

Divine Providence

(Part 9)
Conclusion

1

God's Providence Does Exist

- ▶ *"Man cannot find out the work that God hath done from the beginning even to the end." (Ecclesiastes 3:11)*
- ▶ Therefore as we *"walk by faith, not by sight"* (2 Corinthians 5:7), we *"Trust in Jehovah with all thy heart, And lean not upon thine own understanding: In all thy ways acknowledge him, And he will direct thy paths."* (Proverbs 3:5-6)

2

What Is Providence?

- ▶ Providence is a general concept that refers to the broad scope of God's continuing activity in relation to the on-going world.
- ▶ The providence of God generally means, the divine care, guidance, and sustaining power of God over the universe and the affairs of men, and spiritual realms, yet it is a control that violates neither the sovereignty of the human will nor the divine natural and spiritual laws.

3

Divine Providence

- ▶ Seen in many lives.
- ▶ Generally. **Matthew 5:45**
- ▶ Specifically:
 - Joseph
 - Esther
 - Job
 - Paul
- ▶ The Problem Of Evil.

4

Five Realms Where God's Providence Is Seen:

That Which God Permits.

- ▶ *1 Corinthians 16:7 "For I do not wish to see you now by the way; for I hope to tarry a while with you, if the Lord permit."*
- ▶ *James 4:15 "For that ye ought to say, If the Lord will, we shall both live, and do this or that."*
- ▶ *Acts 14:15-16 "and saying, Sirs, why do ye these things? We also are men of like passions with you, and bring you good tidings, that ye should turn from these vain things unto a living God, who made the heaven and the earth and the sea, and all that in them is: who in the generations gone by suffered all the nations to walk in their own ways."*
- ▶ *Hebrews 6:3 "And this will we do, if God permit."*

5

Five Realms Where God's Providence Is Seen:

That Which God Performs.

- i.e. He makes certain thing happen, performing certain actions.
- Matthew 5:45 "for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sendeth rain on the just and the unjust."*
- Acts 17:25 "neither is he served by men's hands, as though he needed anything, seeing he himself giveth to all life, and breath, and all things"*

6

Five Realms Where God's Providence Is Seen:

That Which God Prefers.

1 Timothy 2:4 *"who would have all men to be saved, and come to the knowledge of the truth."*

2 Peter 3:9 *He desires all men to repent*

Matthew 18:14 *He prefers that no one perish*

7

Five Realms Where God's Providence Is Seen:

That Which God Provides.

▶ God responds to prayer:

- 1 John 5:13-15 *"And this is the boldness which we have toward him, that, if we ask anything according to his will, he heareth us: and if we know that he heareth us whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions which we have asked of him."*

- NOTE: James 1:5, 17

8

Five Realms Where God's Providence Is Seen:

That Which God Prohibits.

1 Corinthians 10:13 *"There hath no temptation taken you but such as man can bear: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation make also the way of escape, that ye may be able to endure it."*

NOTE: Job

9

Five Realms Where God's Providence Is Seen:

What do we know?

- ▶ God **permits** certain things.
- ▶ God **performs** certain acts.
- ▶ God **prefers** certain things.
- ▶ God **provides** for us in response to our prayers.
- ▶ God **prohibits** certain things.

- ▶ **These clearly establish the fact of God's providence!**

10

Application And Difficulty

What do we know?

- God answers prayer, even though I may not know exactly how He does it.
- God has the ability to use various influences, circumstances and people for my good.
- He has the ability to work among nations.
- He can use weather, illness, and even wicked behavior for His own purposes.

- ▶ **HOWEVER** - When it comes to exactly and specifically what God causes, controls, permits or provides, I am not capable of knowing all about that.

11

Application And Difficulty

- ▶ I **CANNOT** interpret the details of God's providence from day to day and event to event.
- ▶ Illustration: A storm that wipes out a whole community, killing several citizens.
 - Did God cause that, or just permit it?
 - If God caused it directly, why? What did He have in mind?
 - Was this just an indirect consequence of living in a world corrupted by sin?

- **I cannot answer these questions!**

12

God's Providence Does Exist

- ▶ *"Man cannot find out the work that God hath done from the beginning even to the end."* (Ecclesiastes 3:11)
- ▶ Therefore as we *"walk by faith, not by sight"* (2 Corinthians 5:7), we *"Trust in Jehovah with al thy heart, And lean not upon thine own understanding: In all thy ways acknowledge him, And he will direct thy paths."* (Proverbs 3:5-6)

13

Application And Difficulty

What do I need to know?

- ▶ I need to know God and my duty to Him.
- ▶ I need to know my Savior and how to respond to and honor him.

14

Conclusion:

Let us never be ashamed to proclaim the fact of God's providence.

- ▶ Warning:
 - Let us be careful of what we affirm, claim, or attribute to God.
 - *Ecclesiastes 5:2 "Be not rash with thy mouth, and let not thy heart be hasty to utter anything before God; for God is in heaven, and thou upon earth: therefore let thy words be few."*
 - *Job 38:2 "Who is this that darkeneth counsel By words without knowledge?"*

15