Of the Decrees of God

Hugh Binning

Agape Chapel Ministries
P.O. Box 59084
Norwalk, CA 90652
USA

Booklets & Tracts are given freely.
Do not sell!

Web: www.sounddoctrine.net
e-mail: acm@sounddoctrine.net

Hugh Binning
Of the Decrees of God
Hugh Binning

"Who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will."
Eph 1:11.

"He is in one mind, and who can turn him? and what his soul desireth, even that he doeth."
Job 23:13

Having spoken something before of God, in his nature and being and properties, we come, in the next place, to consider his glorious majesty, as he stands in some nearer relation to his creatures, the work of his hands. For we must conceive the first rise of all things in the world to be in this self-being; the first conception of them to be in the womb of God's everlasting purpose and decree; which, in due time, according to his appointment, brings forth the child of the creature to the light of actual existence and being. It is certain that his majesty might have endured for ever, and possessed himself without any of these things. If he had never resolved to create any thing without himself, he had been blessed then, as now, because of his full and absolute self-sufficient perfection. His purposing to make a world, and his doing of it, adds nothing to his inward blessedness and contentment. This glorious and holy One encloses within his own being all imaginable perfections, in an infinite and transcendent manner; that if you remove all created ones, you diminish nothing; if you add them all, you increase nothing. Therefore it was in the superabundance of his perfection, that he resolved to show his glory thus in the world. It is the creature's indigence and limited condition which maketh it needful to go without its own compass, for the happiness of its own being. Man cannot be happy in loving himself. He is not satisfied with his own intrinsic perfections, but he must diffuse himself by his affections and desires and endeavours, and, as it were, walks abroad upon these legs, to fetch in some supply from the creature or Creator. The creature is constrained out of some necessity thus to go out of itself, which speaks much indigence and want within itself. But it is
not so with his majesty. His own glorious Being contents him; his happiness is to know that, and delight in it, because it comprehends in itself all that is at all possible, in the most excellent and perfect manner that is conceivable; — nay, infinitely beyond what can be conceived by any but himself. So he needs not go outside himself to seek love or delight, for it is all within him, and it cannot be without his own Being, unless it flow from within him. Therefore ye may find in Scripture what complacency God hath in himself, and the Father in the Son, and the Son in the Father. We find, Prov. 8, how the wisdom of God, our Lord Jesus, was the Father's delight from all eternity, and the Father again his delight; for he rejoiced always before him, ver. 30. And this was an all-sufficient possession that one had of another, ver. 22. The love between the Father and the Son is holden out as the first pattern of all loves and delights, John 17:23, 24. This then flows from the infinite excess of perfection and exudation of self-being, that his majesty is pleased to come without himself, to manifest his own glory in the works of his hands, to decree and appoint other things beside himself, and to execute that decree. We may consider in these words some particulars for our edification:

I. That the Lord hath from eternity purposed within himself and decreed to manifest his own glory in the making and ruling of the world; that there is a counsel and purpose of his will which reaches all things, which have been, are now, or are to be after this. This is clear, for he works all things "according to the counsel of his own will."

II. That his mind and purpose is one mind, one counsel. I mean not only one for ever, that is, perpetual and unchangeable, as the words speak, — but also one for all, that is, with one simple act or resolution of his holy will he hath determined all these several things, all their times, their conditions, their circumstances.

III. That whatsoever he hath from all eternity purposed, he in time practiseth it, and comes to execution and working; so that
The calamities of earthquake, the devastations of storm, the
destruotions of war, and all the terrible catastrophes of plague,
have only been co-workers with God -- slaves compelled to
tug the 'galley of the divine purpose' across the sea of time.
From every evil, good has come; and the more the evil has
accumulated, the more has God glorified himself in bringing
out at last his grand, his everlasting design.

God has only one purpose, for all history is but one.
There are many scenes, but it is one drama;
there are many pages, but it is one book;
there are many leaves, but it is one tree.
There are many lords and many rulers,
yet is there but one empire, and God the only Potentate.

