existence. Thus His Decree of things is equal to their enacted application. God's purpose of manifestation in physical creation is necessary exclusively for the testimony of His eternal workings to those whom He has created. Moreover, His purpose of eternal Decree is necessary in declaration of the spiritual state of His fixed purpose and consummated progress, which is in essence the demarcation of existence. The unbridled doctrinal teaching of all existence having been actualized exclusively in God's Decree in eternity, stands essentially alone in its prioritized emphasis on God's eternal purpose. Eternal enactment places the entire gamut of God's purpose in the foreground and mitigates all doctrinal conceptions of Synergism and Free Will Theology as theologically inconsistent and more anthropological inspired.

Humanistic infusions emphasize man's will rather than God's will. Those who embrace Free Will Theology militate against the sovereignty of God in that they are always found raising a similar question Paul anticipated in Romans 9:14, i.e., "is there unrighteousness with God?" Paul was so outraged by the questioning of God's justice that he dismissed the question with a decisive denial. To this assertion the Apostle decried, "who are you old man that reviled against God, shall the clay say to the potter why have you made me thus?" Depraved minds accuse God of being unjust in His purpose that He saved some and not all. In corroboration, John, in his vision of the Revelation of Jesus Christ, heard the blending of the song of Moses with the song of the Lamb: "...Great and marvelous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints" (Revelation 15:3).

There is no inequality in God's ways. How can man on such a low level of depravity rise to the level of questioning God's justice? Sovereignty evinces that there is no superior to whom God is accountable for His deeds. Therefore, God cannot be guilty of what has been construed by some as unrighteous arbitrariness. Advocates of free will theology are incapable of making the proper distinction between God's purpose that was actualized in His Decree in eternity and the manifestation of such in time. Although these two are illustratively different in their applications, they are not contradictory in their processes. God's purpose and their enactments are from eternity but His manifested exhibitions of them are for mankind's comprehension in the sphere of time. God's eternal purpose cannot be hindered because it is what God has already accomplished through the perception of such by Decree. On the other hand, God's commands and directives are what man should do in alignment with God's nature but not necessarily what has been decreed by God that man shall do. It is nonsensical to purport that mankind can propose to reject God's eternal purpose; which is the same as saying man can propose to defeat God's purpose, which is directly opposite to what God has corroboratively stated in the prophetic writings: "...I have spoken it, I will also bring it to pass; I have purposed it, I will also do it" (Isaiah 46:11).

God's statements of commands and directives are generally conveyed as documentation for manifestation purposes while His eternal purposes are particularly enacted by their perception of having been actualized in His Decree. There are a plethora of scriptural conveyances in testimony to this, e.g., "God commands all men every where to repent" (Acts 17:30) but He only decreed it to some, e.g., "Then, indeed, also to the nations did God give the reformation to life" (Acts 11:18). In this must be viewed mankind's inability, apart from God grace to repent as his fault in manifestation but only as it expresses what was previously determined. Hence, it is necessary to state that God cannot be blamed for man's depravity, as it is God's purpose rather than His command that guarantees what everything will be manifestly accomplished according to His Counsel and Decree. Note, the Greek word for "purpose" is *proqe,sij* (**proth-ehs-ees**) or the previous placement of a purpose. This usage is divided into two divisions: there are (1) three references to men (Acts 11:23; 27:13; II Timothy 3:10) and (2) five references to God's eternal purpose in the salvation of His elect (Romans 8:28; 9:11; Ephesians 1:11; 3:11; II Timothy 1:9). The verb form *protiqe,mai* (**prot-eeth-ehm-eh**) is used only three times (Romans 1:13; 3:25; Ephesians 1:9) and is a compound word made up of the preposition *pro* (**pro**), which means "before" and the verb *tiqe,mi* (**teeth-ee-mee**), which denotes "to place" or "to purpose."

Therefore God "foreknew" in eternity through actualization of His purpose in His Decree; exactly what is done and will definitely manifestly "come to pass." In the wilderness, the "shewbread" was publicly displayed to remind Israel of the manna provided for them in their wilderness journey. Here God manifestly displayed His eternal purpose in His word to remind His people that their salvation was no afterthought with Him; in this sense, our salvation was also God's forethought. Hence God has displayed before us not only what He eternally purposed and actualized in eternity but also His process of manifesting such in time. Thus God's purpose is the same as His execution of the thing purposed in His Decree. For example, God's purpose to create is the same as creation having been actualized itself by His Decree. Moreover, His purpose to save entailed the enactment of certain ones to salvation itself.

Accordingly, creation and salvation coexist within God's purpose, which actuated them in eternity. Here the question might be asked, why did God wait so long to manifest creation and then subsequent salvation for His elect? The answer is: God did not wait because waiting implies time, and there is no manifestation of occurrences and time in eternity. Among the references to the salvation of God's elect from that is from eternity:

(1) God's purpose to save designated ones by grace was before the world began— "Who saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works but according to His own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began" (II Timothy 1:9).

(2) The wisdom that conceived the plan to save the elect was ordained before the world began— "But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory" (I Corinthians 2:7).

(3) The promise of eternal life was made by God before the world began— "In hope of eternal life, which God, who cannot lie, promised before the world began" (Titus 1:2).

(4) The Lamb was slain in the purpose of God before the foundation of the world— "Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world but was manifest in these last times for you" (I Peter 1:20). " ..... the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world" (Revelation 13:8).

(5) The election and actuation of the elect's salvation was made before the foundation of the world— "According as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, for our being holy and without blame before Him" (Ephesians 1:4).

God has only one purpose but it is manifested in many parts. The eternality of God's purpose means that all of its exhibited parts are but one intuition. This is corroborated in the Old Testament writings: God "is in one mind, and who can turn Him? and what His soul desires, even that He does" (Job 23:13). Man has succession of thoughts but God never has a new thought. What He thought He thinks. Nothing can be added to God's mind nor is there succession in the execution of His purpose. Succession is related to time and not to eternity but does not destroy the idea of order in God's purpose. There was no succession in God's thinking in eternity because God is in one mind. This truth is revealed to the finite minds of God's elect in various degrees. Humanly speaking, a person with a creative mind visualizes something as a whole before the development of its parts. Hence in a limited view, the ability to form an idea of a thing as a whole before it is executed in the order which its intention requires; is not beyond the range of even a finite mind. In the unlimited view, God is eternal as, there is a non-sequential but Spiritual order in God's plan of salvation, which He actualized in eternity before such were ever manifested in creation and time. This enlightenment is extremely beneficial to the elect's comprehension of what security actually engenders.