

**SEC 81:** (5.1:07:52)

GREAT QUOTE: “. . . it is said in the Diatribe – ‘As under the same sun, mud is hardened and wax melted; as by the same shower, the cultivated earth brings forth fruit and uncultivated earth thorns; **so by the same long-suffering of God, some are hardened and some are converted.**’ For we are not dividing Free-will into two different natures, and making the one like mud, the other like wax; the one like cultivated earth, the other like uncultivated earth; but we are speaking concerning that one Free will equally impotent in all men; which, as it cannot will good, is nothing but mud, nothing but uncultivated earth. **Nor does Paul say that God, as the potter, makes one vessel unto honor and another to dishonor out of different kinds of clay, but He said, ‘Out of the same lump, etc.’ (Roms 9:21) Therefore as mud always becomes harder and uncultivated earth always becomes more thorny; even so Free will always becomes worse, both under the hardening of the sun of long-suffering and under the softening shower of rain.**” (p.144)

If free will be the same nature – AND IS IMPOTENT in ALL MEN, there is no reason to think one person can attain God’s grace on their own and another person can’t. **FREE WILL in all is defined as that which cannot will good.**

If man were able to, by their own will, choose righteousness to be saved, it would render God unable to know who would be saved. OF COURSE, THIS STATEMENT WOULD BE REFUTED TODAY BY THOSE WHO THINK GOD LOOKED THROUGH THE CORRIDORS OF TIME TO SEE WHO WOULD CHOOSE HIM.

We can’t use human *reason* to look into the secret things of God – We can take some glory out of God by trying to make him fit our human reasonings. Blasphemous.

**Free will is one and the same in all men  
Free will is cultivated and uncultivated  
The difference is the manners and works of God.**

**SEC 82:** (6.0:00)

Luther states Erasmus (and Origen) that it APPEARS ABSURD that God would harden the heart of Pharaoh and then punish him to show God’s power. Origen puts all the blame on Ph.

The Text says “This is the reason I raised you up” does not say God made him that way. God made everything good – it was evil that corrupted it. God did not put any new evil IN Pharaoh, it was already there.

WHY IS THIS OBSURD? Because it goes against human reason. THEN why would HUMAN REASON be so important. Would not the virgin birth, the miracles, the crucified Jesus?

KEY QUOTE: “Let us invent some tropes with the Arians and say, that Christ is not truly God. Let us invent some tropes with the Manichees and say, that He is not truly man, but a phantom and

*introduced by means of a virgin; or a reflection conveyed by glass which fell and was crucified. And in this way, we shall handle the Scriptures to excellent purpose indeed!" (p.146-147)*

IT appears that God can be good and merciful when He acts this way. This reasoning to its END would get rid of Hell.

**SEC 83:** (6.4:23)

This is a great section on connecting passages that describe the fallen nature of man and how God uses that (did not create new evil) to suit His purposes.

Origen interpreted that all things God made were good. So, he changed the wording on Pharaoh "I have made thee" to "I have raised thee up" because God did not make bad things. Luther opens this section addressing this, that ALL THINGS WERE GOOD BEFORE THE FALL. (Eph 2:8)

Pharaoh was made from a corrupt seed. (Proverbs 16:4) God has made all things for himself, yea, even the wicked for the day of evil." God did not create evil in them but making them from the **corrupt seed and ruling over them.** (Ps 51:5, Job 14:4)

**SEC 84:** (6.7:14)

HOW CAN God said to work evil in us, in the same way as He said to harden us, to give us up to our own desires etc.

KEY THOUGH: ***"God moves and does all in all, He necessarily moves and does all in Satan and the wicked man. But He so does all in them, as they themselves are, and as He finds them: that is, as they are themselves averse and evil, being carried along by that motion of the Divine Omnipotence, they cannot but do what is averse and evil. Just as it is with a man driving a horse lame on one foot, or lame on two feet; he drives him just so as the horse himself is; that is, the horse moves badly. But what can the man do? He is driving along this kind of horse together with sound horses; he, indeed, goes badly, and the rest well; but it cannot be otherwise, unless the horse be made sound. "(p.149)***

The wicked man is the creature of God. Though they are averse and left to themselves without the Spirit of God, that person can't will anything good.

**This is where Omnipotence and Aversion meet. God can't suspend His omnipotence – the man can't suspend his aversion or fallenness. By necessity God must continue to be ruling omnipotently and the man without the Spirit will go on living in sin and error.**

**SEC 85:** (6.11:26)

The hardening is thus the sinful man follows the act of hardening. He just goes on his own way and seeks and cares not for the things of God.

