

The Interpretation and Timing of God's Providence

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[0 : 00] In worship, we don't only draw near to God, but he draws near to us. By his spirit, through the word, he comes and he speaks to us.

And so this is the word of the Lord for us right now, right here. Luke 13, verses 1-9.

Now there were some present at that time who told Jesus about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mixed with their sacrifices. Jesus answered, Do you think that these Galileans were worse sinners than all the other Galileans because they suffered this way?

I tell you, no, but unless you repent, you too will all perish. Or those 18 who died when the tower in Siloam fell on them, do you think they were more guilty than all the others living in Jerusalem?

I tell you, not no, but unless you repent, you too will all perish. Then he told this parable.

[1 : 09] A man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard, and he went to look for fruit on it but did not find any. And so he said to the man who took care of the vineyard, for three years now, I have been coming to look for fruit on this fig tree and haven't found any.

Cut it down. Why should it use up the soil? Sir, the man replied, leave it alone for one more year, and I'll dig around it and fertilize it.

If it bears fruit next year, fine. If not, then cut it down. Well, we have lived another week under the good hand of God's providence.

Did we spot his hand? Did we recognize it? Did we thank him for it? We're in a series of studying the providence of God, and we're examining some of the problems that people have with God's providence.

Most of them have to do with the mystery of God's providence, the secrets that God has chosen to not reveal about it. So last week we saw two problems that men have.

[2 : 26] Number one, how can God control men's decisions without violating their free agency and responsibility? That he does this, I trust, was clear from the scriptures.

The dozens of passages that we could have turned to and those that we did. How he does that, he hasn't revealed. But that he does is revealed.

And then the second problem, how can God control the sinful actions of sinful men but not get dirty in the process? Not participate in their sins.

Not be the author of their sins and therefore responsible for them. That God governs and controls even the sinful actions of sinful men is clearly taught.

But how he does that without partaking in sin has not been revealed. So we have to leave the secret things to God and take the revealed things that are given to us.

[3 : 24] Now today we're considering two more problems with God's providence. And these are more practical problems. Problems with the interpretation of God's providence.

And secondly, the timing of God's providence. We'll take them one at a time. The first is the problem of interpreting God's providence. There's two distinct aspects to every act of providence. There is the event itself. That which God does. And then there is the interpretation of that providence. Why God did.

What was the reason? What did he do it for? And often in the Bible we're told both. We're told about the event.

And we're given the interpretation of why he did it. So we read of a global flood. That water once covered this earth completely. And destroyed all but Noah and his family and the animals on the ark.

[4 : 27] That was an event of God's providence. But we're also given in scripture the interpretation of it. But the 40 days and 40 nights of unending rain was not due to some unexplained climate change.

No, it was explained very explicitly that this happened because of men's wickedness and violence that had filled the earth. And God was going to wipe it clean and start over with Noah.

Another time we read of fire and brimstone falling out of heaven and consuming the five cities of the plain. Sodom and Gomorrah being the most famous of the two most famous.

The event was interpreted for us. And we're told God did it because of the wickedness of the city that was so great. Another time we read of the ground just opening up and swallowing people alive. That's the event of God's providence. What he did clearly revealed in scripture. But these are not self-interpreting events.

[5 : 31] We rely upon God for the why. The reason he acted this way in providence. And in this case we're told that these men had not bowed to the authority that God had established over them.

They wanted to take some of it for themselves and rule themselves. And so God judged them. So in these cases we have the event and the interpretation.

It was different for Job, wasn't it? Now there the event was clear. He lost all of his animals, which was money in the bank in those days.

He lost his ten children. He lost his health. Those were events of God's providence. The Lord gave and the Lord has taken away. But the reason for it was not given to Job.

Only we as the readers are clued in to the reason. That challenge in heaven between God and Satan. But the interpretation of providence was withheld and remained hidden from Job.

[6 : 40] Not to worry. Job had three friends with the gift of interpreting the providence of God. Or so they thought. They were certain that they knew why God had done what he had done.

