

## **HC 27-28 –God’s Providence Gives Confidence**

Brothers and Sisters in Jesus Christ: Here is an undeniable truth: **Too many people in the west, with all our knowledge, power, and wealth, think the doctrine of God’s providence is disgusting, even repulsive.**

Why do they find God’s providence repulsive? This doctrine, that God controls every thought and every action, is abhorrent to many because it **destroys the supremacy of man!** It is not therefore a surprise that man has diligently **tried in this post-Christian era to kill God** – or at least declare him dead.

This rejection of God’s providence and adoption of the supremacy of man got its revival in the 1700’s as the French people rejected their tyrant kings, but at the same time, rejected the King of Heaven. It found a fuller expression in the 20<sup>th</sup> century in the US where democracy (rule by man) became more and more popular and God’s rule was rejected.

**But Christians welcome this doctrine** – especially when it is properly explained, understood, and applied. So give attention to God’s Word regarding God’s providence.

Our headings are:

**An explanation of Providence**

**An application of Providence**

Our goals are: That upon properly understanding that God rules and controls every creature and every action, **you will stop worrying about what you can’t control, you will worship God better, and you will school your children in this doctrine so they can enjoy its benefits.**

### **An Explanation of Providence**

**27 Q. WHAT DO YOU UNDERSTAND BY THE PROVIDENCE OF GOD?**

**A.** Providence is the almighty and ever present **power of God** by which **he upholds**, as with his hand, heaven and earth and all creatures, and **so rules** them that leaf and blade, rain and drought, fruitful and lean years, food and drink, health and sickness, prosperity and poverty– all things, in fact, come to us **not by chance** but from his **fatherly hand**.

**1. One dictionary defines providence as: The guardianship and control exercised by a deity.**

But who is this deity? Only Christians can fill in who this Deity is.

**Providence is Jehovah’s great and ever-present power by which he keeps and controls all things and all people.** (“If it’s got to be, it’s up to me,” is pagan.)

**When there is a spread of Covid-19** around the world, it may be God is sick of man’s arrogance and wants to teach him humility.

**When you don’t get the job you want**, you might find out that that company folded...or you may end up with a better job.

When you don't get the guy you wanted to marry... you may find out later he wasn't a true believer.

When you fail your exam, you might be thankful for a new career that you enjoy more! God controls everything.

## **2. Because Jehovah controls all things and all people, nothing spins off into space in some meaningless direction.**

There is nothing that a man can do that is out of God's control. No one can escape God's eyes and hands. He controls the loose wheels on a semi-truck and directs it to where it stops.

Consider what Jeremiah wrote:

Jeremiah 23: 23 "Am I a God near at hand," says the LORD, "And not a God afar off? **24 Can anyone hide himself in secret places, So I shall not see him?**" says the LORD; "Do I not fill heaven and earth?"

**President Biden and Prime Minister Trudeau aren't independent of God's providence,** though they may act like they are by their actions. When God wishes, he raises up. When God wishes, he brings down.

Proverbs 21:1 The king's heart is in the hand of the LORD, **Like the rivers of water; He turns it wherever He wishes.**

Scientists might announce a new scientific law and you might admire it, but **scientists only discover what God had put in place already.** God controlled the elements of that scientific fact.

**The earth did not start to go around the sun when man discovered it.**

**Uranium did not develop explosive properties when man started making bomb.**

God even moves the heart of the most wicked...as he moved King Cyrus.

## **3. Even the tiniest things are in Jehovah's control and he has an established purpose for it.**

Matthew 10:29 "Are not two sparrows sold for a copper coin? And not one of them falls to the ground apart from your Father's will. 30 **But the very hairs of your head are all numbered.**

Do you know how many hairs fall from your head everyday...unless you have none? Each hair has a number.

**No one can move a finger or a thought without your Father's providential control.**

Job 1:12 And the LORD said to Satan, "Behold, all that he has is in your power; **only do not lay a hand on his person.**" So Satan went out from the presence of the LORD.

God controls a drop of rain that falls...and he has a purpose for that drop of rain.  
God does not simply provide food for you, there is a purpose behind his provision of food.

#### **4. God rules by his providence using various methods.**

He may use people, he may use things, or he may work by his own miraculous means and avoid human means altogether.

Jeremiah 5: 24 They do not say in their heart, "**Let us now fear the LORD our God, Who gives rain, both the former and the latter, in its season.**"  
He reserves for us the appointed weeks of the harvest."

God may use what appears to be chance...but is not. Sometimes God just says the word and it is done. Hebrews 1:1-3.

Proverbs 16: 33 The lot is cast into the lap, but its **every decision is from the LORD.**

#### **5. Consider one of the peculiar ways God works providentially: A man may not have done something bad but God still ordains troubles for him.**

The Bible rejects karma. The Bible reveals sovereignty.

John 9: 1 Now as Jesus passed by, He saw a man who was blind from birth.  
2 And His disciples asked Him, saying, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?" 3 Jesus answered, "**Neither this man nor his parents sinned, but that the works of God should be revealed in him.**"

#### **6. But yet there is a definite predictability about how God may work. Consider some examples:**

**a. If you don't strengthen your immune system, you would like get sick and not easily fight-off diseases.** Can God still heal you if you don't take care of your immune system? Yes, but he has appointed a certain way for things to work.

**b. If you eat and don't work or don't exercise, you will probably gain weight.** It may be that you still stay like Tim and Enoch, but that is not how providence usually works.

