

Real Security

Q&A #11: What are God's works of providence? God's works of providence are his most holy wise and powerful preserving and governing all his creatures and all their actions.

Key texts: Most holy (Ps. 145:17), wise (Is. 28:29), preserving & governing (Ps. 103:19), all his creatures and all their actions (Matt. 10:29)

God preserves and governs his creation (Psalm 24:1, Psalm 103:19)

He does so in righteousness and holiness- always true to his nature as a holy God (Psalm 145:13-17)

God governs with wisdom... again true to his nature (Isaiah 28:29)

All things are under God's control (Colossians 1:15-21, 1 Sam. 2:6-8)

Even the smallest details are under God's control (Matthew 10:28-32, Acts 17:26-29)

While God has established order and natural laws in his creation, it is by his word that all is upheld (Hebrews 1:1-3)

God's providence extends to all of his creation, even evil-doers (Matthew 5:42-47)

God uses his complete and active control of nature as a means of carrying out his plan (Job 37)

God controls those rulers of the earth (Daniel 2:20-22, Daniel 4:24-26)

Evil doers are also controlled by God (Job 1:6-12)

Even our will is controlled by God (Prov. 16:1, Phil. 2:12)

God's loving, wise, powerful and holy governing and protecting brings comfort to the Christian (Psalm 91 Psalm 46:1-3, Romans 8:28, Psalm 104)

Summary

God's care of his creation, or providence, derives from God's holiness, wisdom and power. From his holiness and goodness comes his provision; from his wisdom comes the exact appropriateness of his rule- from his power comes his ability to uphold and govern all things. God preserves all his creatures. He sustains what he has made by protecting his creation, limiting Satan's power to do harm, and providing everything necessary for life. God governs all his creatures and their actions. He sovereignly rules over nature, nations and individuals. He even uses sin to accomplish his foreordained purposes, while holding men accountable for their sin. Believers benefit from God's providence. Because God providentially cares for his creation, believers can be patient when things go against them, grateful when things go well, and confident about the future knowing that nothing can separate them from the love of their heavenly father.

Tragedy and Triumph

Joseph's life is presented in Genesis 37-50. It's a story with several "ups and downs", where God was working out his plan while Joseph and the others were unaware. Think about that story.

Was Joseph always happy?

Was God in charge of his brothers? Of Potiphar? Of the prison warden? Of Pharaoh?

How did Joseph respond to his problems? Did Joseph know what God's ultimate purpose for his life was at age seventeen (as a slave)? At twenty-seven (as a prisoner)? At thirty-seven (as a prince)?

What lesson can we learn from the story of Joseph?