It was simple. Evil things like this happen to evil people. Right? Evil things happen to evil people. So Job, you've obviously sinned greatly against God.

You're covering up. You're refusing to repent. The first friend of his to speak is Eliphaz the Temanite. I wonder if you've read his interpretation of providence lately.

Let me read it for you. It's summarized in verses 7 and 8 of chapter 4. Consider now, he says to Job. Who being innocent has ever perished?

Where were the upright ever destroyed? No, I've observed. It's those who plow evil and those who sow trouble who reap it.

[7 : 45] And I want to say, Eliphaz, what planet are you living on? Certainly not this one. Because in this world, the innocent do perish.

And the righteous are destroyed. These things happen to righteous and wicked alike. Tornadoes and hurricanes don't just lift up and go over the house of the righteous.

Crime, disease, wars, and accidents take the lives of the righteous as well as the wicked. And it was that reality. That puzzling reality of God's hard providence.

That caused the wise teacher in Ecclesiastes to gnash his teeth. As he writes, in this meaningless life of mine, I have seen both of these. The righteous man perishing in his righteousness.

And a wicked man living long in his wickedness. Ecclesiastes 7.15 So, Eliphaz and his amen choir of the two other friends, they had it all wrong.

[8 : 52] It's not just that evil things only happen to evil men. And not only were they wrong.

They were pitiless and cruel. Strapping that guilt trip onto the Lord's suffering saint when he was at his weakest.

That's devilish. And finally, the Lord had enough of it and his anger gave them a verbal lashing for it. But Job's friends point up the fact that man has always had problems interpreting God's providence.

And there are interpretations of providence just as cruel and heartless being preached today by some. Who would tell the sick and diseased that it's all their fault.

That if they only had a little more faith. Enough faith. They would be healed. If they only were a little more holy. This wouldn't be in their lives.

[10 : 00] Men are not content to let God have his secrets. But would rather claim this gift of interpreting the providence of God. Now, our Lord Jesus dealt with the same in his own day.

That was the scripture reading that we had read for us from Luke chapter 13. Verses 1 to 5 especially. Two terrible disasters had happened that were the talk of the town in Jerusalem.

Some Galilean Jews had come to Jerusalem to the temple. And they had been cut down with the sword by Pilate's henchmen. And even while they were in the act of sacrificing their animals to the Lord.

So that their own blood was mingled and mixed with the blood of the blood sacrifices in worship. And then there were the 18 on whom the Tower of Siloam suddenly fell and crushed to death. Those were the events of God's providence. But some thought they had the right interpretation of those providences. Those strange providences. They knew why these individuals had been singled out for such disaster.

[11:06] And on both accounts they were obviously worse sinners. Those that got killed were more guilty than the rest. Where have you heard that before?

These guys must have attended the same university that Job's three friends went to. The University of Human Reason. And majored in interpretation of God's providence.

But they didn't even have to say it. Did you notice that as we read it? They didn't even have to express it. Jesus read their thoughts. He knew how they were interpreting the providence. And so he said, I tell you, no.

Don't think those who suffered these disasters were worse sinners. Or were more guilty than the rest. No, I tell you, unless you repent. You too will likewise perish.

You think these disasters tell you something about the evil of its victims. And you're wrong. Rather, these disasters have something to say to you.

[12:10] To you. That you're a sinner against God. And unless you repent, you too will perish. And perish without hope.

So Jesus is telling us that all disasters are forewarnings. This is Jesus who does have the gift of interpreting God's providence. Who knows why things happen.

Why all things happen. And he says all disasters are forewarnings of a greater final disaster that's coming. God's judgment. God's judgment. So their calls to repent.

Their calls to prepare for that final day in judgment. That's the interpretation you need to get right, Jesus was saying to his hearers that day. And I do think that often we hear those who are descendants of Job's three friends pontificating on why certain judgments have come upon the earth today.