Charles H. Spurgeon

---

Agape Chapel Ministries,
P.O.Box 59084
Norwalk, CA 90652 USA
(Free List of Free Materials)
of creatures. Creatures must have some example and copy to look to; but what was his pattern? 'Who hath been his counselor' to teach him? Rom. 11:34. Who gave him the first rudiments or principles of that art? Surely none. He had no pattern given him, — not the least idea of any of these things furnished him, — but it is absolutely and solely his own wise contrivance. — 2d, This purpose of God is most free and absolute; there is no cause, no reason, why he hath thus disposed all things, and not otherwise, as he might have done, but his own good will and pleasure. If it be so in a matter of deepest concernment, (Rom 9:18,.) it must be so also in all other things. We may find, indeed, many inferior causes, — many peculiar reasons for such and such a way of administration, — many ends and uses for which they serve, — for there is nothing that his majesty hath appointed but it is for some use and reason, — yet we must rise above all these, and ascend into the tower of his most high will and pleasure, which is founded on a depth of wisdom; and from thence we shall behold all the order, administration, and use of the creatures to depend. And herein is a great difference between his majesty's purpose and ours. You know there is still something presented under the notion of good and convenient, that moves our will, and inclines us for its own goodness to seek after it, and so to fall upon the means to compass it. Therefore, the end which we propose to ourselves hath its influence upon our purposes, and pleasures them; so that from it the motion seems to proceed first, and not so much from within; but there is no created thing can thus determine his majesty. Himself, his own glory, is the great end which he loves for itself, and for which he loves other things. But among other things, though there be many of them ordained one for another's use, yet his will and pleasure is the original of that order. He doth not find it, but makes it. You see all the creatures below are appointed for man, as their immediate and next end, for his use and service. But was it man's goodness and perfection which did move and incline his majesty to this appointment? No, indeed! But of his own good in it, and who can turn him? And that mind is good to them that trust in him; and therefore, who can turn away our good? Let men consult and imagine what they please, — let them pass votes and decrees what to do with his people, — yet it is all to no purpose, for there is a counsel above, an older counsel, which must stand and take place in all generations. If men's conclusions be not according to the counsel of his will, they are but imaginary dreams, like the fancies of a distracted person, who imagining himself a king, sits down on the throne, and gives out decrees and ordinances. May not he who sits in heaven laugh at the foolishness and madness of men who act in all things as if they had no dependence on him, and go about their business as if it were not contrived already? It is a ridiculous thing for men to order their business, and settle their own conclusions, without once minding One above them, who hath not only a negative, but an affirmative vote in all things. It is true that God, in his deep wisdom, hath kept up his particular purposes secret, that men may walk according to an appointed rule, and use all means for compassing their intended ends; and therefore it is well said, Prudens futuri temporis exitum caliginosà nocte premít Deus (The All-Knowing God holds future events in his grasp as they proceed out of the darkness of night). But yet withal we should mind that of James, 'if the Lord will,' and go about all things even the most probably, with submission to his will and pleasure. And therefore, when men go without their bounds, either in fear or danger, or joy conceived in successes, — ridetque, si mortalis ultra fas trepidet (He will smile, who fears death more than divine judgement), &c. — Excess of fear, excess of hope, excess of joy in these outward things is, as it were, ridiculous to him, who hath all these things appointed with him. To him be praise and glory.

~*~
as ye change? When ye are in a good temper, ye think he loves you: when it is not so, ye cannot believe but he is angry, and hates you. Is not this to speak quite contrary to the word; that he is a God that changes, — that he is not in one mind, but now in one, and then in another, as oft as the inconstant wind of a soul's self-pleasing humour turns about? Here is your rest and confidence, if you will be established, not within yourselves, — not upon marks and signs within you, which ebb and flow as the sea, and change as the moon, — but, upon his unchangeable nature and faithful promises. This we desire to hold out to you all, as one ground for all. You would every one have some particular ground in your own disposition and condition, and think it general doctrine only which layeth it not home so; but believe it, I know no ground of real soul-establishment, but general truths and principles common to you all; and our business is not to lay any other foundation, — or more foundations, according to your different conditions, — but to lay this one foundation, Christ and God unchangeable; and to exhort every one of you to make that general foundation your own in particular, by leaning to it, and building upon it, and clinging to it. All other are sandy and ruinous.

