

Divine Providence (Part 4) Special Providence

General Providence – Job 38

- ▶ God acts in preserving the universe according to predictable patterns we call natural law.
- ▶ In this action, God works the same everywhere at all times, to all people, good and evil are equally subjected.
- ▶ **Matthew 5:45**

Special Providence

- ▶ Natural law and human free will are not the only forces at work in our lives.
- ▶ There is another force at work, one which **CONTROLS** and **DIRECTS** – namely God.

Special Providence

- ▶ God acts through natural law and influences human decisions so as to cause results that would not have occurred without the intervention, but which still exist within the possibilities of natural law and which do not violate the integrity of free will.

Special Providence

- ▶ **Ecclesiastes 9:1** *“For all this I laid to my heart, even to explore all this: that the righteous, and the wise, and their works, are in the hand of God.”*
- ▶ **Ecclesiastes 3:11** *“Man cannot find out the work that God hath done from the beginning even to the end.”*

Special Providence

- ▶ **Deuteronomy 29:29** *“The secret things belong unto Jehovah our God; but the things that are revealed belong unto us and to our children for ever, that we may do all the words of this law.”*
- ▶ Therefore we, *“walk by faith, not by sight.”* (2 Corinthians 5:7)
- ▶ Therefore 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)

Overview ...

- ▶ God's purpose is seen in the control of men and nations – as He worked His purpose for the nation of Israel.
- ▶ Special providence in the use of heathen nations.
- ▶ God rules in the nations.
- ▶ God can and does raise up certain men.
- ▶ Time when judgment must come to the moral world.

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God's Purpose in Creation

- ▶ To glorify God
 - Romans 11:36; Colossians 1:16; 1 Peter 5:6–7
- ▶ Right to rule as Creator
 - Psalms 24:1–2
 - 2 Kings 19:15
 - 1 Chronicles 29:11–12

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God's Purpose in Creation

Right to rule as Creator

- ▶ Psalms 22:28; 47:2; 97:1,5,9; 103:19; 145:11–13
- ▶ Often men carried out the plan of God unawares. cf. Acts 2:23; 3:17; 4:27–28

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God's Purpose in Creation

Through His special providence He controls kings and kingdoms.

- **Daniel 2:21** "And he changeth the times and the seasons; he removeth kings, and setteth up kings; he giveth wisdom unto the wise, and knowledge to them that have understanding"
- **Daniel 5:21** "and he was driven from the sons of men, and his heart was made like the beasts' and his dwelling was with the wild asses; he was fed with grass like oxen, and his body was wet with the dew of heaven; until he knew that the Most High God ruleth in the kingdom of men, and that he setteth up over it whomsoever he will."

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God's Purpose in Creation

Even the smallest of events are not past His control.

- **Proverbs 16:33** "The lot is cast into the lap, but its every decision {is} from the Lord." cf. Acts 1:24–26

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Developing Israel

- ▶ Because of sin God chose to redeem man from sin through His Son Jesus Christ.
 - **Genesis 3:15**
- ▶ Atoning death on the cross.
- ▶ Not just a casual preparation.
- ▶ God chose **ONE** nation from all people
 - **Deuteronomy 7:7–8**
- ▶ Worked with them through the centuries.

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God Chose Abraham

Genesis 12:1-7 Physical and Spiritual promise.

- ▶ **NATION**
 - Genesis 15:5
- ▶ **LAND**
 - Genesis 15:18-21
- ▶ **SEED**
 - All nations blessed by that Seed. cf. Galatians 3:16; Acts 3:22-26

Ishmael and Isaac

Two Sons

- ▶ Ishmael
 - Born to Hagar (Genesis 16:1-3)
- ▶ Isaac
 - Born to Sarah (Genesis 21:1-7; cf. Genesis 22)

Jacob and Esau

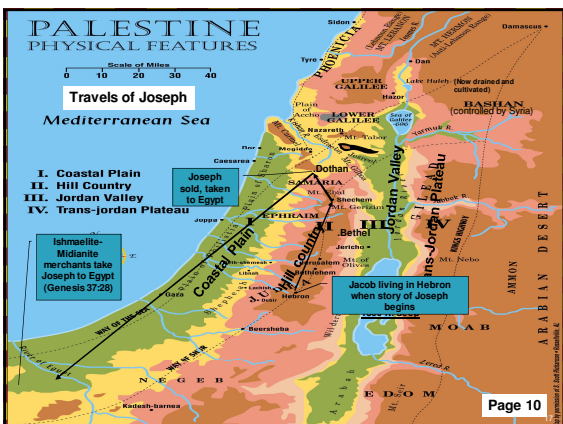
Twin Sons

- ▶ **Esau**
 - Sold birthright (Genesis 25:29-34)
- ▶ **Jacob**
 - God chose younger (Genesis 25:21-28)

Jacob's 12 Sons

- ▶ Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Judah, Issachar, Zebulun
 - Leah
- ▶ Gad, Asher
 - Zilpah
- ▶ Joseph, Benjamin
 - Rachel
- ▶ Dan, Naphtali
 - Bilhah

Genesis 35:22ff



Story of Joseph

Not chosen by whim.

- ▶ Ended up in Egypt
 - Potiphar's wife. Genesis 39
 - Butler and Baker. Genesis 40
 - Pharaoh's dreams. Genesis 41
- ▶ Joseph elevated to power. Genesis 41
- ▶ Reveals his identity. **Genesis 45:5,7-8**
- ▶ Following death of Jacob. **Genesis 50:18-19**