And just who was the guilty ones. And why that storm hit there and killed them and did this and that and the other as if the providence, the interpretation was known.

[13:26] It's interesting how usually the interpretation makes the person feel better than the ones that it happened to by calling them out as worse sinners.

Just as in Jesus' day. But on the other hand, you say, well, doesn't God still pour out his wrath upon sinners in this life as he did in the past?

And we must say, of course he does. Psalm 7, verse 11. God is a righteous judge. A God who expresses his wrath every day. Did you know God is expressing his wrath on Sunday today in the world that he governs?

Romans 1.18. The wrath of God is being revealed. Present tense, right now, today. It's being revealed from heaven against all the godlessness and wickedness of men who suppress the truth in their wickedness.

God is revealing. God is expressing his wrath. His judgment. But knowing exactly where and exactly when and how and on whom and why in precise detail.

[14:32] That has not been revealed, has it? God hasn't given us a running commentary on all his acts of providence. Like he did in explaining some of the acts of providence that happened in scripture times.

In fact, his judgment may not be some disaster. It may just be letting us have what we want. Isn't that what Romans 1 says?

That the judgment of God is to give men over to what their evil desires want. So we need to be very careful here. We need to avoid absolute certainty when interpreting God sent disasters.

If we do not have God's clear word of the interpretation. We ought to be far more humble. Very cautious. Never absolute.

It could be that God is doing this or that. You know, he has done that in the past. And it could be that this is his judgment. But always taking the opportunity to examine ourselves.

[15:36] And to say, am I ready to face that judge? Rather than just pointing the finger. The fact is, we might think of one or two reasons why God did what he did.

When in reality, he's probably got a hundred different reasons why he did what he did. He's not just dealing with those people. But with a whole lot more people.

Doing one thing here and another thing there. Fulfilling his purposes in many lives. And so again, God is his own interpreter.

And he will make it plain. Blind unbelief is sure to err and scan his work in vain. God is his own interpreter and he will make it plain.

And so what's mysterious now to us as to why will be made clear at last. So that's the first problem. And it leads us right into the next problem with God's providence.

[16:35] Not only interpreting it and understanding why God did it. Why this happened. But there's the timing of God's providence. Just as there are two aspects to God's work of providence.

The event and the interpretation. So there are two timetables for the working of God's providence. In fulfillment of promises and answering our prayers and so on.

There's God's time and there's our time. And if you haven't noticed by now, God's working off of his timetable. Not ours. When he acts in providence, he consults his timetable.

And often it moves at such a pace that tries our patience. That tries our faith and our perseverance. Now, sometimes God works very quickly.

And we like that when we're under hard circumstances. He can work quickly. After all, he created the whole universe and everything in it in just six days.

[17:39] And he could have done it in six seconds. Or one second. Or even less. But he had a purpose for which he delayed it into six days.

Which was to set an example for man who's been made in his image as to his seven day work week. To work six. To rest one.

But God is not constrained by time. God can work quickly. In his providence. But usually we find him working at a much slower pace than we like.

It's the problem of that old Reverend Philip Brooks who was pacing his study floor. And his friend asked him, what's the matter? And he says, I'm in a hurry. And God isn't. And that's a recipe for frustration, isn't it?

When you're in a hurry and God isn't. But that's often the case with God's hard providences. He's not in a hurry. He's got purposes that he's taking his time to make sure that they're worked out.

[18:46] Just as he has planned. But one thing is sure. God's providence runs on his timetable. Not ours.

And this slow moving hand of providence is a major trial to the people of God. So our timing problem is really a slowness of God's providence.

At least as men consider slowness. Now I'm sure that all of you are being made to wait in God's providence for something. It's just his way with men.

Abraham and Sarah had to wait 25 years for the child of promise. And even wait until it seemed and was physically impossible for it to happen.

Joseph had to wait 22 years for his God-given dreams to be fulfilled. David had to wait 10, 12 years.

