

The Westminster Larger Catechism – God’s Providence

Q18. What are God’s works of providence?

A. God’s works of providence are his most holy, wise, and powerful preserving and governing all his creatures; ordering them and all their actions, to his own glory.

(God’s providence is holy)

Psalm 145:17: The LORD is righteous in all his ways
and kind in all his work

(God’s providence is wise)

Psalm 104:24: O LORD, how manifold are your works!
In wisdom have you made them all;
the earth is full of your creatures.

Isaiah 28:29: This also comes from the LORD of hosts;
he is wonderful in counsel
and excellent in wisdom.

(God’s providence is powerful)

Hebrews 1:3: He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature, and he upholds the universe by the word of his power. After making purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high,

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(God governs all his creatures)

Matthew 10:29-31: ²⁹ Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? And not one of them will fall to the ground apart from your Father. ³⁰ But even the hairs of your head are all numbered. ³¹ Fear not, therefore; you are of more value than many sparrows.

(God controls the actions of his creatures)

Genesis 45:7-8: ⁷ And God sent me before you to preserve for you a remnant on earth, and to keep alive for you many survivors. ⁸ So it was not you who sent me here, but God. He has made me a father to Pharaoh, and lord of all his house and ruler over all the land of Egypt.

(God controls all things for his own glory)

Romans 11:36: For from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be glory forever. Amen.

Isaiah 63:14: Like livestock that go down into the valley,
the Spirit of the LORD gave them rest.
So you led your people,
to make for yourself a glorious name.

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Q19. What is God’s providence toward the angels?

A. God, by his providence permitted some of the angels, willfully and irrecoverably, to fall into sin and damnation, limiting and ordering that, and all their sins, to his own glory; and established the rest in holiness and happiness; employing them all, at his pleasure, in the administrations of his power, mercy, and justice.

(God permitted some angels to fall into sin)

Jude 6: And the angels who did not stay within their own position of authority, but left their proper dwelling, he has kept in eternal chains under gloomy darkness until the judgment of the great day—

2 Peter 2:4: For if God did not spare angels when they sinned, but cast them into hell and committed them to chains of gloomy darkness to be kept until the judgment;

(God provided no way of salvation for the angels that sinned)

Hebrews 2:16: For surely it is not angels that he helps, but he helps the offspring of Abraham.

(These angels sinned willfully)

John 8:44: You are of your father the devil, and your will is to do your father’s desires. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks out of his own character, for he is a liar and the father of lies.

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(God limited their sins for his own glory)

Job 1:12: And the LORD said to Satan, “Behold, all that he has is in your hand. Only against him do not stretch out your hand.” So Satan went out from the presence of the LORD.

Matthew 8:31: And the demons begged him, saying, “If you cast us out, send us away into the herd of pigs.”

(God established the rest of the angels in holiness and happiness)

1 Timothy 5:21: In the presence of God and of Christ Jesus and of the elect angels I charge you to keep these rules without prejudging, doing nothing from partiality.

Mark 8:38: For whoever is ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him will the Son of Man also be ashamed when he comes in the glory of his Father with the holy angels.”

Hebrews 12:22: But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to innumerable angels in festal gathering,

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(God employs the angels as his servants)

Psalm 104:4: he makes his messengers winds,
his ministers a flaming fire.

2 Kings 19:35: And that night the angel of the LORD went out and struck down 185,000 in the camp of the Assyrians. And when people arose early in the morning, behold, these were all dead bodies.

Hebrews 1:14: Are they not all ministering spirits sent out to serve for the sake of those who are to inherit salvation?

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Q20. What was the providence of God toward man in the estate in which he was created?

A. The providence of God toward man in the estate in which he was created, was the placing him in paradise, appointing him to dress it, giving him liberty to eat of the fruit of the earth; putting the creatures under his dominion, and ordaining marriage for his help; affording him communion with himself; instituting the Sabbath; entering into a covenant of life with him, upon condition of personal, perfect, and perpetual obedience, of which the tree of life was a pledge; and forbidding to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, upon the pain of death.



(Man placed in paradise, etc.)

Genesis 2:8, 15-16: ⁸ And the LORD God planted a garden in Eden, in the east, and there he put the man whom he had formed.

¹⁵ The LORD God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to work it and keep it. ¹⁶ And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, “You may surely eat of every tree of the garden,

(The creatures placed under man’s dominion)

Genesis 1:28: And God blessed them. And God said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth.”

(Marriage ordained for man’s help)

Genesis 2:18: Then the LORD God said, “It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper fit for him.”

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(Man originally enjoyed communion with God)

Genesis 1:28: And God blessed them. And God said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth.”

Genesis 3:8: And they heard the sound of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God among the trees of the garden.

(The Sabbath instituted)

Genesis 2:3: So God blessed the seventh day and made it holy, because on it God rested from all his work that he had done in creation.

(The covenant of works instituted)

Galatians 3:12: But the law is not of faith, rather The one who does them shall live by them.”

Romans 10:5: For Moses writes about the righteousness that is based on the law, that the person who does the commandments shall live by them.

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Romans 5:14: Yet death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over those whose sinning was not like the transgression of Adam, who was a type of the one who was to come.

(The tree of life)

Genesis 2:9: And out of the ground the LORD God made to spring up every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food. The tree of life was in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

(The tree of the knowledge of good and evil)

Genesis 2:17: but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die.”