

- b. God desires His perfect will and sovereignty, but both angelic and human creatures use their God-given free will and self-determination to violate the desires of God. So the decrees contain both the will of God and desires of God. The decrees are the all-inclusive will of God.  
So the decrees contain both the will of God and desires of God. The decrees are the all-inclusive will of God.
- c. God does not desire to cast His creatures into the lake of fire forever, but it is so decreed under the printout of retribution for all who express negative volition at God consciousness and at gospel hearing.
- d. God does not desire the discipline of believers, but it is decreed for all carnality and reversionism.

#### **E. Conclusion**

- 1. Sin's liability creates punitive action from God.
- 2. Therefore, while all sins are judged at the Cross, personal sins carry liability from God under the law of volitional responsibility.
- 3. However, at the Great White Throne judgment, the unbeliever is never indicted on the basis of his sins because his sins were judged at the Cross, but on the basis of his good deeds. You cannot commit a sin without it effecting someone else, without it hurting someone else. The liability for personal sins does not extend outside of time. Sin is not a liability outside of time, i.e., in eternity. Therefore, there is no contradiction between your liability for personal sins in time and the judgment of all personal sins on the Cross.
- 4. In the function of the rebound technique of 1 John 1:9, the purpose is to recover fellowship with God and to recover the filling of the Holy Spirit through citing personal sins to God the Father. As a result, two things can happen to the believer with regard to the liability of sin: the believer is forgiven and the sin liability is completely removed, or the believer is forgiven and the sin liability continues and punitive suffering is replaced by suffering for blessing.

5. The decree of God removes no person from what—within the sphere of his own experience—is the outworking of his own choice based on the function of his own volition.
6. The plan of God and the decrees of God are totally consistent with human freedom and volition. God does not limit and coerce human freedom or violate self-determination. Free will isn't free unless man can decide against God and His plan.
7. However, distinction must be made between what God causes directly (such as the Cross), and what God permits indirectly (such as sin and evil).
8. God created man with a free will. Therefore, He permits human volition to function in self-determination; otherwise, there would not have been the fall of man. It is His permissive will. The permissive will is just as much a part of the decrees which glorify God as the directive will. Remember, the decrees are simply human history in the mind of God in eternity past before any creature existed.
9. God is not the author of sin or evil. Free will and self-determination are the origin and source of sin, human good, and evil.
10. Both sin and the cross are fed into the computer by omniscience. One is the direct will of God. The other is the permissive will of God. But the permissive, directive, and overruling will of God are all a part of the decrees.
11. The sovereignty of God and the free will of man coexist by divine decree. Every decision and desire of God and man were recorded in the divine decree. Omniscience programs this data into the decrees.

### Commentary:

In James 4:13–15, James gives the two men in this passage a lecture on their failures to recognize several principles. Let's review the translation of:

**James 4:13** Come now, you reversionists who say, "Today or tomorrow [ **unsure** ] we will go to this or that city [ **unsure; wanderlust** ], and shall work in that place [ **unsure** ] about a year [ **unsure** ], we shall engage in free enterprise and make a profit [ **working objects** ]." (EXT)

1. These two men have done no research to discover when to leave, what city to visit, and how long they will stay in town, but are confident they will engage in free enterprise and make a profit.

2. James intervenes with a reality check in:

**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)

3. James gets their attention with an ellipsis, indicated grammatically by three dots: ... and defined as, “the omission of one or more words that are obviously understood but that must be supplied to make a construction grammatically complete.”<sup>1</sup>

4. The critical thing missing in these men’s plan is certainty. They have a plan but they do not have the knowledge required to execute it and James points this out to them with his ellipsis.

5. The reason they do not understand what kind of life is ahead for them “tomorrow!” Why? Because they cannot look into the future. Every minute of every day no one has the ability to have absolute knowledge of what is going to happen tomorrow.

6. God has omniscience and we have just noted some critical aspects of His complete knowledge of the future while we are left with an ellipsis. It is because of this that James follows with a piece of good advice in:

**James 4:15** Instead, you ought to say, “If [ εἰάν (eían) ] the Lord wills [ gnomic aorist active subjunctive of θέλω (thélō): “to desire, to intend, to design ], we will live and also do this or that.” (NASB)

1. In this context, the gnomic aorist refers to eternity past, when God set up a plan for their lives. The aorist tense reminds us that billions of years ago, God knew every idea we would ever have, and provided for it, or not.

2. This means God anticipated a request in eternity past and incorporated His answer into the decree. However, in this context the “if clause” is associated with potentiality: “If the Lord wills.” Does the Lord desire to accommodate these two men or does He not intend to do so?

3. The two men have displayed by their actions and they have not sought divine support for their plan, therefore, the subjunctive mood puts the divine response up in the air, “Does He desire or intend to accommodate their plan?”

<sup>1</sup> Merriam-Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary, 11th ed. (2014), s.v. “ellipsis.”



4. This places the Lord's response squarely into the divine decree for divine approval or disapproval. These two men do not have the power to look into the future and make a decision based on assumed divine approval.
5. God does not work this way. These men's rationale must be based on their personal inculcation of biblical principles, guidelines, and doctrines from which to draw a conclusion that their plan is well thought-out.
6. **PRINCIPLE:** In human history, the sovereignty and God and the Free Will of man coexist by divine decree.
7. God's desire, intention, and design for believers is for their inculcation, retention, facilitation, and application of Bible doctrine. It is from that inventory, and that inventory alone, that the Lord's will is determined.
8. Otherwise, it is guesswork from rationales based on human viewpoint. The verse is clear and must be applied, "If it is God's desire, intention, or design," then move forward with your rationale.
9. James has set in place a system by which, without the asset of prophecy, a believer can make a good decision from the resource of divine guidance, a doctrine that is not only applicable to this verse but also a major resource to inform believers on how to make good decisions in concert with the desire, intention, and design of divine viewpoint.
10. This leads us to a study of the doctrine of:

## Divine Guidance

### Introduction:

1. Often you may hear someone ask, or maybe you have been the one to wonder, "What is God's will?"
2. The simple answer is discovered by engaging this process: "Find a church where the pastor teaches Scripture from the original Hebrew and Greek languages.
3. "Concentrate on the subjects taught, retain what you learn in your soul, facilitate the doctrines into paths of least resistance, and apply what you learn to life and circumstances."
4. You have to do this by yourself. Spiritual growth is a walk, not a run. The Word of God is alive and powerful and as such requires strict concentration on your part.
5. However, the primary Teacher is the Holy Spirit whose spiritual link to you is through the teaching ministry of the pastor-teacher in a local church.