[19:48] From the time he was anointed king, the next king of Israel, to the time he actually sat on the throne. He was running like a rabbit from the reigning king Saul.

Trying to kill him. And then when Saul died, he only becomes king of the southern kingdom. And has to wait another seven years to become king of the whole kingdom.

The northern and the southern. And he faced delays that made him cry, How long, O Lord, will you forget me forever? There were times when he despaired of ever seeing the promise of his kingship fulfilled.

And said, One of these days Saul's going to find me and kill me. Yes, the delays of God's providence. The slowness of his hand.

Try the patience. And I wonder what you're waiting for. And if your patience is being tried. Due to that slow-moving hand of God's providence. But more helpfully, I wonder.

[20:54] What can help us wait? Under the slow-moving hand of God's providence. What can help us? Well, remember this. In all God's providence, He's not only considered what is the very best thing to do, But also the very best time in which to do it.

Doesn't that help? He's thought through not just what to do in your life, But when to do it. Army generals do that, don't they? When planning an attack, they not only consider what to do, But when to do it.

And very often the coordination of the when has everything to do with the success of the mission. And so it is with God's providence. As for God, all His way is perfect.

All His ways are perfect. Proverbs or Psalms 1830. His way is perfect. His way is perfect, both in what He does and when He does it. Jim Elliott, that missionary martyr to the Alka Indians, Back in 1955, along with four others, Said, in commenting on that verse, As for God, His way is perfect. I'm particularly conscious, he said, Of the Christian's right to expect events to be exactly timed for good. Interesting coming from Jim Elliott's mouth or pen.

[22 : 22] I'm sure his widowed wife found encouragement in that When the timing of these five men's first visit to the Alka tribe Seemed also wrong. No, as for God, His timing is perfect.

Since God reigns over all His creatures and all their actions all the time, Nothing is more sure than that the precise time of God That He's chosen to fulfill His purposes and designs, It will most certainly come no matter how many the obstacles, No matter how long the wait.

His all-ruling providence will bring it to pass In the best way, in the best time. John Flavel's book, The Mystery of Providence, He gives us many examples from Scripture Of the precise timing of God's providence.

I just want to mention a few. First, this is the truth that That God set a time for the deliverance of Israel Out of Egyptian bondage. Exodus 12 records, Now the length of time the Israelites lived in Egypt Was 430 years.

That's a slow-moving hand of providence When you're slaves, For the better part of that. But at, this is, again, Exodus 12, At the end of the 430 years, To the very day, All the Lord's divisions left Egypt.

[23 : 45] Isn't that a wonderful way to speak? After the 430 years, You know, that's, I calculated it with a calculator, 156,950 days.

That's how long this waiting took place. And not one day later, To the very day, All the Lord's divisions left Egypt.

Stephen comments on it As he's in the New Testament In Acts chapter 7, 17, He says, As the time drew near For God to fulfill His promise to Abraham, God had promised Abraham, Yes, He's going to bring them out.

And as the time drew near, What time? The time to keep His promise. The time when providence, The hand of providence, Would so work that He would bring His children out of Egypt.

There was such a time on God's calendar. And absolutely nothing could stop it. Not even Pharaoh and his elite chariot corps. For the whole world operates on God's timetable.

[24 : 51] Providence always unfolds according to His schedule, Not man's, To fulfill His purposes. And so there was a good purpose For why He left them in Egypt for so long.

There was a good reason for the long delay, As God told Abraham, Because the sin of the Amorites, Who live in the promised land, To which He would bring them, Had not yet reached its full measure.

The sin of the Amorites is still not full. It's filling up. They keep sinning, And finally it's going to get full, And then the land is going to vomit them out, And in you will go, In their place.

And so God had a reason. 400 and, Not a day less, But letting the sin of the Amorites be filled, Before He brings in His Israelites, As they were brought out, Of Egyptian bondage.

So the slowness of God's providence Is always intentional. It's always on purpose. There's no such thing as waiting that is wasted. It's, He's accomplishing His purpose, Sometimes more in the waiting Than the thing we're waiting for.

