

**Question 11.** *How doth God execute His decrees?*

**Answer.** *God executeth His decrees in the works of creation and providence.*

I. Introduction

A. Thankfully, God is not like us. He not only has the power to create things for His plan, but has the power to rule over that creation to bring about His plan. Even if we have the power to accomplish our plans, our plans would not be eternal, good, or wise. God is worthy of our worship because He is not only good, holy, and wise, but is all-powerful, which means He can actually accomplish His perfect plan.

1. Jim Orrick reflects on how different we are from God: *“Sometimes we fail to fulfill our plans because we run out of resources, or because someone prevents us from doing what we intended to do, or just because we grow weary and stop trying. God has all power, and no one can keep Him from doing what He pleases. He does what He purposed to do, which is to glorify Himself. He performs everything He purposed to do, and He supervises all the means necessary to bring about His glory.”*<sup>19</sup>

II. **“God executes His decrees...”**

A. No one executes God’s decrees but God Himself. This is because God alone has the power to execute His decrees. No other being is powerful enough or capable enough to properly carry out the decrees of God. God alone executes His decrees and brings them about.

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<sup>19</sup> Jim Scott Orrick, *A Commentary on The Baptist Catechism*, (Founders Press, 2025), 66.

1. **Isaiah 46:10 (LSB):** *Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times things which have not been done, saying, 'My counsel will be established, and I will accomplish all My good pleasure'*

a) God is the one who establishes the counsel of His will and accomplishes His good pleasure, because He is infinite in power (see *Question & Answer 7*).

### III. “His work of creation and providence.”

#### A. Creation

1. God is Creator and has made the heavens, the earth, and everything that is in them. An example where we see both God’s decree to create and His execution of it is in the first chapter of the Bible (Genesis 1:1, 3, 6-7, 9, 11, 14-15, 20-21, 24, 26-27). God alone has the power and ability to declare something and have it come into existence *ex nihilo*.

a) **John 1:1-3 (LSB):** *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2 He was in the beginning with God. 3 All things came into being through Him, and apart from Him nothing came into being that has come into being.*

#### B. Providence

1. *Providence* is God’s sovereign power at work in and through all of His creation. Or as John Piper defines providence, “God’s purposeful sovereignty.” God sustains and governs His creation to their predetermined ends. God does not just have the power to create things for His good pleasure and will, but He has the power to rule over His creation in an absolute way, where it cannot thwart His plan.

a) **Genesis 45:5-8 (LSB):** *So now do not be grieved or angry with yourselves because you sold me here, for God sent me before you to preserve life. 6 For the famine has been in the land these two years, and there are still five years in which there will be neither plowing nor harvesting. 7 So God sent me before you to establish for you a remnant in the earth and to keep you alive for a great remnant of survivors. 8 So now, it was not you who sent me here, but God; and He has set me as a father to Pharaoh and lord of all his household and ruler over all the land of Egypt.*

(1) God not only has comprehensive control over His creation but is actively involved in His creation. Everything God does or allows has a specific purpose; nothing is random or meaningless because God doesn't just passively permit events; He actively governs and directs all things according to His will, which is for His glory and our good (Rom. 8:28).

C. Can God's decrees be amended or changed?

1. God's decrees cannot be altered because they are eternal, holy, and good. Because God is unchanging, and God's decrees flow out from God's very being, His decrees can never change.

a) **Ecclesiastes 3:14 (LSB):** *I know that everything God does will be forever; there is nothing to add to it and there is nothing to take from it—God has so worked that men should fear Him.*

D. Can God's decrees be discerned or solved?

1. Though God has created us in His image, and we do have an eternal soul, we are incapable of searching the depths of God's eternal decrees. They are too vast and deep for our minds to comprehend.
  - a) **Ecclesiastes 3:11 (ESV):** *He has made everything beautiful in its time. Also, he has put eternity into man's heart, yet so that he cannot find out what God has done from the beginning to the end.*
  - b) **Romans 11:33-36 (LSB):** *Oh, the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and unfathomable His ways! 34 For who has known the mind of the Lord, or who became His counselor? 35 Or who has first given to Him that it might be repaid to him? 36 For from Him and through Him and to Him are all things. To Him be the glory forever. Amen.*

#### IV. Application

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

1. God is worthy of all of your confidence and trust, not only because He is all-wise in His decrees, but also because He is all-powerful to uphold His decrees. We need to always remember that God does not merely intend for His glory to be magnified or merely intend for our good, but that He actually accomplishes them.

#### B. Reflection Questions

1. **Question 1.** *“How often do you take credit for things God did?”*
2. **Question 2.** *“Where is it in your life that you are struggling to trust God?”*
3. **Question 3.** *“Do you believe God is sovereign even in the hard things?”*

V. Repeat / Sing Question & Answer 7 – 11

A. **Question 7.** *What is God?*

1. **Answer.** *God is a Spirit, infinite, eternal, and unchangeable in His being, wisdom, power, holiness, justice, goodness, and truth.*

B. **Question 8.** *Are there more gods than one?*

1. **Answer.** *There is but one only, the living and true God.*

C. **Question 9.** *How many persons are there in the Godhead?*

1. **Answer.** *There are three persons in the Godhead: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit; and these three are one God, the same in essence, equal in power and glory.*

D. **Question 10.** *What are the decrees of God?*

1. **Answer.** *The decrees of God are His eternal purpose, according to the counsel of His will, whereby for His own glory, He hath foreordained whatsoever comes to pass.*

E. **Question 11.** *How doth God execute His decrees?*

1. **Answer.** *God executeth His decrees in the works of creation and providence.*