

Acts 4:28

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

For to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done.

Analysis

The prayer acknowledges God's sovereignty: 'to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done.' The Greek 'proorisen' (determined) indicates predestination - God's eternal decree includes evil actions (crucifixion, persecution) without causing moral guilt. This paradox - God's sovereign control and human responsibility coexisting - distinguishes Reformed theology. The phrase 'thy hand' (power) and 'thy counsel' (plan) emphasizes both capability and intention.

Historical Context

This theological affirmation echoed Peter's Pentecost sermon (Acts 2:23) - Christ's death was simultaneously murder (human guilt) and sacrifice (divine plan). Early church's ability to hold these truths in tension prevented both fatalism (denying human responsibility) and anxiety (doubting God's control).

Related Passages

1 John 4:8 — God is love

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

Study Questions

1. How do you hold together God's sovereignty over evil events with human moral accountability?
2. What comfort does God's predetermined plan provide when facing apparently chaotic persecution?

Interlinear Text

ποιῆσαι	ὅσα	ἢ	χείρ	σου	καὶ	ἢ	βουλή	σου
For to do	whatsoever	G3588	hand	thy	and	G3588	counsel	thy
G4160	G3745		G5495	G4675	G2532		G1012	G4675

προώρισεν γενέσθαι
determined before to be done
G4309 G1096

Additional Cross-References

Acts 2:23 (Parallel theme): Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain:

Isaiah 46:10 (Parallel theme): Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure:

Genesis 50:20 (Parallel theme): But as for you, ye thought evil against me; but God meant it unto good, to bring to pass, as it is this day, to save much people alive.

Matthew 26:24 (Parallel theme): The Son of man goeth as it is written of him: but woe unto that man by whom the Son of man is betrayed! it had been good for that man if he had not been born.