[26 : 07] As we wait on the best way, At the best time. You most likely don't see the reason yet, And that's why you must trust Him. We walk by faith, Not by sight.

So God had a time set for the deliverance of Israel out of Egypt. But He also set a time for the coming, The incarnation of His Son to earth, To bring salvation to us.

Before time began, God planned it, For His Son to come. For many centuries, His prophets had foretold it and promised it. And for just as long, His faithful remnant had waited, And longed for His coming, But, Galatians 4, 4 says, When the time had fully come, God sent His Son, Born of a woman, Born under the law, To redeem those under law.

So it was then, When the time had fully come. It was the best time. Just the right time.

He came. Flavel says, Promises are like pregnant women. They must await their appointed time. That might have been pre-drug induced labor, And C-section deliveries, But in His day, Promises are like pregnant women.

[27 : 29] They must await their appointed time. And when it has come, Providence is the midwife, That brings the promise into the world, Ensuring that not one of His promises miscarry.

Why does what God says in His promises always happen? It's because there's a time for it to happen. And when it comes, God's hand of providence brings that promise into birth. It brings it to pass. So wait for it. At just the right time, He came. And then God had a set time, Not only for the birth of His Son, But the death of His Son.

There were several earlier attempts to kill Jesus, Weren't there? They'd been trying for a long time to kill Him, But each attempt was foiled. And the theological reason given by the Apostle John is, Because His time had not yet come.

Oh, you mean there's a time? There's a schedule somewhere? There's a timetable when Jesus will die? Exactly, John says. And it hadn't yet come. So it didn't matter if they had the stones in their hands, Ready to stone Him, Or had Him on the brow of a hill, Ready to push Him off.

[28 : 39] It didn't happen. Why? Because His time was not yet come. And providence always unfolds according to the timetable of God. And at last it did come.

John 13, 1. It was just before the Passover feast. Jesus knew that the time had come for Him to leave this world and go to the Father.

So here it was, the set time on God's calendar, In which providence would work out all things for the death of Jesus.

And there's an interesting twist to the plot. Because God's time was not the chosen time of the Jews, The Jewish leaders. Jesus' enemies. They plotted to arrest Jesus.

We're told this in Matthew 26. They plotted to arrest Jesus in some sly way and kill Him. But not during the feast, they said. Or there may be a riot among the people. I've read that the Jerusalem population swelled over ten times during the week of Passover feast.

[29 : 49] As all the pilgrims made their way back to Jerusalem to slaughter their Passover lambs. And keep the Passover feast. And Jesus is presently riding on the crest of the wave of popularity.

And these Jewish leaders are afraid. If we arrest and kill Him now, they may riot. And have us. So here's a clash of plans over the timing of Jesus' death.

God's plan is to have His Son die during Passover week. Jewish leaders' plan, any time but Passover week. So whose time? Wins in providence.

Psalms 33, 10 and 11. The Lord foils the plans of the nations. He thwarts the purposes of the people. But the plans of the Lord stand firm forever. The purposes of His heart?

Through all generations. So how did God get His time plan accomplished when it was against the will of His enemies? Well, He set before His enemies an opportunity they could not refuse.

[30 : 53] Judas, one of the 12 intimate disciples of Jesus, comes to them and tells them, I'm willing to hand Jesus over to you when a crowd is not present.

And that was too good to be true. And they agreed to pay Him 30 pieces of silver for it. And so late one night, Judas just suddenly shows up saying, tonight's the night.

I know where He's going to be spending the night. It's in the Garden of Gethsemane. And they were delighted. Now, it wasn't their first choice. Their first choice, not during the feast.

But at least it was during the night time when people are in bed. And so they changed their timetable. Which, unknowing to them, brought it into the timetable of heaven.

By which all of God's providences run. And so at just the right time, Christ died for the ungodly. Yes, when we were without strength.

