

## THE PROVIDENCE OF GOD

A. The subject of “providence” is interesting & certainly deserving of our study.

1. The word providence is not used in the Bible, but the idea is expressed ([Acts 24:1-3](#)).

B. Our English word “providence” is derived from the word “provide,” & in that word we see the basic concept behind “providence”.

1. In reference to God, providence has to do with His provisions for us.
2. The providence of God concerns itself with the preservation, care & control that God exercises over creation.
3. However, God’s providence does not eliminate human will, & our moral duty to Him to do what is right ([Josh 24:14-15](#)).

## I. WHAT GOD’S PROVIDENCE IS NOT

A. **God** working miracles for us.

1. On several occasions, God provided for his people by working miracles.

a. Israel: manna; Widow of Zarephath: flour & oil ([1 Kgs 17](#)).

2. Miracles were to authenticate those who spoke for god, or in some way were His representatives ([Heb 2:1-4](#)).

3. Today, God works through His natural laws to provide for the world & His people.

B. **Holy Spirit** mysteriously leading us.

1. The Spirit works powerfully today, but through the Word of God ([Eph 6:17](#); [Heb 4:12](#)).

## WHAT GOD'S PROVIDENCE IS NOT

### C. Human judgment.

1. When a person says, "God did this or that", he does so without proof.
2. We ought to say like Mordecai, "Who knoweth whether thou are not come to the kingdom for such a time as this?" ([Esther 4:14](#)).
  - a. This ought to be as far as we dare express ourselves about specific events.

## II. ANTI-PROVIDENCE VIEWPOINTS

[**People** in the world do not operate on the same level as the Christian. **We** are always aware of a loving God who cares & provides for us. **Nothing** happens without God's notice! **But** the world believes differently.]

A. The concept of **deism** is that God created the universe & endowed it with self-sustaining forces, after which He withdrew himself from it ([Job 38-39](#)).

B. **Pantheism** is that the universe is God, & God is the universe, & this is the all ([Gen 1:1](#); [Eccl 12:7](#)).

C. **Agnosticism** does not know that there is a God & **atheism** believes there is no God.

1. So only one who believes the Bible can accept God's providential working in human affairs.
2. Others believe in fate (an impersonal force that has already determined the future), karma, luck, horoscopes, & magic.

## III. GOD'S PROVIDENCE IS GENERAL & SPECIFIC

---

**Matt. 6:10**, "...Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven."

---

[Of course not everything that is done on this earth pleases God, but God's Will can even encompass human failings & sin so that ultimately His Will shall be done.]

God's Will shall be carried out, & no one in heaven or on earth can prevent it.

---

**Acts 2:23**, "Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel & fore-knowledge of God, ye have taken, & by wicked hands have crucified & slain:"

---

So how do we integrate our understanding of divine providence with the free will of human beings?

How does God's providence work when human beings so often refuse to do His will?]

## A. The **General** Providence Of God.

1. God provides for the general welfare of mankind:

- a. All necessary physical provisions.
- b. Rain, Weather
- c. Governments.
- d. Family

---

**Acts 17:28**, "For in him we live, & move, & have our being,"

**Matt. 5:45**, "...he maketh his sun to rise on the evil & on the good, & sendeth rain on the just & on the unjust."

**Rom 13:1**, "Let every soul be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, & the authorities that exist are appointed by God."

**Dan. 4:25**, "...seven times shall pass over thee, till thou know that the most high ruleth in the kingdom of men, & giveth it to whomsoever he will."

**Isa. 24:21**, "And it shall come to pass in that day, that the Lord shall punish the host of the high ones that are on high, & the kings of the earth."

**Prov. 19:14**, "House & riches are the inheritance of fathers: & a prudent wife is from the Lord."

**Psa. 127:3**, "Lo, children are an heritage of the Lord: & the fruit of the womb is his reward."

These providential blessings from God are subject to time & chance, which, of course, God can control if He so chooses.

**Eccl. 9:11**, "I returned, & saw under the sun, that the race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong, neither yet bread to the wise, nor yet riches to men of understanding, nor yet favor to men of skill; but time & chance happeneth to them all."

---

## B. The **Specific** Providence Of God.

1. God provides **specific circumstances** for those who want to learn the truth.

---

**Prov. 8:17**, “I love them that love me; & those that seek me early shall find me.”

### Ethiopian Eunuch

**Matt 7:7-11**, “Ask, & it will be given to you; seek, & you will find; knock, & it will be opened to you. 8 “For everyone who asks receives, & he who seeks finds, & to him who knocks it will be opened. 9 “Or what man is there among you who, if his son asks for bread, will give him a stone? 10 “Or if he asks for a fish, will he give him a serpent? 11 “If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask Him!”

---

2. God provides **specific angels** to assist faithful Christians in their lives upon the earth.

---

**Heb 1:13-14**, “But to which of the angels has He ever said: “Sit at My right hand, Till I make Your enemies Your footstool”? 14 Are they not all ministering spirits sent forth to minister for those who will inherit salvation?”

---

3. God provides **specific security** to guard our physical & spiritual needs.

---

**Matt. 6:33**, “But seek ye first the kingdom of God, & his righteousness; & all these things shall be added unto you.”

**Psa. 37:25**, “I have been young, & now am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread.”

**1 Pet 1:5**, “who are kept by the power of God through faith for salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.”

**2 Tim 1:12**, “For this reason I also suffer these things; nevertheless I am not ashamed, for I know whom I have believed & am persuaded that He is able to keep what I have committed to Him until that Day.”

**2 Tim. 4:8**, “Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: & not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.”

---

4. God provides **specific blessings** to the world by our faithfulness to Him.

---

**Phil. 2:13**, “For it is God which worketh in you both to will & to do of his good pleasure.”

**Matt 5:13-16**, “You are the salt of the earth; but if the salt loses its flavor, how shall it be seasoned? It is then good for nothing but to be thrown out & trampled underfoot by men. 14 “You are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden. 15 “Nor do they light a lamp & put it under a basket, but on a lampstand, & it gives light to all who are in the house. 16 “Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works & glorify your Father in heaven.”

**1 Cor. 7:14**, “For the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife, & the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband: else were your children unclean; but now are they holy.”

---

## CLOSING

In **general** providence, God provides generally for the welfare of His creation.

In **specific** providence, God provides specifically for the welfare of man's soul.