

7. Client nation responsibilities include teaching doctrine to the saved, evangelism of the lost, stewardship of the Word, sending out missionaries to other nations, and providing a haven of refuge for the Jewish Diaspora.
8. Too few teach doctrine to the saved, evangelism has lost its impact due to fuzzy gospels, stewardship of the Word is challenged by assaults promoted by a degenerate secular population, most missionaries are ineffective due to lack of doctrine, and we detect an undercurrent of anti-Semitism in the land.
9. All of these downtrends can be focused back on the pulpit and its failures over the past forty years. And the greatest failure is abandoning the stewardship of the Word of God.
10. When Moses approached the end of the writing of the Pentateuch, including the blessings and curses determined by obedience or lack of it, he wrote:

Deuteronomy 29:29 “The secret things [סֵתֵר *(satar)*] **concealed information**] belong to the LORD our God, but those things which are revealed [גָּלָה *(galah)*]: **to uncover; to reveal**] belong to us and to our children forever, that we may do all the words of this law.”

11. In essence, God says, "It's yours. I'm trusting you with it. Now manage it well." This statement of Moses with respect to the stewardship of the Law is parallel to Paul's announcement in:

Ephesians 3:2 ... you have heard of the dispensation [οἰκονομία *(oikonomía)*]: **the management of a household**] of the grace of God [Church Age] which was given to me for you;

v. 3 how that by revelation [ἀποκάλυψις *(apokálypsis)*]: **the uncovering of knowledge, in context, the mystery doctrines of the New Testament church**] He made known to me the mystery [doctrine previously unrevealed] ...

v. 5 ... which (mystery) in other ages [dispensations] was not made known to the sons of men, as it has now been revealed by the Spirit to His holy apostles and prophets ...

12. To be the recipient of the revelation of God is a stupendous privilege. And privilege begets responsibility. Thus, Paul says to the Corinthians:

1 Corinthians 4:1 Let a man so consider us as servants of Christ and stewards [οἰκονόμος (*oikonómos*): managers of the revelation given to the household of God] of the mysteries of God.

v. 2 Moreover it is required in stewards that one be found faithful.

13. Thus, he admonishes his understudy, Timothy:

2 Timothy 2:15 Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing [ὀρθοτομέω (*orthotoméō*): “to cut straight”; re: stonemasonry] the word of truth [by use of a system of hermeneutics].

14. It is little wonder that James, the half-brother of Jesus, warns in:

James 3:1 My brethren, let not many of you become teachers, knowing that we shall receive a stricter judgment.

15. Yes, privilege begets responsibility and the greater the privilege, the greater the responsibility. We understand, then, why the aged Apostle John gives the final warning in the Scripture:

Revelation 22:18 I testify to everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: if anyone adds to them, God shall add to him the plagues which are written in this book;

v. 19 and if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part from the tree of life [Nike Award #1, par 1] and from the holy city [Nike Award #6, par 3], which are written in this book [loss of rewards for adding to or subtracting from the book of Revelation].

v. 20 He who testifies to these things says, “Yes, I am coming quickly.”

16. Truly, playing fast and loose with God's revelation is dangerous business. And creating plural meanings not found in the text will be found worthy of loss of reward at the **βῆμα (bēma)**: the Evaluation Tribunal of Christ (2 Corinthians. 5:10).

VII. Principles related to the Divine Decree:

1. The divine decree is eternal and simultaneous knowledge of omniscience expressing the will of God by which all things are brought into being and controlled, made subject to His divine pleasure, and result in His eternal glory.
2. The decree of God is His eternal and immutable will regarding the future existence of events which will happen in time and the precise manner and order of their occurrence.
3. The decrees express the eternal plan and will of God by which God has rendered certain all events of history, past, present, and future.
4. Therefore, the decree is eternal and simultaneous knowledge of omniscience expressing the will of God by which all things are brought into being and controlled, made subject to His divine pleasure, and result in His eternal glory.
5. There is one all-inclusive will and purpose of God concerning all there ever was or will be from the beginning of history until its termination.
6. This will and purpose of God originated within Himself long before any creature ever existed.
7. This means the will and purpose of God related to the decrees is designed for the glory, pleasure, and satisfaction of God.
8. God did not decree Himself to be. God eternally existed before and outside of the decree. Therefore, the decree does not act upon God, but God acts upon the decree.
9. God's decrees are efficacious, determining all that ever was or will be, including the directive, permissive, and overruling will of God.

(End JAS1-37. See JAS1-38 for continuation of study at p. 371.)

10. All things depend on God's will and nothing is certain apart from God's will. There comes a point in theology where God's will and the decree must be understood as synonymous.
11. To the finite mind, the principles of divine omniscience are countless, but to God they are all one plan, embracing both cause and effect, both means and end, therefore it is contained in one divine decree.
12. God's decree related to His plan includes His sovereign purposes which are efficacious, accomplished by God alone apart from creature ability, mentality, talent, function, and sacrifice.
13. Summation: In human history, the sovereignty of God and the free will of man coexist by divine decree. With these things in mind we now return to:

James 1:18 In the exercise of His will He brought us forth by the word of truth, so that we would be a kind of first fruits among His creatures. (NASB)

1. In our analysis of this verse so far we have observed that the word "will" is the aorist passive participle of **βούλομαι** (*boúlomai*) which refers to divine volition.
2. It refers to God's divine purpose in eternity past when He determined to provide salvation to those who would believe in Jesus Christ. This indicates divine cognizance of the spiritual birth of those who would believe in time.
3. *Boúlomai* refers to the divine decree which contains the totality of the will of God and in this case it includes divine knowledge of those who will believe during human history yet future.
4. The *will* of God refers to the *decree* of God and the passive voice should be translated, "Having been decreed in eternity past."
5. Further, an aorist participle precedes the action of the main verb which always has the indicative mood. That verb is the aorist active indicative of **ἀποκυέω** (*apokuéō*): "to give birth."
6. This does not refer to physical birth but rather to one's spiritual birth. This is indicated by the prefix **ἀπό** (*apó*) denoting origin or source which is the "Father of lights."