[31 : 52] But also, precisely during Passover week. You see, God would have His Passover lamb slaughtered during Passover. To send a message that could not be missed.

To the people crowded into Jerusalem with all their Passover lambs. That they'd been bringing and offering for hundreds and hundreds of years. In remembrance of that night back in Egypt.

When God had said, slaughter the Passover lambs. Paint the blood across the doorposts. And around the door. And over the doorposts. Then get in under the blood.

Stay in the house. And when my destroying angel of wrath comes. I will see the blood. And pass over you. And they kept this ritual year after year after year.

Now here it is. Passover week again. God is letting these people know. That His Son, Jesus of Nazareth.

[32 : 53] Is the one true Passover lamb. That was slain as a sacrifice for sin. So that all who take refuge in Him. Might have God's wrath.

Pass over them. And fall on Him instead. So Paul writes to the Corinthian church. Christ our Passover lamb has been slain.

And to highlight that glorious truth. God had Him slain during Passover. The very best time set for His death. Even before time began.

I wonder friend. Are you trusting in the blood of the Lord Jesus. So that God's wrath might pass over you. In the day of judgment. That's the only hope any of us have.

To escape the coming wrath of God. Don't miss the very point for God's timing. Why did God time? He timed it so that you as well as those Jerusalem Jews.

[33 : 53] 2,000 years ago. So that you hearing about His timing. Might wake up and say. You mean God would so order the events. Of the timing of His Son.

To have Him die during Passover. That I might learn how God's wrath could pass over me. Don't miss the reason for God's timing. Trust in this Savior.

Get under His blood. And be safe from the avenging wrath. That is coming for our sins. The timing of Jesus' birth. The timing of His death.

And yes God had an appointed time for His second coming. Back to this earth. Peter speaks of Christ's promise to come again in 2 Peter 3.9.

The Lord is not slow in keeping His promise. As some understand slowness. He is patient with you. Not wanting anyone to perish. But everyone to come to repentance.

[34 : 52] Providence. Again. Men were saying. Where is this coming that He promised? And as they interpreted the providence.

He is slow. He is slow in keeping it. Where is it? Well it may seem slow to our timetable. And especially when we are stuck in hard providences.

But according to His Father's timetable. Jesus was not slow at all. As to His return. It is right on time. It is lining up just as He.

The Father had planned. And what feels like slowness to us. Is really His amazing patience with sinners. Why hasn't He come again? It is not because He is slow.

And keeping slack. And keeping His promises. It is because He is patient. Maybe with some of you here. That if He had come last week. You would be in hell forever. And His slowness to return.

[35 : 50] Was really patience for you. That you might come to Him today. And put your faith in Jesus. And live forever with Him. Again my sinner friend.

Don't miss the reason for His perfect timing. Of all His events. His return. Especially. Get into Christ. Don't abuse His patience.

Don't misinterpret it. As if He doesn't care. I guess He really doesn't care about my sin. He hasn't sent lightning down. He's not come in judgment. That's to misinterpret the providence. No. He's being patient with you.

Not wanting to see you perish. But to see you come. To Jesus. And live. Believers. Does this not help you.

As you wait. God's timing. For Christ's return. As He's coming. Yes. You have struggles. Yes. You have trials. Yes. You have heartaches. Yes. You're waiting. For the unfolding.

[36 : 49] Of His glorious redemption. All that's to come. When Jesus returns. But. Is it not worth waiting. To know that. Jesus is waiting.

So that more sinners like you. Might be saved. What if He had come 50 years. Ago. Would you be saved? Surely this should help us.

To see. God's purposes. And how do we know that? Because we have scripture. And so sometimes we have the interpretation. Other times we don't. But there's always a timing. A perfect timing. To all God does.

So the revelation awaits. An appointed time. Habakkuk 2. 3. It speaks of the end. And will not prove false. Though it lingers. Wait for it. It will certainly come. And will not delay. He always chooses the very best time.