Let us now, in this sad time, press consolation from this. The Lord's hand is in all this. It is immediate in every dispensation, and it is only carnal mindedness that cannot see him stretching out his hand to every man, with his own portion of affliction. Know this one thing, that God is in one mind; for all these many ways and judgments, he is in one mind, — to gather the saints, to build up the Church, the body of Christ. This is his end, — all other businesses are in by the by, and subservient to this. Therefore he will change it as he pleases, but his great purpose of good to his people all the world cannot hinder. Let us then establish our souls in this consideration; all is clear above, albeit cloudy below; all is calm in heaven, albeit tempestuous here upon earth. There is no confusion, no disorder in his mind. Though we think the world out of course, and that all things reel about with confusion, he hath one mind

will he makes such things serve man, that all of them together may be for his own glory. — 3d, The Lord's decree is the original source of all things that are, or have been, or are to come. This is the first original of them all, to which they must be reduced as their spring and fountain. All of you may understand that there are many things possible, which yet actually will never be. The Lord's power and omnipotency is of a further extent than his decree and purpose. His power is natural and essential to his being; his decree is of choice, and voluntary. The Father could have sent a legion of angels to have delivered his Son; the Son could have asked them, but neither of them would do it, Matt. 26:53. The Lord could have raised up children to Abraham out of stones, but he would not, Matt. 3:9. His power then comprehends within its reach all possible things which do not in their own nature and proper conception imply a contradiction; so that infinite worlds of creatures more perfect than this, — numbers of angels and men above these, — and creatures in glory surpassing them again, — are within the compass of the boundless power and omnipotency of God. But yet for all this it might have fallen out that nothing should actually and really have been, unless his majesty had of his own free will decreed what is, or hath been, or is to be. His will determines his power, and, as it were, puts it in the nearest capacity to act and exercise itself. Here, then, we must look for the first beginning of all things that are. They are conceived in the womb of the Lord's everlasting purpose, as he speaks, Zeph. 2:2. The decree is, as it were, with child of beings, Isa. 44:7. It is God's royal prerogative to appoint things to come, and none can share with him in it. From whence is it, I pray you, that of so many worlds which his power could have framed, this one is brought to light? Is it not because this one was formed, as it were, in the belly of his eternal counsel and will? From whence is it that so many men are, and no more — that our Lord Jesus was slain, when the power of God might have kept him alive, — that those men, Judas, &c. were the doers of it, when others might have done
it? From whence are all those actions, good or evil, under the sun, which he might have prevented, but from his good will and pleasure, from his determinate counsel? Acts 4:28. Can you find the original of these in the creature, why it is thus, and why not otherwise? Can you conceive why, of all the infinite numbers of possible beings these are, and no other? And, what hath translated that number of creatures, which is, from the state of pure possibility to futurition or actual being, but the decisive vote of God's everlasting purpose and counsel? Therefore we should always conceive, that the creatures, and all their actions, which have, or will have any being in the world, have first had a being in the womb of God's eternal counsel, and that his will and pleasure hath passed upon all things that are and are not. His counsel has concluded of things that have been, or will be, that thus they shall be; and his counsel determined of all other things which are also possible, that they shall never come forth into the light of the world, but remain in the dark bowels of omnipotency, that so we may give him the glory of all things that are not, and that are at all. — Then, 4th. We should consider the extent of his decree and counsel; it is passed upon all things; it is universal, reaching every being or action of the universe. This is the strain of the whole Scripture. He did not, as some dream, once create the creatures in a good state, and put them in capacity henceforth to preserve them selves, or exercise their own virtue and power, without dependence on Him, as an artificer makes an horologe, and orders it in all things, that it may do its business without him. He is not only a general original of action and motion, as if he would command a river to flow by his appointed channels; as if he did only work, and rule the world by attorneys and ambassadors. That is the weakness and infirmity of earthly kings, that they must substitute deputies for themselves. But this King appoints all immediately, and disposes upon all the particular actions of his creatures, good or evil; and so he is universal absolute Lord of the creature, of its being and doing. It were a long work to rehearse what the accordingly they must be, — and seeing none can turn him from his way, — O then, Christians, learn to commit yourselves to him in all things, both for this life and the life to come! Why are ye so vain and foolish as to depend and hang upon poor, vain, depending creatures? Why do ye not forsake yourselves? Why do ye not forsake all other things as empty shadows? Are not all created powers, habits, gifts, graces, strength, riches, &c. like the idols in comparison of him, who can neither do good, neither can they do ill? Cursed is he 'that trusteth in man,' Jer. 17:5. There needs no other curse than the very disappointment you shall meet withal. Consider, I beseech you, that our God can do all things, whatever he pleases, in heaven and earth, and that none can obstruct his pleasure. Blessed is that soul for whom the counsel of his will is engaged. And it is engaged for all that trust in him. He can accomplish his good pleasure in thy behalf, either without or against means; all impediments and thorns set in his way, he can burn them up. You who are heirs of the promises, O know your privilege! What his soul desireth, he doth even that; and what he hath seriously promised to you, he desires. If you ask, who are heirs of the promises? I would answer, simply those and those only, who do own them and challenge them, and cling to them for their life and salvation; those who seek the inheritance only by the promise, and whose soul desires them and embraces them. O if you would observe how unlike ye are to God! Ye change often, ye turn often out of the way; but that were not so ill if ye did not imagine him to be like yourselves, and it is unbelief which makes him like to yourselves, — when your frame and tender disposition changes, — when presence and access to God is removed. That is wrong, it speaks out a mortal creature indeed; but if it be so, O do no more wrong! Do not, by your suspicions and jealousies, and questionings of him, imagine that he is like unto you, and changed also. That is a double wrong and dishonour to his majesty. Hath he not said, 'I am the Lord, and change not.' 'He is in one mind, who can turn him?' How comes it then, that ye doubt of his love as oft
which is the great sin condemned in servants; to put the mouth
in the dust, and to keep silence, because he doth it — 'I was
dumb, I opened not my mouth, because thou didst it.' There is
submission indeed, — silence of mind and mouth, — a
restraint put upon the spirit to think nothing grudgingly of him
for any thing he doth. It is certainly the greatest fault of
Christians, and ground of many more, that ye do not look to
God, but to creatures in any thing that befalls you; therefore
there are so frequent risings of spirits against his yoke, frequent
spurnings against it, as Ephraim, unaccustomed with the yoke.

