

A Match Made In Heaven

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[0 : 00] Please take your Bibles this morning and open them up to Genesis chapter 24.! If you don't have a Bible of your own, you can find one in a seat back nearby.

If you didn't bring a Bible and you don't own a Bible at all, then go take that one home with you. It's our gift to you. We want you to have a copy of God's Word available to you, and especially now as we go through this chapter together.

We want you to have a copy of God's Word open before you. So Genesis chapter 24, and when you've found it, let's stand in honor of the reading of God's Word this morning. Now Abraham was old, well advanced in years, and the Lord had blessed Abraham in all things.

And Abraham said to his servant, the oldest of his household, who had charge of all that he had, Put your hand under my thigh, that I may make you swear by the Lord, the God of heaven and God of the earth, that you will not take a wife for my son from the daughters of the Canaanites among whom I dwell, but will go to my country and to my kindred and take a wife for my son Isaac.

The servant said to him, perhaps the woman may not be willing to follow me to this land. Must I then take your son back to the land from which you came? Abraham said to him, see to it that you do not take my son back there.

[1 : 19] The Lord, the God of heaven, who took me from my father's house and from the land of my kindred, and who spoke to me and swore to me, to your offspring I will give this land.

He will send his angel before you, and you shall take a wife for my son from there. But if the woman is not willing to follow you, then you will be free from this oath of mine, only you must not take my son back there.

So the servant put his hand under the thigh of Abraham his master and swore to him concerning this matter. Then the servant took ten of his master's camels and departed, taking all sorts of choice gifts from his master.

And he arose and went to Mesopotamia, to the city of Nahor. And he made the camels kneel down outside the city by the well of water at the time of the evening, the time when women go out to draw water.

And he said, O Lord, God of my master Abraham, please grant me success today and show steadfast love to my master Abraham. Behold, I am standing by the spring of water, and the daughters of the men of the city are coming out to draw water.

[2 : 23] Let the young woman to whom I shall say, Please let down your jar that I may drink. And who shall say, Drink, and I will water your camels. Let her be the one whom you have appointed for your servant Isaac.

By this I shall know that you have shown steadfast love to my master. Before he had finished speaking, behold, Rebekah, who was born to Bethuel, the son of Milcah, the wife of Nahor, Abraham's brother, came out with her water jar on her shoulder.

The young woman was very attractive in appearance, a maiden whom no man had known. She went down to the spring and filled her jar and came up. Then the servant ran to meet her and said, Please give me a little water to drink from your jar.

She said, Drink, my lord. And she quickly let down her jar upon her hand and gave him a drink.

When she had finished giving him a drink, she said, I will draw water for your camels also until they have finished drinking.

So she quickly emptied her jar into the trough and ran again to the well to draw water. And she drew for all his camels. The man gazed at her in silence to learn whether the lord had prospered his journey or not.

[3 : 30] When the camels had finished drinking, the man took a gold ring weighing half a shekel and two bracelets for her arms weighing ten gold shekels and said, Please tell me whose daughter you are.

Is there room in your father's house for us to spend the night? She said to him, I am the daughter of Bethuel, the son of Milcah, whom she bore to Nahor. She added, As soon as he saw the ring and the bracelets on his sister's arms and heard the words of Rebecca his sister, thus the man spoke to me, he went to the man.

And behold, he was standing by the camels at the spring. He said, Come in, O blessed of the Lord. Why do you stand outside? For I have prepared the house and a place for the camels. So the man came to the house and unharnessed the camels and gave straw and fodder to the camels.

And there was water to wash his feet and the feet of the men who were with him. And then food was set before him to eat. But he said, I will not eat until I have said what I have to say. He said, Speak on.

So he said, I am Abraham's servant. The Lord has greatly blessed my master and he has become great. He has given him flocks and herds, silver and gold, male servants and female servants, camels and donkeys.

[5 : 09] And Sarah, my master's wife, bore a son to my master when she was old. And to him he has given all that he has. My master made me swear, saying, You shall not take a wife for my son from the daughters of the Canaanites in whose land I dwell, but you shall go to my father's house and to my clan and take a wife for my son.