GOD did not give the wicked man (or Pharaoh) the Spirit so he acted according to his spirit in evil and rage and pride.

**SEC 86:** (6.13:40)

God did not create evil in Ph. **MAN IS NOT PASSIVE IN THIS.** We are evil by nature – God is all good –

KEY QUOTE: *“God works evil in us, that is, by us, not from the fault of God, but from the fault of evil in us:--that is, as we are evil by nature, God, who is truly good, carrying us along by His own action, according to the nature of His Omnipotence, cannot do otherwise than do evil by us, as instruments, though He himself be good; though by His wisdom, He overrules that evil well, to His own glory and to our salvation.”* (p.151)

**SEC 87:** (6.16:27)

By its nature, Pha. Heart hated God word and work. Phar. Could not avoid the action of God God’s omnipotence nor could he avoid his aversion and enmity of his own will.

God’s hardening simply refrained to work good in Ph heart.

KEY QUOTE: *“ I will so move his very evil will, that he shall go on in his course and lust of willing, no will I cease to move it, no can I do otherwise, I will, nevertheless, present to him My word and work; against which, that evil impetus will run; for he, being evil, cannot but will evil while I move him by the power of My Omnipotence.”* (p.152-153)

He ran against that which he could not receive and despised. God was certain that an evil will could will nothing but evil and that as the good which it hated was presented to it, it could not but wax worse and worse.

**SEC 88:** (6.20:24)

Why doesn’t God cease from that motion of His omnipotence, by which the wicked is moved to go on and do evil and become worse? This would mean that God (for the sake of the evil) would cease to be God.

There are some workings of God that we may question and murmur. However, we need to worship and adore the secrets of the majesty. Why did God permit Adam to fall?

What takes place is right because He is God. It

**SEC 89:** (6.22:26)

Those who desire to define free will to their liking will twist scripture interpretation to meet their needs.

The Diatribe seemed to argue that interpreting the Exodus passage as Luther has, means that it makes God not a long-suffering God – But Luther responds, God punished Pha with the plagues (signs) also.

**SEC 90:** (6.25:09)

The design of Moses then is to not focus on the hardening of Ph but on the promise of God to deliver them. (Ex 6:1) This came with many difficulties in the Israelite people – similarly when Christ suffered the disciples had many difficulties as well. This was to increase their faith that afterwards they may more steadily believe.

**THE PURPOSE OF TRIBULATION WITH PHARAOH:** Ph would not send them away – let them go away – God did this to show His power (Ex 9:16; Rom 9:17) It was for strengthening their faith.

God was completely knowing Ph could not submit to God. Ph was NOT forced against his will.

**SEC 91:** (6.30:08)

Diatribes said that there was:

1. Necessity of consequence but not a necessity of the thing consequent
2. Ordinary Will - (will of sign WHICH CAN BE RESISTED)
3. Will of Decree – (WHICH CANNOT BE RESISTED)
4. Romans 9 has nothing to do with the salvation of man
5. Prescience (known before hand) of God **DOES NOT** pose a necessity
6. Prescience of God **DOES** pose a necessity.

If God knew beforehand that Judas was a traitor, Judas became a traitor by necessity – nor could Judas have the power to change that will. But he did what he did willingly – it was his own work; it was not by compulsion.

KEY THOUGHT: *“God does not lie, nor is He deceived. This is a truth evident and invincible. There are no obscure or ambiguous words here . . . If God be not deceived in that which he foreknows, that which he foreknows must, of necessity, take place. If that were not so, who could believe His promises, who would fear His threatenings?”* (p.158)

Man’s prescience is fallible.

KEY QUOTE: **“How could He (God) promise or threaten, if His prescience could be deceived or hindered by our mutability!”** (158)

**SEC 92:** (6.34:28)

Luther found one thought sequence in which he found agreement with Erasmus and he praised Erasmus that they did find agreement on this point.

In this section – Luther seemingly agrees with R.C. Sproul (Chosen by God) about this passage. That if there was ever a place for God to place that we have the ability to choose Him on our own without His assistance, this would be it. (Please not also, “Who are you to argue with God” which would stand to reason that some of the readers of Paul’s words might be offended at his writing. Much like Erasmus’ and others through time until today.

Necessity is imposed upon us by the will of God.

Can one explain the contradiction of the prescience of God and the Free will of man? It is like a number being both nine and ten.

