



The Nature of God's Decree and Foreordination

As we consider the decree of God (His eternal purposes and plans), let us understand that they reflect His very nature. Reflecting on God's attributes helps us define and understand His purposes. In relation to His decree then we must recall that God's nature is:

- **Holy:** God is absolutely perfect and pure.
- **Omnipotent:** God is all-powerful and free to do all His holy will.
- **Omniscient:** God is all-knowing, having perfect knowledge of past, present and future events.
- **Omnipresent:** God exists in all space and in all of past, present, and future eternity.
- **Eternal:** God has always been, is now, and always will be.
- **Self-Existent:** God had no beginning, will have no end, and is the source of all beings, things, knowledge, and power.
- **Sovereign:** God is the supreme authority; His decrees are irresistible.

- **Wise:** God's plans all work together in harmony to accomplish His purposes.
- **Just and Righteous:** God cannot do anything evil, unjust, or wrong.

Therefore in light of God's nature, let us now consider the nature of His decrees.

God's Decrees are:

- **Glorious:** The chief end or final cause contemplated in all God's decrees is His own glory. Because God is infinite and perfect, the revelation of His glory and excellency is the highest of all existing purposes. All other purposes of creation, therefore, are properly and necessarily subordinate to that end.

Romans 11:36: For from Him and through Him and to Him are all things. To Him be the glory forever. Amen.

Question #88: What is the chief end of all God's decrees? _____ Why is it right and proper that this be the chief end of all God's decrees? _____

- **Many and one:** God's decrees are all reducible to one eternal purpose. When we speak of God's decrees as one eternal purpose we call it God's Decree, singular. All of the manifold events of history form one great purpose or plan. Because God's knowledge perfectly encompasses past, present, and future, He approved of His plan, from beginning to end, at the time He made it. Charles Hodge explains, "*It is inconsistent with the idea of absolute perfection, that the purposes of God are successive, or that He ever purposes what He did not originally intend: or that one part of His plan is independent with other parts. It is one scheme and therefore one purpose.*"²

Isaiah 41:4: Who has performed and accomplished it, **Calling forth the generations from the beginning? I, the LORD,** am the first, and with the last, I am He.

Isaiah 46:9-10: ⁹Remember the former things long past, For I am God and there is no other; I am God and there is no one like me, ¹⁰**Declaring the end from the beginning** And from ancient times things which have not been done, Saying, "**My purpose will be established, And I will accomplish all My good pleasure.**"

Isaiah 48:3: **I declared the former things long ago** And they went forth from My mouth, and I proclaimed them. **Suddenly I acted, and they came to pass.**

Question #89: Explain in your own words how God's decrees reduce to form one great purpose or plan. _____

²Charles Hodge, *Systematic Theology*, vol. 1 (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1993), 537.