And I said to my master, Perhaps the woman will not follow me. But he said to me, The Lord, for whom I have walked, will send his angel with you and prosper your way. You shall take a wife for my son from my clan and from my father's house.

Then you will be free from my oath when you come to my clan. And if they will not give her to you, you will be free from my oath. I came today to the spring and said, O Lord, the God of my master Abraham, if now you are prospering the way that I go, behold, I am standing by the spring of water. Let the virgin who comes out to draw water, to whom I shall say, Please give me a little water from your jar to drink. And who will say to me, Drink, and I will draw water for your camels also. Let her be the woman whom the Lord has appointed for my master's son.

Before I had finished speaking in my heart, behold, Rebecca came out with her water jar on her shoulder, and she went down to the spring and drew water. I said to her, Please let me drink. She quickly let down her jar from her shoulder and said, Drink, and I will give your camels drink also.

[6 : 30] So I drank, and she gave the camels drink also. Then I asked her, Whose daughter are you? And she said, The daughter of Bethuel, Nahor's son, whom Milcah bore to him.

So I put the ring on her nose and the bracelets on her arms, and then I bowed my head and worshipped the Lord and blessed the Lord, the God of my master Abraham, who had led me by the right way to take the daughter of my master's kinsman for his son.

Now then, if you are going to show steadfast love and faithfulness to my master, tell me, and if not, tell me, that I may turn to the right hand or to the left. Then Laban and Bethuel answered and said, The thing has come from the Lord.

We cannot speak to you bad or good. Behold, Rebecca is before you. Take her and go, and let her be the wife of your master's son, as the Lord has spoken. When Abraham's servant heard their words, he bowed himself to the earth before the Lord.

And the servant brought out jewelry of silver and of gold and garments and gave them to Rebecca. He also gave to her brother and to her mother costly ornaments. And he and the men who were with him ate and drank, and they spent the night there.

[7 : 38] When they arose in the morning, he said, Send me away to my master. Her brother and her mother said, Let the young woman remain with us for a while, at least ten days. After that she may go.

But he said to them, Do not delay me, since the Lord has prospered my way. Send me away, that I may go to my master. And they said, Let us call the young woman and ask her.

And they called Rebecca and said to her, Will you go with this man? And she said, I will go. So they sent away Rebecca, their sister, and her nurse, and Abraham's servant and his men.

And they blessed Rebecca and said to her, Our sister, may you become thousands of ten thousands. And may your offspring possess the gate of those who hate him. Then Rebecca and her

young woman arose and rode on the camels and followed the man.

Thus the servant took Rebecca and went his way. Now Isaac had returned from Beir-le-Hairoi and was dwelling in the Negev. And Isaac went out to meditate in the field toward evening.

[8 : 39] And he lifted up his eyes and saw, and behold, there were camels coming. And Rebecca lifted up her eyes. And when she saw Isaac, she dismounted from the camel and said to the servant, Who is that man walking in the field to meet us?

The servant said, It is my master. So she took her veil and covered herself. And the servant told Isaac all the things that he had done. Then Isaac brought her into the tent of Sarah, his mother, and took Rebecca.

And she became his wife. And he loved her. So Isaac was comforted after his mother's death. The grass withers, the flower fades, but the word of the Lord endures forever.

Father God, we pray now that you would bless the preaching of your word. Give us ears to hear and hearts to receive the truth. We pray this in Christ's name. Amen. You may be seated.

Amen. But if you happened to turn on PBS at the right time between 1983 and 1994, you might have found yourself watching a show called The Joy of Painting with artist Bob Ross.

[9 : 47] I trust that you all know who Bob Ross is. Now he has his own channel. You can watch him 24 hours a day, anytime that you'd like. But there he would be, head full of hair, happily painting a scene.

Usually it's a forest or waterfalls, a mountain scene, a walk through the woods. And at the end of the show, it would always turn out beautiful. But along the way, if you watch him paint, he would make mistakes here and there.