So do ye; and this it is only makes it heavy and troublesome.
If there were no more reason for it but your own gain, it is the
only way to peace and quietness. Durum: sed levius fit
patientia, quicquid corrigere est nefas. Your impatience cannot
help you, but hurt you, it is the very yoke of your yoke; but
quiet and silent stooping makes it easy in itself, and brings in
more help beside, even divine help. Learn this, I beseech you,
to get your own wills abandoned, and your spirits subdued to
God, both in the point of duty and dispensation. If duties
commanded cross thy spirit — as certainly the reality and
exercise of godliness must be unpleasant to any nature — know
what thou art called to, to quiet thy own will to him, to give up
thyself to his pleasure singly, without so much respect to thy
own pleasure or gain. Learn to obey him simply because he
commands, though no profit redound to thee; and by this
means thou shalt in due time have more sweet peace and real
gain, though thou intendedst it not. And in case any
dispensation cross thy mind, let not thy mind rise up against it.

Do not fall out with Providence, but commit thy way wholly
to him, and let him do what he pleases in that. Be thou minding
thy duty. Be not anxious in that, but be diligent in this, and
thou shalt be the only gainer by it; besides, the honour
redounds to him.

Then I would exhort you, from this ground, to trust in him.
Seeing he alone is the absolute Sovereign Lord of all things, —
seeing he has passed a determination upon all things, and

Scripture speaks of this kind; but O! that ye would read them
oftener, and ponder them better, how there is nothing in this
world, — which may seem to fall out by chance to you, that
you know not how it is to come to pass, and can see no cause
nor reason of it, — but it falls out by the holy will of our
blessed Father. Be it of greater or less moment, — or be it a
hair of thy head fallen, or thy head cut off, — the most
dependent and contingent thing, — though it surprised the
whole world of men and angels, that they should wonder from
whence it did proceed, — it is no surprise to him, for he not
only knew it, but appointed it. The most certain and necessary
thing, according to the course of nature, it hath no certainty
but from his appointment, who hath established such a course in
the creatures, and which he can suspend when he pleaseth. Be
it the sin of men and devils, which seems most opposite to his
holiness, yet even that cannot appear in the world of beings, if
it were not, in a holy, righteous, and permessive way, first
conceived in the womb of his eternal counsel, and if it were not
determined by him, for holy and just ends, Acts 4:28.