KEY QUOTE: *“The apostle, therefore, restrains the impious who are offended at these most clear words, by letting them know, that the divine will is accomplished, by necessity in us; and by letting them know also, that it is defined to a certainty, that they have nothing of liberty or “Free- will” left, but that all things depend upon the will of God alone. . . And yet it does us no injury, seeing that it is not indebted to us, it never received any thing from us, it never promised us any thing but what itself pleased and willed.”* (160)

### **SEC 93:** (6.40:21)

In this section Luther talks about searching the scriptures and that it is blasphemy to attempt to make the all-free prescience of God harmonize with our freedom.

Luther brings up the passage that many who hold to free will quote, “God is not willing the death of a sinner.” And that many men are saying that same thing in hell.

God works all in all – He is omnipotent.

### **SEC 94:** (6.44:03)

**THE SOURCE of OFFENSE of God’s sovereignty and omnipotence is this** – that God who is set forth as full of mercy and goodness, should, of His mere will, leave men, harden them and damn them as though He delighted in the sins and in the great ternal torments of the miserable. This makes God cruel and intolerable.

Luther said this offended him as well – to the point that he did not even want to be born. But also, he thinks this is a helpful thing. Helps us realize the significance of saving grace.

There are these sentiments written on their hearts and they acknowledge and approve them, though against their will when they are spoken:

1. God is Omnipotent. In power and in action. If this is not true God would be ridiculous.
2. God knows and foreknows all things, and neither can be deceived or err.

These things are written in our hearts but then obscured when it is confused by wicked teachers and drawn aside by other opinions.

**SEC 95:** (6.47:23)

IF THIS is not Paul's argument in Rom 9 – what is the use of the illustration of the potter and the same lump of clay? IF we have LIBERTY – this would be a silly and vain illustration.

Romans 9 does not line up with the Diatribe. If they believe they shall be grafted in (9:23). This says nothing about the ability of man to believe. But the text says that God grafts them in. This is God's work, the one doing the grafting.

Luther makes accusation that Erasmus was evasive in his writing. IN the middle of passages, he did not complete the thought and would cut it short.

**SEC 96:** (6.50:57)

Erasmus taught that Judas had the power to change his own will and not betray Jesus

Luther is teaching that Judas became a traitor willingly or unwillingly, but the fact is Judas betrayed Jesus at a certain time by the predetermined will of God.

Luther questions Erasmus teaching as ambiguous and not clear and not good for a theologian to do.

**SEC 97:** (6.55:39)

THE argument and phrase "the necessity of the consequence and of the thing consequent" appears often and throughout Luther's response. This was used by the Sophists (Greek teachers) and by Erasmus to explain free will.

If the first part (necessity of the consequence) is true, then Free will is vanquished. God foreknows something to take place, it must take place. This is opposite of free will.

BUT THE OPPOSITE OF THAT STATEMENT TAKES INTO CONSIDERATION THE FREE WILL OF MAN. That Judas COULD change his mind and not be a traitor. **THIS IS THE THING CONSEQUENT.** These two positions can't be harmonized.

There is NO THING CONSEQUENT. This is a nothingness argument.

ATTENTION WILL LEAVE THE HARDENING OF PHARAOH'S HEART AND GO TO JACOB AND ESAU.

**SEC 98:** (6.59:08)

The Diatribe says that this (Romans 9:11) does not pertain to salvation of man. Luther says, if this is not about the salvation of Man why did Paul even bring it up – just to be a trifler?

Luther does not have a high regard for Jerome. The Diatribe leans on the comments of Jerome frequently.

**SEC 99:** (6.1:01:20)

Jacob attained what he did because of God – not free will. Same with Esau. It clearly says, that before they were born and neither had done good or evil. This has nothing to do with free will.

What did free will do for either Jacob or Esau? One would be servant and one lord. This was predetermined by God. THERE WAS NO MERIT HERE.

KEY THOUGHT: *“Paul is argumentatively considering, whether or not they attained unto that which was said of them, by the power or merits of “Free-will”; and he proves, that they did not; but that Jacob attained unto that, unto which Esau attained not, solely by the grace “of Him that calleth. . . . What did “Free-will” do for Jacob, or what did it do against Esau, when it was already determined, by the prescience and predestination of God, before either of them was born, what should be the portion of each; that is, that the one should serve, and the other rule?”* (168-169)

**SEC 100:** (6.1:04:18)

GEN 25:23 – the younger will receive Grace. They would be the people of God. Jacob received the blessing and the kingdom.

This is an essential article of faith – one which the soul depends.

