

13. James has just given the two reversionists a dressing down, a severe reprimand. Given the “what for.” And well-deserved. If these two men do not respond to James’s tongue lashing they will soon be the deserved recipients of divine discipline and potentially the implementation of the sin unto death.
14. There is a Latin proverb that sums up Macbeth’s soliloquy and the two reversionists in James: chapter 4, verse 5:

Sic transit gloria mundi: Thus passes away the glory of the world.

15. Here is the expanded translation of:

James 4:14 You two do not understand what kind of life ... yours tomorrow. You two are just a fleeting vapor trail which soon vanishes from view. (EXT)

16. In an effort to prevent this, James, in grace, gives some good advice to them in James Four beginning with a good dose of grace orientation in:

James 4:15 Instead, you ought to say, “If the Lord wills, we will live and also do this or that.” (NASB)

1. James begins his pastoral advice with the substitutionary preposition, **ἀντί (antí)**: “Instead,” followed by the conditional, **ἐάν (eán)**: “If” followed by the present active infinitive of **λέγω (légō)**: “say.” The infinitive of **λέγω** indicates that James is changing what the two men said about making money over to what they should have said.
2. Thus, in this verse, James gives the men advice by means of a quotation beginning with the phrase, “If the Lord wills” James uses the definite article, **ὁ (ho)**: “the,” followed by the proper noun, **Κύριος (Kúrios)**, referring to God the Father.
3. **NOTE:** When a text contains the Greek proper noun, **Κύριος (Kúrios)**, but without the definite article, then it refers to Jesus Christ, although there are some rare exceptions.
4. The word “wills,” is the present active subjunctive of **θέλω (thélō)**: “to will, want, desire.” “If it is God’s desire” is a good way to translate this in our context.
5. This sentence emphasizes the sovereignty of God. “If it is God’s desire, we will live and prosper.” This is followed by a summary of other duties we will perform for the Lord with the phrase, “and do this and that.”
6. These are illustrations of what the positive-volition believer has in store for him as a motivated, grace-oriented believer who functions inside the divine dynasphere and executes the sophisticated spiritual life.

7. The desires of God have to do with the principle that God the Father has been eternally aware of all that occurs throughout history. He is never caught off guard, and there is nothing about which He is unaware. Thus, the sovereignty of God and the free will of man coexist by the divine decree.
8. This means that God has integrity and thus maintains order in the universe. He has immutable standards that are designed to provide order for all time if His standards are followed.
9. That they are not followed is proof positive that the perfect environment established in Eden was lost because the free-will of man chose to violate divine standards.
10. God's standards are immutable, thus, violation of any one of them results in divine punishment, which entered the human race with the Fall of man.
11. Therefore, when believers opt for human viewpoint, human good, and evil, then to that degree peace, order, and prosperity gradually transforms the Zeitgeist so that disorder impacts and prevails for everyone.
12. History's first rebellion happened in Eden when Adam violated the divine command to not eat the forbidden fruit. His doing so resulted in the Fall of man. We recently studied the rebellion which occurred in the priest nation, Northern Kingdom, during the reign of Ahab and Jezebel. The rebellion presently threatening the downfall of client nation America is led by a host of ham actors repeating their lines, but whose strings are being pulled by those monied rebels who oppose the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution of the United States of America, the Bill of Rights, and subsequent Amendments.
13. Bottom Line: Every thought, decision, and action committed by Homo sapiens were eternally known by God. Therefore, the phrase, "If the Lord wills," refers to the divine decree and "If the Lord desires," is a good translation for this context.
14. This emphasizes the divine decree. God's decree advises against these two men thinking well of their plan and therefore intend to execute.
15. Therefore, God, through James, advises the men with grace orientation to then decide, "we will live and also do this or that."
16. James gives great advice to these men by reminding them of the divine decree and our place in that decree. With arrogance they are not qualified to make choices without consultation with divine viewpoint.
17. They are not enabled to make good choices when they function outside the divine dynasphere, most assuredly while in reversionism. This failure is why their first three assertions are not absolutes in verse 14, but guesswork.

18. It is pertinent to remember the definition and the details of the **Doctrine of the Divine Decree**:

- A. **Definition:** The Decree of God is His eternal, holy, wise, and sovereign purpose comprehending simultaneously all things that ever were and will be in their causes, conditions, successions, relations, and determining their certain futurity.
1. The source of the Decree is divine omniscience which God knew simultaneously in eternity past everything that would happen in human history—the thought, decision, and action of every person in human history and everything in relation to all things pertaining to it.
 2. The several contents of this one eternal purpose are, because of the limitation of our faculties, necessarily perceived by us in partial aspects and logical relations from Scripture.
 3. Therefore, we classify “the decrees” as being plural, but in reality it is all one Decree.
 4. Thus, the Divine Decree is His eternal and immutable will regarding the future existence of all events which will happen in time and the precise manner and order of their occurrence.
 5. The Decree of God is His eternal and immutable will regarding the future existence of all events which will happen in time and the precise manner and order of their occurrence.
 6. The term, Decree, refers to the eternal plan by which God has rendered certain all of the events of the universe, both angelic and human.
 7. The Decree is the all-inclusive will and purpose of God concerning all that ever was or will be and which He Himself alone must have objectively designed for His own glory and for His satisfaction.
 8. The Divine Decree is efficacious in that it determines all that ever was, all that is, and all that ever will be. The Decree is viewed by man from two standpoints: **(1) Efficacious**: that which is directly wrought by God from His sovereignty and **(2) Permissive** which is appointed by God to be accomplished by secondary causes or by the free will and action of agents, i.e., the free will of man.

(End JAS4-31. See JAS4-32 for continuation of study at p. 311.)

9. **The Divine Decree has numerous characteristics:**

1. They are all comprehensive which means that not the slightest uncertainty could exist as to one of the smallest or most insignificant of events without confusion to all.

Therefore, all events in the life of every person are interwoven and interdependent. God is not the author of confusion.

Everything you think, why you think it, and the environment in which you think it, was all known to God in eternity past. This says everything in life is a chain of cause-and-effect events.

2. The decrees are eternal. God is not gaining in knowledge. Omniscience means God knew simultaneously everything that ever was or will be in their causes, conditions, successions, and relations.
3. God is perfect; therefore, His decrees are perfect. They are not perfect in content because they include sin, failure, human good, and evil. But everything that would ever happen was known to God. His is a perfect system of comprehension.
4. The decree is unchangeable and certain. Nothing could possibly occur to necessitate a change. God is never found not knowing something. God has never had to make changes or any adjustments in the divine decree.
5. The decree is the free choice of God in eternity past. This is the central and most important point in this doctrine which every pastor and evangelist must understand. God is not bound to follow any necessary path. Having decreed, however, He is bound by His infinite faithfulness and truth to complete what He has begun.

10. The free choice of God is very important, because God, from His own sovereign volition, invented free will in two categories of creatures—angels and mankind, so that both categories can choose for or against God.

Ephesians 2:10 For we are His production, having been created in Christ Jesus for good achievements which God has prepared in advance [**divine provisions**], that we should walk [περιπατέω (*peripatéō*)] by means of them. (EXT)