

God's Providence (Proverbs 16:1-9)

April 12, 2026

TEXT: Prov. 16:1-9

Psalm 115:3; Eph. 1:11; Rom. 8:28; Phil. 1:6

MAIN IDEA—God created all things, governs all things, and uses all things for His glory. This biblical truth, while mysterious, is a tremendous source of faith and hope for believers in the midst of trials as we run our race on the way to glory.

MEMORY VERSE: [Prov. 19:21]

1. GOD'S PLAN (Prov. 16:1-3)—These verses address the relationship between divine sovereignty and human responsibility. Scripture teaches both the sovereignty of God and the free moral choices of men with equal emphasis, yet behind it all is the providence of God.

*God's Providence is God's ruling over His creation (i.e. God's working behind the scenes running everything He created).

The Westminster Confession of Faith (Ch. 5, Sec. 1)—*God, the great Creator of all things, doth uphold, direct, dispose and govern all creatures, actions, and things, from the greatest even to the least, by his most wise and holy providence, according to his infallible foreknowledge, and the free and immutable counsel of his own will, to the praise of the glory of his wisdom, power, justice, goodness, and mercy.*

Col. 1:16-17

The Bible clearly teaches God's providential control over: the universe at large (**Ps. 103:19; Dan. 4:35; and Eph. 1:11**); the physical world (**Ps. 104:14; 135:6; Matt. 5:45**); brute creation (**Ps. 104:21, 28; Matt. 6:26; 10:29**); the affairs of nations (**Ps. 22:28; 66:7; Acts 17:26**); man's birth and lot in life (**1 Sam. 16:1; Ps. 139:16; Is. 45:7; Gal. 1:15, 16**); the outward success and failures of men's lives (**Ps. 75:6, 7; Lk. 1:52**); things seemingly accidental or insignificant

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(Prov.16:33; Matt.10:30, 31); the protection of the righteous (Ps.4:8; 5:12; 63:8;121:3; Rom.8:28); supplying the wants of God's people (Gen.22:8, 14; Deut.8:3; Phil.4:19); giving answers to prayer (1 Sam.1:19-20; 2 Chr.33:13; Ps. 65:2; Matt. 7:7; Lk.18:7, 8) and the exposure and punishment of the wicked (Ps.7:12, 13; 11:6).

Matt. 10:29-31

V1-The answer of the tongue-Human responsibility is always subject to God's sovereignty.

Acts 4:27, 28

The point of this verse is to keep God's people aware that our plans will come to nothing without God bringing it about. **Ps. 127:1 V2-Weighing the motives of the heart.**

Ps. 139:23-24

V3-Committing our works to the LORD.

Ps. 37:5

***God's will of decree (i.e. God's will of events).**

Prov. 19:21

***God's will of command.**

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If we are honest, we must confess these truths are mysterious but they are clearly stated in the Bible therefore we must: admit we don't fully understand these things while at the same time humbly submit to God's revealed word (**Rom. 11:33-36**).

2. GOD'S PURPOSES (Proverbs 16:4-6)—Everything the LORD permits or does, He does based on His infinite wisdom and for His own glory. This too is mysterious because it involves the LORD's power being displayed by using all things including overruling evil and the evil actions of men.

Concurrence is God working His divine will through the decisions and actions of His creatures.

Acts 2:22-24

J.I. Packer—*Of the evils that infect God's world (moral and spiritual perversity, waste of good, and the physical disorders and disruptions of a spoiled cosmos), it can summarily be said: God permits evil (Acts 14:16); He punishes evil with evil (Ps. 81:11-12; Rom. 1:26-32); He brings good out of evil (Gen. 50:20; Acts 2:23; 4:27-28; 13:27; 1 Cor. 2:7-8); He uses evil to test and discipline those He loves (Matt. 4:1-11; Heb. 12:4-14); and one day He will redeem His people from the power and presence of evil altogether (Rev. 21:27; 22:14-15).*

V6-The fear of the LORD keeps believers away from evil.

Rom.5:8-9

3. THE VALUE OF UNDERSTANDING GOD'S PROVIDENCE (Proverbs 16:7-9)—This truth is a great encouragement to believers to persevere knowing that God rules in the affairs of men and will finish His good purposes in our lives. **V7**-Pleasing God leads to peace.

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2 Tim. 3:12

V8-Righteousness is more valuable than earthly wealth.

V9-The LORD's direction.

Jas. 4:13-15

James Montgomery Boice (1938-2000) notes 4 blessings of trusting in God's Sovereignty:

1) It deepens our reverence for the true and living God, 2) It gives comfort in the midst of trials, temptations, or sorrow 3) It provides encouragement and joy in evangelism. 4) It gives a deep sense of security.

Q27 & 28 of the Heidelberg Catechism of 1563. [Question 27. *What do you mean by the providence of God? Answer: The almighty and everywhere present power of God; whereby, as it were by his hand, he upholds and governs heaven, earth, and all creatures; so that herbs and grass, rain and drought, fruitful and barren years, meat and drink, health and sickness, riches and poverty, yea, and all things come, not by chance, but by his fatherly hand.*

Question 28. *What advantage is it to us to know that God has created, and by his providence does still uphold all things? Answer: That we may be patient in adversity; thankful in prosperity; and that in all things, which may hereafter befall us, we place our firm trust in our faithful God and Father, that nothing shall separate us from his love; since all creatures are so in his hand, that without his will they cannot so much as move.*