

Millard J. Erickson, in his *Christian Theology* Volume 1, pp. 387-388, 394 states:

While creation is God's originating work with respect to the universe, providence is his continuing relationship to it. By providence we mean the continuing action of God by which he preserves in existence the creation which he has brought into being, and guides it to his intended purposes for it. . . .

Providence may be thought of as having two aspects. One aspect is God's work of preserving his creation in existence, maintaining and sustaining it; this is generally called preservation or sustenance. The other is God's activity in guiding and directing the course of events to fulfill the purposes which he has in mind. This is termed government or providence proper. Preservation and government should not be thought of as sharply separate acts of God, but as distinguishable aspects of his unitary work.

Preservation is God's maintaining his creation in existence. It involves God's protection of his creation against harm and destruction, and his provision for the needs of the elements or members of the creation. . . .

By the government of God we mean his activity in the universe so that all its events fulfill his plan for it. As such, the governing activity of God of course broadly includes the matter which we have referred to as preservation. Here, however, the emphasis is more fully upon the purposive directing of the whole of reality and the course of history to the ends that God has in mind. It is the actual execution, within time, of his plans devised in eternity.

B. Scriptural Background to the Doctrine

1. Scripture background to Preservation

Deuteronomy 33:12, 26-29 -- "Of Benjamin he said, 'May the beloved of the Lord dwell in security by Him, who shields him all the day, and he dwells between His shoulders.'"

"There is none like the God of Jeshurun, who rides the heavens to your help, and through the skies in His majesty. The eternal God is a dwelling place, and underneath are the everlasting arms; and He drove out the enemy from before you, and said, 'Destroy!' So Israel dwells in security, the fountain of Jacob secluded, in a land of grain and new wine; His heavens also drop down dew. Blessed are you, O Israel; who is like you, a people saved by the Lord, who is the shield of your help, and the sword of your majesty! So your enemies shall cringe before you, and you shall tread upon their high places."

I Samuel 2:9 -- "He keeps the feet of His godly ones,"

Nehemiah 9:6 -- "Thou alone art the Lord.

Thou hast made the heavens,
The heaven of heavens with all their host,
The earth and all that is on it,
The seas and all that is in them.
Thou dost give life to all of them
And the heavenly host bows down before Thee."