

**The 1689 Confession of Faith; Chapter 2 – “Of God and the Holy Trinity”,  
Message # 27 – “God is Absolute in His Purposes”, Presented in the Adult Sunday  
School Class, by Pastor Paul Rendall on March 5th, 2017.**

**Chapter 2 – Of God and the Holy Trinity, Paragraph 1 -**

The Lord our God is but (a)one only living and true God; whose (b)subsistence is in and of Himself, (c)infinite in being and perfection; whose essence cannot be comprehended by any but Himself; (d)a most pure spirit, (e)invisible, without body, parts, or passions, who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; who is (f)immutable, (g)immense, (h)eternal, incomprehensible, (i)almighty, every way infinite, (k)most holy, most wise, most free, most absolute; (l)working all things according to the counsel of his own immutable and most righteous will, (m)for his own glory; most loving, gracious, merciful, long-suffering, abundant in goodness and truth, forgiving iniquity, transgression, and sin; (n)the rewarder of them that diligently seek him, and withal most just (o)and terrible in his judgments, (p)hating all sin, and who will by no means clear the (q)guilty.

a 1st Corinthians 8: 4 and 6; Deuteronomy 6: 4; b Jeremiah 10: 10; Isa 48: 12; c Exodus 3: 14; d John 4: 24; e 1st Timothy 1: 17; Deut. 4: 15-16; f Malachi 3:6; g 1st Kings 8: 27; Jeremiah 23: 23; h Psalm 90: 2; j Genesis 17: 1; k Isa 6: 3; l Psalm 115: 3; Isa 46: 10; m Pro 16: 4; Rom 11: 36; n Exodus 34: 6-7; Hebrews 11:6; o Nehemiah 9: 32-33; p Psalm 5: 5-6; q Exodus 34:7; Nahum 1: 2-3

**The Lord is Most Absolute –**

**Job 42: 1-6** – “Then Job answered the Lord and said: ‘I know that You can do everything, and that no purpose of Yours can be withheld from You.’ “You asked, ‘Who is this who hides counsel without knowledge?’ “Therefore I have uttered what I did not understand, things too wonderful for me, which I did not know.” “Listen, please, and let me speak; You said, ‘I will question you and you shall answer Me.’ “I have heard of You by the hearing of the ear, but now my eye sees You.” “Therefore I abhor myself and repent in dust and ashes.”

You can see in these verses that Job confesses that God is absolute in that He can do everything, and no purpose of His can be withheld from Him. The NASB says, “I know that no purpose of Yours can be thwarted.” In other words, whatever the Lord purposes to do, He will do.

**1. God is Absolute in His Purposes –**

**Isaiah 46: 9-13** – “Remember the former things of old, For I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is none like Me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times things that are not yet done, Saying, ‘My counsel shall stand, And I will do all My pleasure,’ calling a bird of prey from the east, the man who executes My counsel, from a far country.” “Indeed I have spoken it; I will also bring it to pass. I have purposed it; I will also do it.” “Listen to Me, you stubborn-hearted, who are far from righteousness: I bring My righteousness near, it shall not be far off; My salvation shall not linger.” “And I will place salvation in Zion, For Israel My glory.”

The Lord is most absolute in terms of His purposes. He is absolutely determined that His purposes will stand. He is the One who declares the end from the beginning and from ancient times things that are not yet done. His counsel will stand and He will do all His pleasure. Similarly, for unworthy sinners, who He calls stubborn-hearted here, He says in verse 13 that He will bring His righteousness near in the gospel. It shall not be far off; His salvation shall not linger, and He will place salvation in Zion, for Israel His glory.

**Isaiah 44: 24-28** – “Thus says the LORD, your Redeemer, And He who formed you from the womb: “I am the Lord, who makes all things, who stretches out the heavens all alone, who spreads abroad the earth by Myself; who frustrates the signs of the babblers, And drives diviners mad; who turns wise men backward, and makes their knowledge foolishness; Who confirms the word of His servant, and performs the counsel of His messengers; who says to Jerusalem, ‘You shall be inhabited,’ To the cities of Judah, ‘You shall be built,’ and I will raise up her waste places; who says to the deep, ‘Be dry!’ “And I will dry up

your rivers'; Who says of Cyrus, 'He is My shepherd, and he shall perform all My pleasure, saying to Jerusalem, "You shall be built," and to the temple, "Your foundation shall be laid." 2

The God in the Second Person of the Divine Trinity is the One speaking here; the Redeemer of Israel. You can see how absolute He is in His purpose defeat all of His enemies and frustrate the purposes of evil and wicked men who were delving into the occult to try to see their future. He will make their knowledge foolishness and turn their wise men backwards. On the other hand He is the One who confirms the word of His servants the prophets concerning their going into captivity and coming out of it. Cyrus' strategy to take Babylon was to drain the river Euphrates which passed right through and under the walls of Babylon, and then his troops could get into the city and overcome all the resistance of Babylon's king and warriors. God would take Cyrus and raise him up to be a shepherd to His people Israel politically. Cyrus would issue the decree to have Jerusalem built once again, and the temple foundation would be laid according to his edict.

