

A Question for Calvinists and Reformed Devotees – Updated and Reposted

OK, so God never commanded them to burn their children, and he never considered commanding them to burn their children. Where's the dilemma here? Surely you aren't suggesting God was caught off-guard, or that it's possible for us to override his will. ((Comment by Lee Shelton, IV, contemporarycalvinist.blogspot.com))

The Reformed/Calvinist adherents claim that everything done is God's will, whether it be good or evil. There is no sense in which they do not dispute this as many Calvinist/Reformed writers and theologians have confirmed. Thus what we are given is a near – to fatalistic view of our existence, in which all actions are willed of God.

If that is so, and the majority of Calvinists say it is, then they need to answer this passage:

29Cut off thine hair, O Jerusalem, and cast it away, and take up a lamentation on high places; for the LORD hath rejected and forsaken the generation of his wrath.

30For the children of Judah have done evil in my sight, saith the LORD: they have set their abominations in the house which is called by my name, to pollute it.

31And they have built the high places of Tophet, which is in the valley of the son of Hinnom, to burn their sons and their daughters in the fire; which I commanded them not, neither came it into my heart. (*Jeremiah 7:29-31*)

Notice what the LORD states here:

And they have built the high places of Tophet, which is in the

valley of the son of Hinnom, to burn their sons and their daughters in the fire; which I commanded them not, neither came it into my heart.

The LORD is VERY express here that the concept and idea of burning children in the fire “NEITHER came it into my heart.”

If then, God decrees (wills) everything, then how can this statement be in Scripture?

How can it be that God willed the Jews in Jerusalem to sacrifice their children in the fire, but it was not in His heart, and didn't enter into His heart?

Since the will stems from the heart, how can God will something, yet the thing willed not be in the heart of God?

The adherents of Calvinist/Reformed doctrine cannot have it both ways.

Update . . .

I find this amazing: That individuals can plainly look at clear Scripture, and then misconstrue what the words plainly state. So it is with this challenge. There are two things touched upon, and the Calvinists who have replied have obviously, deliberately misconstrued what was said. This is plain because of what they attempt to accuse me of saying, such as Stan's comment:

This is actually a terrifying concept you're offering here. So ... as you read it, the passage in Jeremiah 7 is saying that human beings thought up things that God never thought of? Human beings exceeded God's knowledge? I would have to assume that you necessarily deny that God is omniscient then as well, right? ((Stan's [comment](#) on original posting))

And Lee Shelton's comment:

OK, so God never commanded them to burn their children, and he never considered commanding them to burn their children. Where's the dilemma here? Surely you aren't suggesting God was caught off-guard, or that it's possible for us to override his will. ((Lee Shelton's [comment](#) on original posting))

Both of these comments willfully ignore the very common Calvinist doctrine of "foreordination" of all things, which is stated by one Calvinist the following way (**emphasis mine**):

*The first objection is that God's Providence means that our choices are not real and that they do not make a difference. **But our choices are real and genuine because God says they are.** And they make a difference because God brings about His will by means of our choices, not in spite of our choices. Our choices are important, they make a difference, and therefore we should always seek to make good, holy, and wise choices. ((In light of Calvinist doctrine, this is utter nonsense. Our choices are scripted and any choice we make is going to be the will of God, no matter what we think or what logic we use to arrive at the choice. According to what the author declared, any route we take to arrive at a choice was already fore-ordained by God, and we will be making the choice God determined we should make to fulfill His will – whether the choice is for good or evil.)) The second objection is that, since God often commands us to do things in Scripture and calls us to make choices, He cannot be ultimately in control of our decisions. This objection, however, cannot account for all of the verses we have seen that God does control all things—including our decisions. The Bible views commands—and the crucial importance of us to obey them—as perfectly consistent with God's control over our choices. For example, in 1 Chronicles 28:9 David commands Solomon to serve God with a whole heart and a willing mind. This shows his responsibility to choose to follow God. But does this mean that God has ultimately left it up to Solomon*

to follow Him or not? No, because in the next chapter we see David acknowledging that it is ultimately God who gives a person a heart to obey, for He prays “give to my son Solomon a perfect heart to keep Thy commandments” (29:19). There would be no use in asking God to cause Solomon to obey if God had ultimately left the choice up to Solomon. In light of all that we have seen, it seems best to conclude that since God controls all things, He causes us to make willing choices so that His will is always done, yet these choices are genuine, and we are accountable for them. Again, we do not need to necessarily see how these truths fit together, but if we are going to believe the Bible, it seems that we must believe them. ((So much for “Prove all things; hold fast that which is good.” I Thessalonians 5:21)) ([The Amazing Providence of God](#), Author not cited on page))

And, Aaron Curry plainly echoed this doctrine with the statement:

Ok, Good. Every decision a person makes good or evil fulfills God's will. GOD IS BEHIND EVERY DECISION A HUMAN BEING MAKES. ((E-mail from Aaron dated 26/11/2008))

So when they state what they believe concerning God's sovereignty and fore-ordaining of all things, they are saying that God wills everything. Moreover, despite the attempt to explain that the fore-ordained choices we make are our responsibility and ordaining sin is not virtually the same as being the “author of sin;” that cannot stand as the word “ordain” is defined as follows:

or·dain (ôr-dn)²

tr.v. or·dained, or·dain·ing, or·dains

1. a. To invest with ministerial or priestly authority; confer holy orders on..

b. To authorize as a rabbi.

