

Question #91: Explain in your own words how divine foreknowledge necessitates that God's decrees comprehend all the events of human history. _____

- **Immutable:** God's decrees are perfect and therefore cannot change. This is to say that whatever God has determined will come to pass, because He has also determined the means by which they come to pass.

Jeremiah 4:28: For this the earth shall mourn, And the heavens above be dark,
Because I have spoken, **I have purposed, And I will not change My mind, nor will I turn from it.**

Psalms 33:11: The **counsel of the LORD stands forever, The plans of His heart** from generation to generation.

Question #92: What specific comfort do you derive from the fact that God's decrees are perfect and therefore cannot change? _____

- **Inclusive of the ends and the means:** God's decrees ordain all of the means by which His purposes are established. Since God's purpose is being carried out in an infinitely complex world of causes and effects, His purposes include all of the causes and effects necessary to accomplish them. Clearly, His eternal plan includes all of the means by which His ends are attained. *The Westminster Confession of Faith (On Providence: articles 1, 2, 3)* explains:

1. God, the great Creator of all things, doth uphold, direct dispose, and govern all creatures, actions, and things, from the greatest even to the least, by his most wise and holy providence, according to his infallible foreknowledge, and the free and immutable counsel of his own will, to the praise of the glory of his wisdom, power, justice, goodness, and mercy.

2. Although in relation to the foreknowledge and decree of God, the first cause, all things come to pass immutably and infallibly, yet, by the same providence, he ordereth them to fall out according to the nature of second causes, either necessarily, freely, or contingently.

3. God, in his ordinary providence, maketh use of means, yet is free to work without, above, and against them, at his pleasure.

Consider how even the free choices of people ultimately accomplish the eternal purposes of God. Scripture clearly affirms that the decisions we make every day are part of God's means of fulfilling His decree.

Acts 4:27-28: ²⁷For truly in this city there were gathered together against Thy holy servant Jesus, whom Thou didst anoint, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, along with the Gentiles and the peoples of Israel, ²⁸**to do whatever Thy hand and Thy purpose predestined to occur.**

Ephesians 3:8-12: ⁸To me, the very least of all saints, this grace was given, to preach to the Gentiles the unfathomable riches of Christ, ⁹and to bring to light

what is the administration of the mystery which for ages has been hidden in God, who created all things; ¹⁰in order that the manifold wisdom of God might now be made known through the church to the rulers and the authorities in the heavenly places. ¹¹This was in accordance with **the eternal purpose which He carried out in Christ Jesus our Lord**, ¹²in whom we have boldness and confident access through faith in Him.

Question #93: After considering the infinite number of complex causes and effects involved in the carrying out God's purposes in this world, write a short prayer of praise extolling God's amazing providence.

- **Efficacious:** God's decrees will surely come to pass. Consider how predictive prophecy has affirmed this time and again.

Daniel 11:36: Then the king will do as he pleases, and he will exalt and magnify himself above every god, and will speak monstrous things against the God of gods; and he will prosper until the indignation is finished, **for that which is decreed will be done.**

Lamentations 3:37-38: ³⁷Who is there who speaks and it comes to pass, **Unless the Lord has commanded it?** ³⁸**Is it not from the mouth of the Most High That both good and ill go forth?**

Isaiah 25:1: O LORD, Thou art my God; I will exalt Thee, I will give thanks to Thy name; **For Thou hast worked wonders, Plans formed long ago, with perfect faithfulness.**

Consider how the decrees of God not only declare the certainty of all of His promises but also His threatenings. When God threatens the wicked with destruction, He is not playing games. He will make good on His threats if His warnings are not heeded.

Psalms 145:20: The LORD keeps all who love Him; But **all the wicked, He will destroy.**

Genesis 6:13: Then God said to Noah, "The end of all flesh has come before Me; for the earth is filled with violence because of them; and **behold, I am about to destroy them with the earth.**"

Matthew 10:28: And do not fear those who kill the body, but are unable to kill the soul; but rather **fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.**

Likewise, when God promises to bless His own people, He will surely do it. The promises of God are as sure as the sun is bright! God's faithfulness in blessing His people, and their delight in glorifying Him are in accord with God's eternal purposes which He has purposed in Christ Jesus.

Romans 8:28: And we know that **God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God**, to those who are called according to His purpose.

2 Corinthians 1:20: For **as many as may be the promises of God, in Him they are yes**; wherefore also by Him is our Amen to the glory of God through us.

1 Peter 1:3-7: ³Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, **who according to His great mercy has caused us to be born again** to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, ⁴**to obtain an inheritance which is imperishable and undefiled and will not fade away, reserved in heaven for you**, ⁵**who are protected by the power of God through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed**

in the last time. ⁶In this you greatly rejoice, even though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been distressed by various trials, ⁷**that the proof of your faith,** being more precious than gold which is perishable, even though tested by fire, **may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ.**

Question #94: Describe the confidence and security you have in your faith because God's decrees are efficacious. _____