**SEC 101:** (6.1:06:52)

Mal 1:2-3 is perverted by the Diatribe in three ways:

1. God does not love as we love nor does God hate anyone because passions like this does not belong to God.

**RESPONSE** *We do love mutably, God loves from an immutable nature. SO, this is true.*

KEY QUOTE: *“. . . Free will to be nothing at all; seeing that, the love and hatred of God towards men is immutable and eternal; existing not only before there was any merit or work of Free will but before the worlds were made; and that, all things take place in us form necessity, accordingly as He loved or loved not from all eternity. So that, not the love of God only, but even the manner of His love imposes on us necessity, Here then it may be seen, how much its intended ways of escape profit the diatribe, for more it attempts to get away from the truth, the more it runs upon it; with so little success does it fight against it!”* (p.170)

From Jacob and Esau, it shows what ability we have in our free will (i.e. NOTHING) God chose them before they were born before they had acted and done anything good or bad.

**SEC 102:** (6.1:09:33)

2. Malachi does not seem to speak of that hatred by which we are damned to all eternity but of temporal affliction: seeing that, those are reprov'd who wished to destroy the people of Edom.

**RESPONSE** This statement is in contempt of Paul. If what Erasmus said was true, then the hatred of God is laid on Esau without any desert.

Mal words are for Israel, after He loved them, they did not love Him back, or fear Him as their Lord (Mal. 1:6) God had moved Esau and his family (Edomites) to live in the desert.

The purpose of the Mal passage was to show the ingratitude of the sons of Jacob who did not see or understand what God had done for them and AGAINST the Edomites for no other reason than He loved one and hated the other.

### **SEC 103:** (7.0:00)

3. God foreknows before one is born that their behavior will merit hate and thus the hatred and love of God do not at all militate against free will. The Jews were cut off from the tree because of unbelief and Gentiles let in because of belief. Those in the tree are warned to continue to believe so they do not FALL OFF.

**RESPONSE:** Men are cut off from unbelief and they are encouraged to believe so they will not be cut off. But it does not reason that they can believe or remain believing from free will of their own. How did they get their faith?

### **What is the source of our faith and belief Christ?**

Again, the exhortations to remain in the faith is just that and encouragement to believe and stay believing. It does not prove what we **CAN DO** but what we **OUGHT TO DO**.

### **SEC 104:** (7.3:16)

Is 45:9 Shall the clay . . . Jer 16:6 "as the clay in the" The Diatribe seems to say to the original hearers the text points towards temporal (worldly) affections. Paul, says Erasmus, uses more force and in his context uses them with reference to eternal election and reprobation. (p.173)

**Neither of the passages proves free will** – and Luther says that Paul is not using the O.T. passage out of context.

Luther argues that when Paul quotes an O.T. passage he says the name from whom he is quoting. Here he does not. "*Paul uses this general similitude according to his spirit in support of his own cause as others have used it in 88 support of theirs.*" (p.174) 1 Cor 5:6 = Paul uses it to represent corrupt morals and applies it in another place (Gal 5:9) to those who corrupt the word of God: so also Christ speaks of the leaven of Herod and of the Pharisees (Mark 8:15; Matt 16:6)

### **SEC 105:** (7.5:49)



THE DIATRIBE MAKES THE argument that Paul does not exclude free will with 2 objections:

1. 2 Tim 2:20 in a house there are vessels of wood. . .if a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel of honor (v.21)

**RESPONSE:** Paul does not say if anyone shall purify himself from his own filth. Rather Paul says "From These" that is from the vessels unto dishonor. So, the sense is, if anyone shall remain separate and shall not mingle himself with the wicked teachers, he will be a vessel unto honor.

EVEN if Luther grants Erasmus' reasoning Paul is not speaking on the same subject in 2 Tim as he is in Rom 9:11-23. The similitudes may be the same, but the topics are different.

FURTHER Luther goes even further and says that let us grant that each passage is of the same thing: Luther says that Erasmus missed the scope of the similitude. The cause for each similitude differs. They are not the same.

- 2 Tim 2:20 it is an exhortation (God knows his own v19 the master prepares his own)
- Romans 9 it is a doctrine.

Erasmus makes notice of "If a man PURIFIES HIMSELF"

Luther response

- can Free will purify without grace?
- Also reminding of (sec 56) imperative & conditional passages (this is in indicative verbs)

### **SEC 106:** (7.11:36)

2. This objection concerns reason and not text. The Diatribe says that fault can't be placed on the vessel because the potter creates the clay as well as attempts it. So, the vessel is cast into eternal fire when it merited nothing because it had no power of its own.