The second thing propounded is, that his mind and counsel is
one; one and the same, yesterday, to-day, and for ever.'
Therefore the apostle speaks of God, that there is no shadow of
change or turning in him, James 1:17. He is not a man that he
should lie, neither the son of man that he should repent: hath he
said, and shall he not do it? Numb. 23:19. And shall he decree,
and not execute it? Shall he purpose, and not perform it? 'I am
the Lord, I change not,' that is his name, Mal. 3:6. 'The counsel
of the Lord standeth for ever, the thoughts of his heart to all
generations,' Psalm 33:11. Men change their mind oftener than
their garments. Poor vain man, even in his best estate, is
changeableness, and vicissitude itself, altogether vanity! And
this ariseth, partly from the imperfection of his understanding,
and his ignorance, because he does not understand what may
fall out. There are many things secret and hidden, which if he
discovered, he would not be of that judgment; and many things
may fall out which may give ground of another resolution: and
partly from the weakness and perverseness of his will, that
cannot be constant in any good thing, and is not so closely
united to it, as that no fear or terror can separate from it. But
there is no such imperfection in him, neither ignorance nor
weakness. 'All things are naked' before him; all their natures,
their circumstances, all events, all emergencies, known to him
are they, and 'all his works from the beginning,' as perfectly as
in the end. And therefore he may come to a fixed resolution
from all eternity; and being resolved, he can see no reason of
change, because there can nothing appear after, which he did
not perfectly discover from the beginning. Therefore, whenever
ye read in the Scripture of the Lord's repenting — as Gen. 6:7.
Jer. 18:8. — ye should remember that the Lord speaks in our
terms, and, like nurses with their children, uses our own
dialect, to point out to us our great ignorance of his majesty,
that cannot conceive more honourably of him, nor more
distinctly of ourselves. When he changeth all things about him,
he is not changed, for all these changes were at once in his
mind; but when he changeth his outward dispensations, he is
said to repent of what he is doing, because we do not usually
change our manner of dealing, without some conceived grief,
or repentance and change of mind. When a man goes to build a
house, he hath no mind but that it should continue so. He hath
not the least thought of taking it down again; but afterwards it
becomes ruinous, and his estate enlarges, and then he takes a
new resolution, to cast it down to the ground and build a better.
Thus it is with man; according as he varies his work, he
changes his mind. But it is not so with God. All these changes
of his works, — all the successions of times, the variation of
dealings, the alteration of dispensations in all ages, — were at
once in his mind, and all before him; so that he never goes to
build a house but he hath in his own mind already determined
all the changes it shall be subject to. When he sets up a throne
in a nation, it is in his mind within such a period to cast it down
again; when he lifts up men in success and prosperity, he doth
not again change his mind when he throws them down, for that
to his disposal; but wicked men, who have contrary wills of
their own, can gain no more by resisting, but to be drawn along
with it.

Now to what purpose is all this spoken of God's decrees and
purposes, which he hath called a secret belonging to himself? If
his works and judgments be a great depth, and unsearchable,
sure his decrees are far more unsearchable; for it is the secret
and hidden purpose of God, which is the very depth of his way
and judgment. But to what purpose is it all? I say, not to
inquire curiously into the particulars of them, but to profit by
them. The Scripture holds out to us the unchangeableness,
freedom, extent, holiness, and wisdom of them, for our
advantage; and if this advantage be not reaped, we know them
in vain. Not to burden your memory with many particulars, we
should labour to draw forth both instruction and consolation
out of them. Instruction, I say, in two things especially, — to
submit with reverence and respect to his majesty in all his
works and ways, and to trust in him who knows all his works,
and will not change his mind.

There is nothing wherein I know Christians more deficient
than in this point of submission, which I take to be one of the
chiefest and sweetest, though hardest duties of a Christian. It is
hardly to be found among men, — a thorough compliance of
the soul to what his soul desires, a real subjection of our spirits
to his good-will and pleasure. There is nothing so much blessed
in scripture as waiting on him, as yielding to him to be
disposed upon, — 'Blessed are all they that wait on him.' Pride
is the greatest opposite, and he opposes himself most to that,
for it is in its own nature most derogatory to the highness and
majesty of God, which is his very glory. Therefore submission
is most acceptable to him, when the soul yields itself and its
will to him. He condescends far more to it; he cannot be an
enemy to such a soul. Submission to his majesty's pleasure, is
the very bowing down of the soul willingly to any thing he
does or commands, — whatever yoke he puts on, of duty or
suffering, to take it on willingly, without answering again,
was in his mind also; so that there is no surprise of him by any unexpected emergence. Poor man hath many consultations end he come to a conclusion; but it is not thus with his counsel. Of all those strange and new things which fall out in our days, he hath none of these things. He is in one mind, and none of all these things have put off his eternal mind; nor yet plurality, but as with one opening of his eye, he beholds all things as they be, so with one inclination or motion of his will, he hath given a law, so with one act, and appointed all things. And at once, and one look, see both light and colours, and both the glass and the shadow in it, and with one motion of our wills move towards the end and with the means. O, how much more may we, with one simple and undivided act of his good will and pleasure, pass a determination on all things, in their times, and orders, and in his own infinite and glorious pleasure. And shall we not suffer persecution and tribulation here? Hath we not carved out such a lot unto us in this life? Then when we consider, that his majesty hath eternal glory wrap up in the same counsel from which thy affictions proceed, and that the Lord appointed you to suffer persecution, and expectation for that, then for the affection he made you to feel for the city before him? Hath he not more red and more made you to an end of it all together? Then know, that life eternal is in the bosom of the same purpose which gave thee to believe; though the one be born before the other, yet the decree as upon this vain presumption to give diligence in religion, know, that it is one mind and purpose, that hath linked the end and the means together as