**c. If you don't take your medicines, you will probably get sicker.** Can God make you survive without your medicines? Yes. Does he usually do so? No. (It doesn't matter what the "fake healers" say on TV.

**d. If you are a foolish Christian who plays with poisonous snakes in worship, you are**

**likely to get bitten and die.** Could God save you from being bitten? Yes. Does he normally do that? No.

**e. If you are lazy and don't fix the hole in your roof,** you will get rain or snow on your bed. Can God stop the snow? Yes, but snow will generally come each year in winter.

### **An Application of Providence**

#### **28 Q. HOW DOES THE KNOWLEDGE OF GOD'S CREATION AND PROVIDENCE HELP US?**

**A.** We can be **patient when things go against us, thankful when things go well,** and for the future we can **have good confidence in our faithful God** and Father that nothing will separate us from his love. All creatures are so completely in his hand that without his will they can neither move nor be moved.

#### **1. Because God, your Father, providentially rules over every creature and every action, be patient when things don't go the way you might expect them to go.**

You know you are his child and he will do what is best for you. This is why Job was able to say what he did...though he experienced great hardships in his life.

Job 1: 21 And he said: "Naked I came from my mother's womb, And naked shall I return there. The LORD gave, and the LORD has taken away; Blessed be the name of the LORD." 22 In all this Job did not sin nor charge God with wrong.

Apostle James explained that **you who are God's children through Jesus could even look forward to troubles,** knowing that God will **bless you for patiently enduring troubles.**

James 1: 2 My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials, 3 knowing that the **testing of your faith produces patience.**

So if you lose your job, or if your computer crashes, if you get Covid-19, or if you lose your cell phone, if you fail a grade in school, if someone backs into your car in the parking lot, or if your plants die because it freezes this week, remember James 1:2.

#### **2. Because your heavenly Father providentially rules over every creature and every action, be thankful when things go well.**

Don't take the credit for what God does; give the credit. This was explained to the Israelites before they entered Canaan.

Deuteronomy 8: 10 "When you have eaten and are full, then **you shall bless the LORD your God** for the good land which He has given you.

This must be part of your daily lifestyle. Thank God often. Don't take credit that belongs to the Lord. What do you have that you have not received?

**3. Because God, your heavenly Father, providentially rules over every creature and every action, have confidence in God that he will keep you safe forever.**

Psalm 55: 22 Cast your burden on the LORD, **and He shall sustain you;** He shall never permit the righteous to be moved.

What amazing confidence you can have in your Father. No one is able to move the righteous. You have a place in God's family and your name is registered in heaven. It is irrevocable.

Romans 5: 3 And not only that, but we also glory in tribulations, **knowing that tribulation produces perseverance; 4 and perseverance, character; and character, hope.** 5 Now hope does not disappoint...

God's Word and Spirit reassure you your Father will not leave you alone. Jesus did not die for you to leave you. So work, live, eat, marry, and have and raise kids...because God rules.

Romans 8: 38 ... neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, 39 nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, **shall be able to separate us from the love of God** which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

**4. Since God's rules the world by his providence, and since you can be patient in trial, and since you can be thankful in prosperity, and since you can be confident in the future, you then have nothing to fear.**

Yes, you must work (providence does not take away responsibility), but you are not to fear.

So examine your life for a minute and think if fear controls you...or Jesus does. If Jesus, be bold! Work.

**5. Because providence is so dear and so useful, Apostle Paul used it as an evangelistic tool.**

He reminded the Athenians that Jehovah God was the Creator and the Keeper of all things and persons. He knew if God's Spirit were working the doctrine would make non-believers drop to their knees. So don't hide this doctrine. The world needs to put their trust in the one who sustains the world.

Acts 17: 24 "God, who made the world and everything in it, since He is Lord of heaven and earth, does not dwell in temples made with hands. [26] "And He has made from one blood every nation of men to dwell on all the face of the earth, and has determined their pre-appointed times and the boundaries of their dwellings,

**Conclusion:**

What a beautiful doctrine "providence" is! God the Father – *your Father* – rules every creature – every action – and nothing happens out of his will. And his will is always good for you!

Brothers and sisters in Jesus Christ:

**1. Don't fear and don't worry.** Know your Father is able to do what he promised to do for you. Be thankful when things go well. Be patient when they don't. Keep your confidence in him.

**2. Don't put pressure on yourself trying to control things that you can't. If you get Covid or cancer,** you either will get better or you will die – but you are still God's child. **If you lose your phone,** either you find it, or buy a new one, or learn to live without. But you have a permanent phone line to heaven...and it is pre-paid...and unlimited. **If you have a flat tire and go to work late,** you might be fired from your job, but God never terminates your citizenship in heaven. Instead of worrying, **let this doctrine cause you to worship God better and go about your life in peace.**

**3. Teach this doctrine to your children.** They are facing many pressures in today's world – getting school work done, getting jobs, getting married, **putting up with mocking,** etc. Remind them God controls all things. They have their responsibility to be faithful, but they don't need to be worried. God will provide for them.

**4. Why would you not fear or worry?** Because you are the blood bought children of God through Jesus! More, when you do worry, it is a contempt and distrust of your Savior.

Finally, if you are not a Christian, you have reason to worry. You don't have God's promises to do what is best for you. But you can fix that if you ask God to make you his child on account of his satisfying his wrath in Jesus. Christ died for the sins of all those who truly call on God to be saved!