**RESPONSE:** Luther says the Diatribe betrays itself the most in this place. Paul says the same thing about not being able to resist the will of God (Rom 9:19) This is an offense to many people. **HERE THEY REQUIRE THAT GOD ACT ACCORDING TO OUR HUMAN LAW.** What seems right to us should apply to God.

Flesh does not think glorious things of God. Some think it is absurd He should condemn him who cannot avoid the merit of damnation. God must be brought to order.

It is as if the Diatribe is saying that God is making a person who deserves merit a vessel of dishonor.

### **SEC 107:** (7.15:22)

If we are to follow reason and God damns those who, according to Erasmus, worthy of merit to be saved. Then the reverse – what about those who get crowned and should be damned?

This entire section is about damning the undeserving and saving the undeserving. This is about the justice of God.

KEY QUOTE: *“Behold, therefore, the iniquity of the human heart! When God saves the undeserving without merit, nay, justifies the impious with all their demerit, it does not accuse Him of iniquity, it does not expostulate with Him why He does it, although it is, in its own judgment, most iniquitous; **but because it is to its own profit, and plausible, it considers it just and good. But when He damns the undeserving, this, because it is not to its own profit, is iniquitous; this is intolerable; here it expostulates, here it murmurs, here it blasphemes!** The Diatribe with its friends, do not, in this cause, judge according to equity but according to the feeling sense of their own profit. . . He is, however, in both instances, monstrous and iniquitous in the sight of men; yet just and true in Himself.”* (p. 178)

If I feel good about the sov. Of God because it benefits me then I look upon this with favor but if I feel that I have lived “righteously” on my own thinking I am living righteously on my own merits I look upon this in contempt.

**THIS IS THE KEY TO UNDERSTANDING THOSE WHO PROMOTE FREE WILL – IT IS ABOUT HUMILITY**

### **SEC 108:** (7.18:49)

Erasmus collects many passages that seem either to attribute all to God’s grace or all to men. His interpretations contradict themselves. The Diatribe concludes and says that because Paul says “If a man purify himself” is an exhortation and why exhort if it is not possible. In other places the Diatribe says that man cannot purify himself without grace. (this contradiction is noted earlier and other places in the book) Luther says this makes the Diatribe explode on itself.

Luther points again to the additional words in the 2 Tim text “from these.”

1 Cor 12:6 - God works all in all! LUTHER again refers back to Erasmus evading and lack of proper explanation

### **SEC 109:** (7.22:46)

*“There are no contradictions in the words of the Scripture, nor any need of an invented interpretation to clear up a difficulty.”* (p.180)

There is no contradiction: God works all in all – if a man purifies himself. Nor does it need to be said that God does something, and man does something. **If a man purifies himself is conditional and IMPLIES NOR AFFIRMS ANY WORK OF POWER TO MAN. But simply SHOWS WHAT WORK THERE OUT TO BE IN MAN.**

**1 Cor 12:6 is a conditional passage which neither affirms or denies any work or power in man but simply shows what work or power there ought to be in man.**

**1 Cor 12:6 is an INDICATIVE PASSAGE THAT ALL THE WORKS AND ALL THE POWER ARE OF GOD.**

These passages do not contradict. The one says nothing to the power of man and the other attributes all to God.

The Diatribe makes that assertion that for God to make a command and if we are unable to keep it means that command is ridiculous. If God commands, then we are able to do it!

Yet Luther rightly points that if we can do it then grace is not needed. Period. **This is what the entire work comes down to. There are many passages and things argued and points made. The main point is if grace is needed then free will can't attain it.** (p.181)

**SEC 110:** (7.25:55)

ERASMUS "If man do nothing, there is no place for merit, and where there is no place for merit, there can be no place either for punishment or for reward."

KEY ARGUMENT: ". . .*where is any room for grace? Moreover, supposing "Free-will" to merit a certain little, and grace the rest, why does "Free-will" receive the whole reward?"* (181)

Luther – These are carnal arguments and the Diatribe refutes itself more than it refutes Luther.

For Erasmus – Merit is in the power of free will – where is the room for GRACE? Why does it get all the whole reward? Or do we as humans get a small portion of reward?

Luther asks – why do I waste time on this argument. Even if it were true one could not define how much work is attributed to God and how much is attributed to man. Erasmus' argument can't find Bible to back it.

Paul says that we are made of God as vessels of clay. This is the entirety of the Hardening of Pharaoh, the case of Esau and the Potter.