**Isaiah 45: 1-13** – “Thus says the LORD to His anointed, to Cyrus, whose right hand I have held – To subdue nations before him And loose the armor of kings, to open before him the double doors, So that the gates will not be shut: ‘I will go before you and make the crooked places straight; I will break in pieces the gates of bronze and cut the bars of iron.’ “I will give you the treasures of darkness and hidden riches of secret places, that you may know that I, the Lord, Who call you by your name, am the God of Israel.” “For Jacob My servant’s sake, and Israel My elect, I have even called you by your name; I have named you, though you have not known Me.” “I am the Lord, and there is no other; there is no God besides Me.” “I will gird you, though you have not known Me, That they may know from the rising of the sun to its setting that there is none besides Me.” “I am the Lord, and there is no other; I form the light and create darkness, I make peace and create calamity; I, the LORD, do all these things.” “Rain down, you heavens, from above, And let the skies pour down righteousness; let the earth open, let them bring forth salvation, and let righteousness spring up together.” “I, the LORD, have created it.” “Woe to him who strives with his Maker!” “Let the potsherd strive with the potsherd of the earth!” “Shall the clay say to him who forms it, ‘What are you making?’ “Or shall your handiwork say, ‘He has no hands’? “Woe to him who says to his father, ‘What are you begetting?’ Or to the woman, ‘What have you brought forth?’ “Thus says the Lord, The Holy One of Israel, and his Maker: ‘Ask Me of things to come concerning My sons; and concerning the work of My hands, you command Me.’ “I have made the earth, and created man on it. I – My hands – stretched out the heavens, and all their host I have commanded.” “I have raised him up in righteousness, And I will direct all his ways; He shall build My city and let My exiles go free, not for price nor reward,” says the LORD of hosts.”

In these verses we are shown how absolute God is in His purposes in terms of what the Persian king Cyrus would be able to accomplish in terms of his helping the nation and people of Israel. It says here in verse 1 that Cyrus is His anointed, whose right hand He held, to subdue nations before Him. The reason that God is speaking of Cyrus this way is that he would use him in a way typical of the Lord Jesus Christ as we shall see later in this section. He would give him the treasures of darkness; the riches amassed by Nebuchadnezzar, that he might know that the Lord who had called him by name was the Lord God of Israel. This prophecy given by the Lord to Isaiah was given 200 years before Cyrus was born. God raised Cyrus up and called him by name so that His elect nation the elect people among the nation of Israel would believe that their deliverance from the captivity was near. Even though it does not appear that Cyrus ever came to know the Lord, the Lord used him to issue the decrees to allow Israel to rebuild Jerusalem and the temple. In verses 6-8 God shows Isaiah and His people that He is absolute in the formation of light and His creating darkness; His making peace and creating calamity; that He is the One who does these things. In verse 11, God addresses those who knew Him among Israel to inquire after the things that would take place in the future concerning His sons whom He would call to Himself because of electing love and grace. He would spiritually adopt them as His sons. He would do this through His Son Christ Jesus whom He would raise up in righteousness, and direct all His ways, and He would build the city of God; not the earthly Jerusalem, but the New Jerusalem, the Church, the City on a hill which cannot be hid. And He would let the exiles of sin go free, not for price or reward, or anything that they would pay, but their ransom would be paid by Christ Himself and by His sacrifice of Himself. But even

though it would cost Him laying down His life, their salvation would be obtained not by paying money, but would be obtained by faith.

**John Gill says on verse 3 – that thou mayest know that I the Lord, which call thee by thy name, am the God of Israel** – “to call him by name two hundred years, or near it, before he was born, was a proof that he was God omniscient, and knew things before they were, and could call things that were not, as though they were; and this Cyrus was made acquainted with; for, as Josephus (i) says, he read this prophecy in Isaiah concerning him; and all this being exactly fulfilled in him, obliged him to acknowledge him the Lord, to be the Lord God of heaven, and the Lord God of Israel, Ezra 1: 2.

**John Gill says on verse 11:** “And now the Lord allows his people, and encourages them to “ask” of Him these things; to inquire of Him by prayer, and by searching the Scriptures, what these things are that are to come; what of them have been accomplished, and what of them remain to be accomplished, “and how long it will be to the end of these wonders”, Daniel 12: 6, and so Jarchi interprets the word, rendered “things to come” in the text, “signs and wonders”: and they may and should pray for the accomplishment of them; yea, insist upon and demand them.” “The Lord not only allows his people to put Him in remembrance of His promises and prophecies, but to plead for, and, as it were, require the performance of them; and so the words are an encouragement to the importunate prayer of faith.” “Faith in prayer has great power with God, a kind of command over Him; it holds Him to his word; it will not let Him go without the blessing; nor let Him alone till he has made good His promise; nor give Him any rest, day nor night, till He has fulfilled the things to come concerning His sons.”