

Section IV: What Happened?

10. The Divine Decree(s):

- A. God' Sovereignty in Eternity Past chose to manifest His Essence to share His love with others and thus glorify Himself. Psa 19:1; Psa 29:2-3; 1 John 4:16-19; John 3:16**
- B. This would be called The Divine Decree as all others would proceed from this objective.**
- C. From an infinite number of possibilities, He decided to proceed by creating Matter, Creatures, Space and Time. Rom 1:20**
- D. Space was created so that Matter could be distinguished. Gen 1:1**
- E. He chose to create other beings in a manner consistent with His Essence, not necessarily compatible.**
 - 1. There is not, never was and never can be any Being greater than or equal to God**
 - 2. So of necessity, any created being would have to hold a lesser status.**
 - 3. God did not need glorification of Himself by Himself but when the created being realized and embraced the God who is love He would be glorified as a result.**
 - 4. Neither did He need to be loved by another being, but He unselfishly chose to share Himself.**
 - 5. Of necessity, all that proceeds from God would be finite.**
- F. To expand His love into relationship with another creature required a Plan for fellowship compatible with his Essence.**
- G. This Plan required Grace for He would be dealing with lesser creatures. Luke 6:36; 2 Tim 1:9**
- H. God could have created a computer-like being that had been programmed only to love and glorify Him, but He decided to go another step and establish something greater.**
- I. So for a true potential depth of a love relationship and thus greater glory to Himself, God chose to make creatures with the perfect ability to choose, but not the ability to choose perfectly every time. Gen 1:26-27**
- J. To parts of His living creation (mankind and angels) He chose to give the ability to decide between various options. Decisions by definition**

- means there must be multiple options, so included in volitional beings is the ability to reject a command. John 8:54
- K. This establishes the opportunity for God to manifest His essence to a greater degree. Luke 6:32-36
- L. The sequence of Divine Decrees to this point includes:
1. God chose to manifest His Essence to share His love with the result of glorifying Himself.
 2. He selected Matter, Creatures, Space and Time as the means with which to do it.
 3. He chose to create other beings in a manner consistent with His Essence, though not necessarily compatible.
 4. To share His love He designed a means for fellowship with His Creatures compatible with His Essence.
 5. Of necessity these Creatures had to be lesser than He, so grace would have to be the policy to have the potential for fellowship.
 6. To show His love to the greatest degree God gave His Moral Creation the ability to reject His commands. Gen 1:26
- M. From these initial desires of God, other Decrees were made concerning the habitat of these finite beings and how He would create or manufacture them. Gen 1:1-31
- N. God is the Primary Cause of the existence of Volition outside of Himself, but is not the Primary Cause of the decisions made by that volition.
1. The fact that creatures are the Primary Cause of their decisions makes them solely accountable for their decisions. John 3:16,36
 2. Being Omniscient, God foreknew every decision each creature would make. Rom 8:29; 1 Pet 1:1-2
 3. Knowing of an event beforehand does not make one responsible for that event.
 4. His Plan, based in Grace, established and accounted for all decisions, whether for or against Him.
 5. The term "Divine Decrees," should therefore be extended only to His Primary Causes.
- O. God desires the best for His creatures. 2 Pet 3:9; 1 Tim 2:3-4
- P. Any course of action chosen by His creatures will demonstrate God's Essence, whether for blessing or cursing, in His way according to His timing.

- Q. God is so great that He does not need to control the decisions of men and angels as a Primary Cause to bring about the prophetic word concerning salvation and the events of history.**
- 1. His Plan clearly allows for decisions other than obedience to His rules. Gen 3:1-7**
 - 2. It is not that God is impotent to overrule volition, but that He chooses to not do so. If He chose to overrule all volition, all would be saved.**
 - 3. He may choose to overrule the speech or actions of any part of His creation. Cf Balaam**
 - 4. He may choose to use weather, natural phenomena, life, death, health, other material objects, animals, or mechanical malfunctions at any time, in any way and at any intensity, to direct the course of history, but mankind can choose whether to be on the right or wrong side of it.**
 - 5. God intervenes in history to bless, discipline or both.**
 - 6. Being Omniscient, His Plan would account for all secondary and tertiary causes.**
 - 7. The First Advent itself was a testimony to a magnitude of evil decisions that actually played into God's Redemptive work.**
- R. At the center of the Angelic Conflict is the relationship between the Sovereignty of God and the Volition of mankind and angels.**
- 1. Sovereignty comes from the concept of Rulership/Kingship. Deut 4:39; 1 Chr 29:11-12; Rev 19:16**
 - 2. Rulers pronounce decrees, make statutes and give commands. Esther 2:8; 3:15; 4:3 et al**
 - 3. Obedience requires compliance with the authority's commands and thus involves choices. Gen 3:1-7**
 - 4. Judgments in the form of punishment are prescribed and rendered for commands not obeyed. Dan 3:8-12; John 3:36**
 - 5. When a Volitional Creature is not involved, the decree of God is fact. Gen 1:3-25**
 - 6. By decree, God made Volitional Creatures personally responsible for their decisions. Gen 2:16-17; Ezek 28:15**
 - 7. Throughout history many have misunderstood the relationship between God's Kingship and His Omnipotence. If God must force His love upon His creation (i.e. irresistible grace), the response is coerced and not real.**