

he did not only decree from eternity to create the world, but did also decree to redeem the world by Jesus Christ, and erected the world in order to the manifestation of his glory in Christ: Eph. 1:4, 5, the choice of some in Christ was "before the foundation of the world".... So though it was possible that the cup should pass from our blessed Saviour, that is, possible in its own nature, yet it was not possible in regard of the determination of God's will, since he had both decreed and published his will to redeem man by the passion and blood of his Son. These things God by his absolute power might have done, but upon the account of his decree they were impossible, because it is repugnant to the nature of God to be mutable. It is to deny his own wisdom which contrived them, and his own will which resolved them, not to do that which he had decreed to do. This would be a diffidence in his wisdom, and a change of his will. The impossibility of them is no result of a want of power, no mark of an imperfection, of feebleness and impotence, but the perfection of immutability and unchangeableness.

Augustus Hopkins Strong, in his *Systematic Theology* (Philadelphia: Judson, 1907), Volume I, pp. 286-288, asserts:

Omnipotence. By this we mean the power of God to do all things which are objects of power, whether with or without the use of means.

(a) Omnipotence does not imply power to do that which is not an object of power; as, for example, that which is self-contradictory or contradictory to the nature of God.

Self-contradictory things: "*facere factum infectum*"-- the making of a past even to have not occurred (hence the uselessness of praying: "May it be that much good was done"); drawing a shorter than a straight line between two given points; putting two separate mountains together without a valley between them. Things contradictory to the nature of God: for God to lie, to sin, to die. To do such things would not imply power, but impotence. God has all the power that is consistent with infinite perfection -- all power to do what is worthy of himself.... Even God cannot make wrong to be right, nor hatred of himself to be blessed....

(b) Omnipotence does not imply the exercise of all his power on the part of God. He has power over his power; in other words, his power is under the control of wise and holy will. God can do all he will, but he will not do all he can. Else his power is mere force acting necessarily, and God is the slave of his own omnipotence....

(c) Omnipotence in God does not exclude, but implies, the power of self-limitation. Since all such self-limitation is free, proceeding from neither external nor internal compulsion, it is the act and manifestation of God's power. Human freedom is not rendered impossible by the divine omnipotence, but exists by virtue of it. It is an act of omnipotence when God humbles himself to the taking of human flesh in the person of Jesus Christ.