

DIVINE PROVIDENCE

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“My soul, wait thou only upon God; for my expectation is from him.” (Psalm 62:5)

“It is good that a man should both hope and quietly wait for the salvation of the LORD.” (Lamentations 3:26)

God’s providence in our lives refers to his guidance (*Psalms 32:8*), provision (*1 Kings 17:16, Neh. 9:21, 1 Kings 17:16, Luke 22:35*), and protection (*Deut. 33:27*). It speaks of his involvement in the daily affairs of our lives. God is an active participant, not a passive observer. Predestination is that part of God’s covenant of grace which fixes the eternal abode of his people (*Rom. 8:29*). Everyone he foreknew and chose in Christ before the world began, he also predestinated unto the adoption of children (*Eph. 1:4-5*). Christ redeemed them (*1 Pet. 1:18-19*), saved them from the curse of the law (*Gal. 3:13*), reconciled them to God (*2 Cor. 5:19*), and justified them (*Rom. 3:24, 5:9*). While they live in this world he quickens them (*Eph. 2:1*), imparting eternal life, thereby making them fit subjects for the gospel (*2 Tim. 1:9-10*). One day he will return to claim his own and carry them to mansions above (*Mat. 25:31-34*). Providence is distinguished from predestination in that the former affects our life in this world while the later ordained life in that world to come. Providence concerns the temporal, predestination concerns the eternal. Providence sustains us in the journey, predestination fixes our final abode.

“The Absolute Predestination of All Things” is a false doctrine which perverts the meaning of predestination and misapplies the providence of God. It teaches that all the events of time including the course of nature and its consequences, along with all the thoughts and actions of men are the result of the predetermined counsel of God.

In the words of the hymn writer, a correct understanding of predestination coupled with a trust in divine providence provides, *“strength for today and bright hope for*

tomorrow". David expressed his understanding of providence when he said, "My times are in thy hand..." (Psa. 31:15) and later, "The lines are fallen unto me in pleasant places; yea, I have a goodly heritage." (Psalm 16:6).

It is important to recognize that God's providence is not random or unpredictable. The enduring mercy of God saves us from his consuming wrath (Psa. 118:1, Lam. 3:22, Psa. 103:10, Psa. 130:3). Nevertheless, we generally reap what we sow (Isa. 1:19-20, Gal. 6:7, Luke 6:44) in greater abundance than we sowed (Mat. 13:8, Hos. 8:7).

Moses emphasized this great principle of divine truth in his farewell address to the children of Israel, "I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live:" (Deu. 30:19).