2. To order by virtue of superior authority; decree or enact.

3. To prearrange unalterably; predestine: by fate ordained.

See Synonyms at dictate.

[Middle English ordeinen, from Old French ordener, ordein-, from Latin rdinre, to organize, appoint to office, from rd, rdin-, order; see ar- in Indo-European roots.]

or·dainer n.

or·dainment n. ((The American Heritage® Dictionary of the English Language, Fourth Edition copyright ©2000 by Houghton Mifflin Company. Updated in 2003. Published by Houghton Mifflin Company. All rights reserved.))

And from Strong's Concordance:

1299 diatasso { dee-at-as'-so }

from 1223 and 5021; TDNT – 8:34,1156; v

AV – command 7, appoint 4, ordain 3, set in order 1, give order 1; 16

GK – 1411 { διατάσσω }

1) to arrange, appoint, ordain, prescribe, give order
((Strong, James. The Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible : Showing Every Word of the Test of the Common English Version of the Canonical Books, and Every Occurrence of Each Word in Regular Order. Ontario: Woodside Bible Fellowship.))

And the underlying word for “ordained” means:

3724 horizo { hor-id'-zo }

from 3725; TDNT – 5:452,728; v

AV – determine 2, ordain 2, as it was determined + 2596 + 3588 1, declare 1, limit 1, determine 1; 8

GK – 3988 { ὁρίζω }

1) to define

1a) to mark out the boundaries or limits (of any place or thing) 1b to determine, appoint

1b1) that which has been determined, acc. to appointment,

decree

1b2) to ordain, determine, appoint ((ibid))

Hence, by the above definitions, to say that everything we do, good or evil, is God's will and God ordained it, is to say that God ordained both good and evil, and it is "God's will" that we commit evil deeds. Hence, it necessarily follows that God ordained (willed) our "evil deeds" and thus "ordained sin" which is to say that "God" is the author of sin, the author of the fall, and the author of all wickedness and iniquity. This cannot be excused or explained away. Moreover, to say that we are responsible for the decisions we make that were scripted for us to make, is, on its face, utter nonsense.

The fact that Calvinists believe in the "fore-ordaining" of all things, makes the accusations of the Calvinists who posted comments, baseless and pure hokum. One would have to utterly ignorant of the English language to miss what is being stated in the original post. Moreover, they are ignoring what certain other verses clearly state . . .

Because they have forsaken me, and have estranged this place, and have burned incense in it unto other gods, whom neither they nor their fathers have known, nor the kings of Judah, and have filled this place with the blood of innocents; They have built also the high places of Baal, to burn their sons with fire for burnt offerings unto Baal, which I commanded not, nor spake it, neither came it into my mind: Therefore, behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that this place shall no more be called Tophet, nor The valley of the son of Hinnom, but The valley of slaughter. (*Jeremiah 19:4-6*)

And they built the high places of Baal, which are in the valley of the son of Hinnom, to cause their sons and their daughters to pass through the fire unto Molech; which I commanded them not, neither came it into my mind, that they should do this abomination, to cause Judah to sin. (*Jeremiah*

32:35)

Now, it is not I that say it, but the LORD God: The sin of burning one's children in the fire was never in the LORD's heart and/or mind that such a thing be done. Does this mean that the LORD did not know people would do such things? Not hardly. Rather it is to state that, though the LORD God knew, but this was not His will – not the will of His heart, nor of His mind. Plainly, that is what is meant, and is well within the meaning of the words “mind” and “heart”

3820 leb { labe}

a form of 3824; TWOT – 1071a; n m

AV – heart 508, mind 12, midst 11, understanding 10, hearted 7, wisdom 6, comfortably 4, well 4, considered 2, friendly 2, kindly 2, stouthearted + 47 2, care + 7760 2, misc 20; ; 592

GK – 4213 { □□□ }

GK – together with 06965 4214 { { □□□□□ □□□

1) inner man, mind, will, heart, understanding

1a) inner part, midst

1a1) midst (of things)

1a2) heart (of man)

1a3) soul, heart (of man)

1a4) mind, knowledge, thinking, reflection, memory

1a5) inclination, resolution, determination (of will)

1a6) conscience

1a7) heart (of moral character)

1a8) as seat of appetites

1a9) as seat of emotions and passions

1a10) as seat of courage ((Strong, James. The Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible : Showing Every Word of the Test of the Common English Version of the Canonical Books, and Every Occurrence of Each Word in Regular Order. Ontario: Woodside Bible Fellowship.))

And the meaning of the word “will,” for purposes of illustration:

6634 ts[^]eba' (Aramaic) { tseb-aw'}

corresponding to 6623 in the fig. sense of summoning one's wishes; TWOT – 2953; v

AV – will 9, his will 1; 10

GK – 10605 { { □□□□

1) to desire, be inclined, be willing, be pleased

1a) (P'al)

1a1) to desire

1a2) to be pleased

1a3) to will (without hindrance) (of God) ((ibid))

What this undoubtedly means that it was never the inclination of the heart and mind of God that children be burnt in the fire.

So, again I ask:

If then, God decrees (wills) everything as the Calvinists believe and purport, then how can these statements be in Scripture?

How can it be that God willed the Jews in Jerusalem to sacrifice their children in the fire, but it was not in His heart and mind, and didn't enter into His heart and mind?

Since the will stems from the heart/mind, how can God will something, yet the thing willed not be in the heart/mind of God?

If there is such a thing as an intellectually and Biblically honest Calvinist, I would like an answer.