

occur within the essence, and result in the three trinitarian distinctions. All this part of the Divine activity is excluded from the Divine decrees, because it is necessary and not optional. God the Father did not decree the eternal generation of the Son, nor did the Father and Son decree the spiration of the Holy Spirit. The triune God could no more decide after the counsel of his own will to be triune, than he could decide in the same manner to be omnipotent, or omniscient. The Divine decree, consequently, comprehends only those events that occur in time. God foreordains, "whatsoever comes to pass" in space and time. That which comes to pass in the eternity of the uncreated essence, forms no part of the contents of God's decree.

William G. T. Shedd, *Dogmatic Theology*, in three volumes. Reprinted. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, n.d.), pp. 393-394.

B. Scriptural Background to the Doctrine

1. Psalm 33:11 -- The psalmist says that the plan (or purpose or design or scheme) of the Lord stands forever. Here the word  $\eta\chi\upsilon\lambda\omicron\varsigma$  is used. Verse 10 tells us that at the same time the Lord nullifies the schemes of nations and frustrates the plans of the people.
2. Isaiah 46:10 -- God declares at the beginning of history the events that will come to pass. He can do this because His plan or purpose ( $\eta\chi\upsilon\lambda\omicron\varsigma$ ) will be established, and His good pleasure ( $\gamma\omega\eta$ ) will be accomplished.
3. Luke 22:22 -- Our Lord says that His betrayal and death have been decided or appointed or determined ( $\acute{\omicron}\rho\acute{\iota}\zeta\omega$ ) presumably by God.
4. Acts 2:23 -- Jesus was put to death by the men of Israel at the hands of heathen executioners, but He was delivered up to this death by the determined ( $\acute{\omicron}\rho\acute{\iota}\zeta\omega$ ) plan ( $\beta\omicron\upsilon\lambda\eta$ ) and foreknowledge of God. The Father predetermined that wicked men would put His Son to death.
5. Acts 4:28 -- Here we are told that Herod, Pontius Pilate, the Gentiles, and the people of Israel did to Jesus whatever God's hand and plan ( $\beta\omicron\upsilon\lambda\eta$ ) predetermined ( $\pi\rho\omicron\omicron\rho\acute{\omicron}\rho\acute{\iota}\zeta\omega$ ) to occur. The Father predetermined that wicked men would put His Son to death.
6. Acts 17:26 -- God has appointed the rise and decline of nations, and has determined ( $\acute{\omicron}\rho\acute{\iota}\zeta\omega$ ) the boundaries of their habitation, including their migrations from one place of habitation to another.
7. Romans 9:23 -- Here God makes ready beforehand ( $\pi\rho\omicron\epsilon\tau\omicron\iota\mu\acute{\alpha}\zeta\omega$ ) those vessels of mercy whom He calls from among both Jews and Gentiles.