For all He does. Don't miss the applications. To your own lives. This is the same God. The God that we see. Ordering the timetable.

[37 : 49] For the Israelites. To come out of Egypt. Ordering the time. When Jesus would be born. The exact time. Of His death. The exact time. For His second coming. That's the God.

Who has chosen the very best time. Concerning all that He's doing. In your life. Working all things together.

For your good. Even as you wait upon Him. Everything that happens in your life. Is done at just the right time. Even your interruptions.

I don't have time for this. Yes you do. This is precisely the best time. For this. According to God's purposes. Nothing ever.

Comes to you early. Or late. The Lord is always right on time. Now Mary and Martha. Thought differently for a while. And were often like them.

[38 : 45] Their brother was sick. They'd sent for Jesus. Lord the one you love. Is sick. They'd waited for Jesus. And he hadn't come. And when he finally did arrive.

They each separately. Got. With Jesus. Alone. And said Lord. If you'd been here. Our brother would not have died. Lord. If you'd been here.

Our brother would not have died. But it was precisely his purpose. To wait. To let. Their brother die. That he might receive more glory.

By raising him. Not just from a sick bed. But from. A grave. That he had inhabited. As a dead man. For four days. That greater glory. Might be given. Through this sickness.

To the son of God. Even as. Jesus said. When he first heard. From the messenger. Lord. The one you love. Is sick. He said. This sickness. Will not end in death.

[39 : 40] No. It is for God's glory. So that God's son. May be glorified. Through it. Jesus wasn't late. He's never late. He's always right on time.

And your hard providences. Are perfectly timed. To fulfill his purposes. For his glory. And your good. In your life. So though it wait. Terry. Though it tarry.

Wait for it. You'll understand it better. By and by. And then you will say. He's done all things well. He has timed it perfectly. I still. Think that.

That the best theater. In heaven. Will be seeing. The timing. Of God's providence. Wow. It was just. Perfect. It was clockwork. If it had happened. A day earlier.

That wouldn't have happened. If it would have been a day. That wouldn't. How did God do that? How he timed things. And we'll worship him. For his perfect timing. That's the God.

[40 : 33] That's at work. In your life. Have you embraced. The goodness of God. In his. The slowness. Of his work. In your hard providences. Or are you losing heart?

Remember. You're waiting. For the best. Timing. And as you wait. Hold on to the promises. Made for people waiting. Isaiah 30 to 18. Blessed are all.

Who wait for him. Psalm 25. Three. None who wait for you. Will ever be put to shame. Isaiah 40. And verse 30. Those who wait upon the Lord. Will renew their strength.

They will soar like eagles. They will run. And not grow weary. They will walk. And not be faint. So we wait. And hope for the Lord. He is our help. And our shield.

And none. Wait for him. In vain. Thomas Boston. Wrote a book. Called the crook. In the lot. It's about. God's crooked.

[41 : 29] Providences. Things that he. Has made crooked. That we can't make straight. You have any of those. In your life. Those are the things. That are hard. Those are the things. You're waiting. For God to come and act.

We're forced to wait. Boston's. Text for the book. Was 1st Peter 5. 6. It's. Peter's words. That because God. Opposes the proud. And gives grace. To the humble.

He says. Therefore. Humble yourselves. Under God's mighty hand. That he may lift you up. In due time. Does God have you. Under a humbling providence.

Providence. That. Has shown you. Your weakness. Showing you. Your lack of faith. Your lack of strength. To bear. You're under a humble. Providence. What's the word for you.

Match your spirit. To the providence. Humble providence. Humble yourself. Under God's mighty hand. Get your spirit. In the same. Manner.

[42 : 29] As the providence. That is humbling. Why. So that God. May lift you up. In due time. You see. God opposes the proud.

But he gives grace. To the humble. God. Puts down. The proud. But he lifts up. The humble. So the most important thing. For you. Under this time. Is to sweetly.

Humble yourself. And to. Wait on God. To have his time. And his purposes. Fulfilled. In that difficulty. Knowing he's never late.