and love it, are led by it willingly, for they yield themselves up
a chain; and therefore, if thou expectest to be saved, according to election, thou must, according to the same counsel, make thy calling home from sin to God sure.

Thirdly, What thing soever he hath purposed, he in due time applies to the performance of it, and then the counsel of his will becomes the works of his hands, and there is an admirable harmony and exact agreement between these two. All things come out of the womb of his eternal decree, by the word of his power, even just fashioned and framed, as their lineaments and draughts were proportioned in the decree, nothing failing, nothing wanting, nothing exceeding. There is nothing in the idea of his mind but it is expressed in the work of his hands. There are no under-cooked half-wishes in God. Men have such imperfect desires, — I would have, or do, such a thing if it were not, &c. He wavers not thus in suspense; but what he wills and desires, he wills and desires indeed. He intends, doubtless, it shall be, and what he intends he will execute and bring to pass; therefore his will in due time applies almighty power to fulfill the desire of it; and almighty power being put to work by his will, it cannot but work all things 'according to the counsel of his will;' and whatsoever his soul desireth, that he cannot but do, even as he desires, seeing he can do it. If he will do it, and can do it, what hinders him to work and do? Know then that his commands and precepts to you signifying what is your duty, they do not so much signify what he desires, or intends to work, or have done, as his approbation of such a thing in itself to be your duty; and therefore though he have revealed his will concerning our duty, though no obedience follow, yet is not his intention frustrated or disappointed; for his commands to you say not what is his intention about it, but what is that which he approves as good, and a duty obliging men. But whatsoever thing he purposes and intends should be, certainly he will do it, and make it to be done. If it be a work of his own power alone, himself will do it alone. If he require the concurrence of creatures to it, — as in all the works of providence, — then he will effectually apply the creatures to his work, and not wait in suspense on their determination. If he have appointed such an end to be attained by such means, — if he have a work to do by such instruments, — then, without all doubt, he will apply the instruments when his time comes, and will not wait on their concurrence. You see now strange things done, you wonder at them: how we are brought down from our excellency, — how our land is laid desolate by strangers, — how many instruments of the Lord's work are laid aside, how he lifts up a rod of indignation against us, and is like to overturn even the foundations of our land, — all these were not in our mind before, but they were in his mind from eternity, and therefore he is now working it. Believe then that there is not a circumstance of all this business, not one point or jot of it, but is even as it was framed and carved out of old. His present works are according to an ancient pattern, which he carries in his mind. All the measures and degrees of your affliction, — all the ounces and grain-weights of your cup, were all weighed in the scales of his eternal counsel; the instruments, the time, the manner, all that is in it. If he change instruments, that was in his mind; if he change dispensations, that was in his mind also; and seeing ye know by the scriptures that a blessed end is appointed for the godly, that all things work for their good, that all is subservient to the church's welfare; seeing, I say, you know his purpose is such as the scripture speaks, then believe his performance shall tie exact accordingly, nothing deficient; no joint, no sinew in all his work of providence, no line in all his book and volume of the creature, but it was written in that ancient book of his eternal counsel, and first fashioned in that, Psal. 139:16.

Then, lastly, His will is irresistible, his counsel shall stand; who can turn him from his purpose, and who can hinder him from performance? Therefore he attains his end in the highest and most superlative degree of certainty and infallibility. Himself will not change his own purpose; for why should he do it? If he change to the better, then it reflects on his wisdom; if he change to the worse, it reflects both on his wisdom and