

I. Lapsarian Views

A. Infralapsarianism

1. Creation
2. Fall
3. Election and reprobation
4. Redemption in Christ
5. Application of Christ's redemptive benefits to the elect

B. Supralapsarianism

1. Election and reprobation
2. Creation
3. Fall
4. Redemption in Christ
5. Application of Christ's redemptive benefits to the elect

C. Modified Supralapsarianism (Herman Hoeksema)

1. Glory of God
2. Christ
3. Elect church
4. Reprobate
5. Creation, fall and providence

II. Some Scriptures Supporting Modified Supralapsarianism

A. Texts Concerning Creation

1. Psalm 115:16: "The heaven, even the heavens, are the LORD's; but the earth hath he given to the children of men."
2. Mark 2:27-28: "And he said unto them, The sabbath was made for man, and not man for the sabbath: Therefore the Son of man is Lord also of the sabbath."
3. I Corinthians 15:45: "And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit."
4. Revelation 4:11: "Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created."
5. Romans 1:20: "For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse."

B. Other Texts

1. I Corinthians 3:21-23: "Therefore let no man glory in men. For all things are yours; Whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; all are yours; And ye are Christ's; and Christ is God's."
2. Romans 8:28-29: "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren."
3. Ephesians 1:9-12: "Having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself: That in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in him: In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will: That we should be to the praise of his glory, who first trusted in Christ."
4. Colossians 1:15-20: "Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature: For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be

thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: And he is before all things, and by him all things consist. And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all [things] he might have the preeminence. For it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell; And, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven.”

III. Herman Hoeksema on Modified Supralapsarianism

We place ourselves without reservation on the standpoint of supralapsarianism and maintain that it is the scriptural and the only consistent presentation of the decree of God’s predestination. But we would like to modify this supralapsarian view in such a way that it is in harmony with our organic conception of things. We must emphasize not so much what is first or last in the decree of God, but rather place ourselves before the questions: What in those decrees is conceived as purpose and what as means? What is the main object in those decrees, and what is subordinate and subservient to that main object?

In this way we escape the danger of leaving the impression that there is a temporal order in the decrees of God. In addition, according to our way of presenting the doctrine of predestination, we may open the way to find an answer to the question, Why is there a reprobation? It is true that supralapsarians give a partial answer to this question when they assert that God also has willed the ungodly for his own name’s sake and for the manifestation of his righteousness, justice, power, and wrath. But this is by no means the final answer that may be given to this question, nor does it satisfy us, because in this way we still cannot escape the impression that there is arbitrariness in God. The reprobate are evidently not necessary to reveal God’s power, wrath, and righteousness, for these virtues certainly never came to a clearer, more definite revelation than at the cross of Jesus Christ. He certainly satisfied the justice and the righteousness of God and bore all his wrath.

Therefore, we would like to present the matter of God’s counsel of predestination as follows: God conceived and willed all things in his eternal decree for his own name’s sake, that is, to the glory of his name and the reflection of his divine, infinite virtues and life. As the highest in God is his own covenant life, he willed to establish and to reveal his covenant in Christ, and all other things in the counsel of God are related to that main purpose of God as means. Hence we obtain the following order of the decrees:

1. God wants to reveal his own eternal glory in the establishment of his covenant.
2. For the realization of this purpose, the Son becomes the Christ, the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature, that in him as the first begotten of the dead all the fullness of God might dwell.
3. For that Christ and the revelation of all his fullness, the church is decreed, and all the elect. In the decree of God, Christ is not designed for the church, but the church for Christ. The church is his body and serves the purpose of revealing the fullness there is in him.
4. For the purpose of realizing this church of Christ and, therefore, the glory of Christ, the reprobate are determined as vessels of wrath. Reprobation serves the purpose of election as the chaff serves the ripening of the wheat. This is in harmony with the current thought of Scripture. We find it expressed literally in Isaiah 43:3-4: “For I am the Lord thy God, the Holy One of Israel, thy Saviour: I gave Egypt for thy ransom, Ethiopia and Seba for thee. Since thou wast precious in my sight, thou hast been honourable, and I have loved thee: therefore will I give men for thee, and people for thy life.”
5. Finally, in the counsel of God, all other things in heaven and on earth are designed as means to the realization of both election and reprobation and, therefore, of the glory of Christ and his church. Because in the decree of God all things are conceived in this manner, all things must work together for good to them that love God, to them that are called according to his purpose. In this light we can also understand Scripture when it teaches that “all things are yours; Whether Paul or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; all are yours; And ye are Christ’s; and Christ is God’s” (I Cor. 3:21-23).