He's always waiting. For the perfect time. To lift us up. He will lift you up. In due time. Due time.

And who knows. The due time. Better than the Lord. It's the best time. Ever pick a peach. And eat it.

[43 : 27] When it's not ripe. When it's not the due time. You got to. Barely. Bite into a. A pithy mouthful. Of. Flavorless.

Pulp. Ever. Pick and eat a. Peach. In due time. And it drips.
Off your chin. Onto your lap. Isn't it much better. To wait. For God. Don't pick the peach.
Prematurely. Don't try to extricate yourself.
Out of the providence. That God. Has in you. Has you in. And wants you in. And you're ready to cut corners. Or do this or that. No. Wait God's time. And in due time. He will lift you up.
And it will be a sweet peach. Not. Not. I forced this through. And you'll have. Pulp in your mouth.
Rather than the sweetness. Of which. For which God.
[44 : 24] Brought the trial. Brought the hard providence. Into your life. He wants you to. To taste the sweetness. Of his love. Wait on him. None who wait.
Will be disappointed. He's worth waiting on. And as you wait. Peter says. You can cast your cares on him. Because he cares for you. That'll help you wait.
So if God's not in a hurry. Why should we be. Right. Chafing against his timetable. Will only make it worse. And it's not to his glory.
To chafe against his timetable. Isn't it. Think of it. From. From this perspective. We live in a. A rat race. Hurry. Hurry. Hurry. You've got to have everything now. In our world. Isn't it a great glory.
To God. To have a people. Who have bent their. Their will. To where they. Have embraced God's timetable. And they've.
[45 : 22] They've really sung that song. Have thine own way Lord. And said Lord. Have your own timetable. I want that. I don't want the pulpy. Mouthful.
I want the sweetness. Of learning. In the weight. To draw near to you. To get closer to Jesus. To cast my cares upon him.
To find out how much he loves me. How much he cares for me. How strong his arm to uphold really is. Things that you can't learn anywhere. But in the weight. I want the sweetness.
Can you think. It's not only sweet to you. But what a pleasure to God. To have such a people.
Nobody else wants to wait. Fix me doctor. Give me a pill. Right now.
I want it. And. And here's a people. Who surrendered to God. He's so good. What. What must their God be. That. That they're happy to wait. For his timing.
[46 : 18] Oh. May we glorify. This God of providence. In our lives. Flavel says. Waiting. Is the hard work of faith. Well. If that's true. And it's the hard work of faith.
And you must. Wait. With your eyes fixed on Jesus. Because he's the object of faith. And he's the one who waited. He's the one who endured. The cross.
Have you thought about. His enduring the cross. For the joy set before him. He endured the cross. He didn't bail. He's got men laughing at him.
Spitting. And mocking him. And he doesn't bail. And take the easy way out. He. He. He endures. He waits. And he waits. And now the father turns his face away.
He must scream. Why have you forsaken me? And he waits. Until the last drop of God's wrath.
[47 : 17] Is poured out upon him. And then. He shouts. It is finished. It is finished. That's the one you're waiting on. He knows everything about waiting.
Cast your cares on him. We got to get to Jesus. In our way. We got to wait with Jesus. We got to cast our cares upon Jesus. We got to bring it all to Jesus.
He will strengthen us. Yes. Waiting is the hard work of faith. And Jesus. The object of our faith. Is more than able and willing. To carry us through the storm.
Let's pray. We wait. We wait. In hope for the Lord. He is.
Our help. And our shield. In him our hearts rejoice. For we trust in his holy name. May your unfailing love.
[48 : 16] Rest upon us. Oh Lord. Lord. Even. As we put our hope in you. We pray through Christ. Amen. Take your hymnal.
And turn to number 21. My favorite song. On the providence of God. And it does remind us. That God is his own interpreter. And it reminds us. To wait his time.
Rather than our own. Number 21. Let's stand as we sing. Amen. Thank you.