

God's Providence

(Belgic Confession article 13, Heidelberg Catechism Lord's Day 10)

God's providence

God's providence is that God, according to His holy will so rules and governs the earth and all creatures, that in this world nothing happens without His direction.

Whatever happens in our world, nothing happens by chance. It all comes to us by God's fatherly hand. (See Lord's Day 10, q/a 27).

We don't always understand God's providence. Sometimes it is as if unbelievers and godless men can do whatever they want and believers and God fearing men have a hard and difficult life.

1. Why does God not always bless the believers with earthly goods and with health?
2. What is God's blessing in our lives?

God governs this world

We live in a world full of sin, where devils deceive and destroy and do terrible things.

A world full of war and misery. A world, also, in which many lawless men can do whatever they want and the poor and needy have to suffer injustice. Sometimes even within God's own people. But we know that despite the power of sin and the devils, God governs this world and still upholds it in His providence. Everything has a purpose in God's plan. Also about sin, we must know that nothing happens against God's holy will.

Although the devil has much power, he cannot cross the limits set by God.

3. Where do we see in our world, that God restrains Satan?
4. Why does God allow Satan to do so many terrible things?

God allows sin, but He does not do sin.

That God allows sin to happen, does not mean that He works these sinful acts. Man is responsible for his own deeds, also for his own sins. But God can use these evil deeds in His plan.

See Genesis 50:20 : There Joseph said to his brothers: *But as for you, you meant evil against me; but God meant it for good, in order to bring it about as it is this day, to save many people alive.*

God's providence and our attitude

There is much what we don't understand. We don't know the details of God's plan. God oversees His complete plan and He knows what He is doing. Maybe we will understand it later, or maybe we have to wait until Christ returns, to be able to understand it. But we should not complain and rebel. We must obediently accept what God sends us in this life. We can struggle with it, but then we have to ask God for His help. And we must honour God and praise Him for His mighty deeds, which we so often cannot understand.

God's providence is a comfort to us

Matthew 6:25-34 : Christ tells us that we can live without worrying. It does not help us to worry for tomorrow and the day thereafter. He wants us to live a happy life, free of worries. And He tells us that we can have a good life. When we seek His Kingdom and His righteousness.

5. Can we change anything in our lives by worrying?
6. What is the difference between careless and carefree?