received favorably by the king. 8) The king learns that Mordecai saved his life and rewards him (at the hands of Haman). 9) Haman becomes jealous and has a gallows prepared for Mordecai. 10) Haman is hanged on the gallows he had prepared for Mordecai. 11) The Jews take vengeance on their persecutors with the king’s blessings.

These events show that 1) God’s plans will unfold with or without our participation (Esther 4:12-14); 2) faith and action may be required to receive God’s providence (Esther 4:16); and 3) human opposition will not stop God’s providence (Esther 6:13). A key verse to consider in regard to God’s providence is found in Esther 4:14:“…who knoweth whether thou art come to the kingdom for such a time as this?”

**God’s Providence in the life of Joseph**

Because of God’s providence in the life of Joseph, all of God’s people have been blessed. 1) God used Joseph to bring about an important phase of His Scheme of Redemption. 2) God took the descendants of Abraham into Egypt as promised (Gen. 15:13-16). 3) God preserved an infant nation in time of famine. 4) Through the descendants of Joseph, the Messiah would come into the world to redeem God’s people.

**The Chain of Providence in the Life of Joseph**

Let us review the series of events that illustrates the providence of God in Joseph’s life. We will consider them in reverse order.

1) Jacob and his family are in Egypt. How did they get there?

2) How was Joseph able to bring his brethren and father to Egypt?

3) How did Joseph become Prime Minister of Egypt?

4) Why did Pharaoh appoint Joseph to be Prime Minister?

5) How had Pharaoh learned that the Spirit of God was in Joseph?

6) How was it that Joseph had come to interpret Pharaoh’s dream?

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**Special Providence**

God’s love and concern for the elect is called Special Providence. God intervenes in the lives of His people in three ways: 1) direct cause--He causes things to happen; 2) permission--He allows things to happen; 3) prevention--He keeps things from happening.

The Bible tells us that the entire Godhead provides for us: God (Matt. 6:33); Christ (Matt. 28:20); and the Holy Spirit (Jn. 7:39). God has always worked providentially in the lives of the faithful. Consider His work in the lives of Abraham, Moses, and Paul. God works today in the lives of all obedient believers (Phil. 2:13; Rom. 8:28). God’s providence is often at work without our knowledge. Some examples are 1) David—“No man cared for my soul” (Ps. 142:4) and 2) Elijah—“And I, even I only, am left” (1 Kings 19:10).

Evidence of God’s providence for believers includes truth, grace, security, and prayer. 1) Those who want **truth** can find it (Prov. 1:20-23; 8:17; Matt. 7:7-11; Luke 11:13; Acts 17:27). 2) **Grace** (unmerited divine favor) is essentially a New Testament word (Jn. 1:17; Titus 2:11; 2 Cor. 12:9; Heb. 4:16). Consider these differences between Old Testament law and New Testament grace. Law is connected with Moses and works; grace with Christ and faith (Jn. 1:17). Law blesses the good; grace saves the bad (Ex. 19:5). Law demands that blessings be earned; grace is a free gift (Eph. 2:8). 3) God promises temporal and eternal **security** for obedient believers (Matt. 6:33; Ps. 37:25). The wicked may prosper , but God promises eternal security for the obedient (Matt. 25:46; Rev. 14:13). 4) **Prayer** offers access to God which the worldly do not have (Jn. 9:31). It is the connection through which many spiritual blessings come to the elect (Jas. 1:5-6).

The blessings of God’s Special Providence come with conditions. For example, we are to 1) do more than others (Matt. 5:47); 2) ask, seek, knock (Matt. 7:7); and 3) walk in the light (1 Jn. 1:7).

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