Only he wouldn't call them mistakes, would he? He would call them happy accidents. That accidental little blob of paint there in the middle of the canvas, he would take that and turn it into a flower or the scratch up in the corner of the canvas, he would turn that into a tree branch.

He would take that accident, that unintended mistake, that seemingly random occurrence, and he would turn it into something good, beautiful. And you know, I thought about that as I read our passage this week, that that is how many people understand the work of God in their life and in the world.

Many people believe that God, like an artist, he has a plan for what he intends to do. And God, like a skillful artist, is mostly in control of that process.

[11 : 12] He's painting a beautiful picture. But of course, we know, right? Every now and then, an accident happens. Something occurs that's mainly outside of his control.

Something happens that he doesn't like. He didn't mean for it to happen. But like a skillful artist, he's able to take that accidental blemish and turn it into something beautiful in the end.

What I'd like for us to see this morning from our passage, here in Genesis chapter 24, is that that is not how God works in the world.

The God that we've been introduced to here in the book of Genesis is a totally sovereign God. Meaning that this God has complete and total control over all things.

To be totally sovereign means that there are no accidents, nothing random, no mistakes, no chance occurrences. The end result is exactly what he's planned from the beginning.

[12 : 22] Every brush stroke of human history is placed exactly as he wants it to be. And what may look like to us as accidents or blemishes or random occurrences or chance is not in fact random.

The sovereign God is not responding to the events of history and turning it out for good. He is in fact directing, orchestrating all things.

All things go as this God plans. We've seen in the very first pages of Genesis the God who created all things and now in every page afterwards we see a God who upholds and sustains and directs all things.

There's a term for this and it's what we call providence. Have you heard this term? Providence. God's providence is his sovereignty in action.

John Piper says it like this. He says it is his purposeful sovereignty by which he will be completely successful in the achievement of his ultimate goal for the universe.

[13 : 41] Which is we believe the magnification of the glory of God in the gospel of Jesus Christ. That's his goal. I wonder if you see God's hand in your life this way.

I wonder if you interpret the events of your life the events of the world in this way. I want us to see this morning five effects of God's providence from Genesis chapter 24.

Five effects of God's providence this morning. First number one we see God's providence encourages faithful pursuit. Rightly understood God's providence his sovereignty in action it encourages faithful pursuit.

You know one wrong way to think about God's sovereignty in action is that well if God is working I don't have to. If God is sovereignly orchestrating all things for his purposes I don't have a role to play.

I can just rest. That's not how Abraham sees it. Look there to verse 1. We see here Abraham is old by this point. He's about 140 years old.

[14:55] The Lord has blessed Abraham tremendously but there's still something that he wants. There's still something that he needs to see happen here. What is it? His son Isaac has to be married.

Now think about why. Of course on one hand any father would desire this for his son to find a wife is a good thing. Isaac is about 40 years old now.

Abraham is probably ready for him to get up move out of the basement go get married go on find somebody but bigger picture here in light of God's promises think about this why does Isaac need a wife?

Abraham knows that Isaac needs a wife because God has promised him through Isaac shall your offspring be named it is Isaac it's through the line of Isaac through the descendants of Isaac ultimately that the promised Messiah will come so zoom out big picture here if Isaac does not get married and bear children Jesus doesn't come it's really amazing I think if you look at a family tree I wonder if you've ever done this exercise you lay it all out and you see all the generations from generation to generation to generation all the relationships all the steps along the way as many generations as you can go back great great great great great grandparents do you realize every single one of those connections must happen for you to be here right now every one of those relationships they have to meet and marry and reproduce in order for you and I to be here right now think about it if your great great great grandpa was not born when he was born and raised where he was raised and brought up how he was brought up and attracted to who he was attracted to you would not be here right now is that a happy accident god knew you before you were even born and so orchestrated by his providence all things in such a way that you would be here right now in the same way you can go to

Matthew chapter one or Luke chapter three and you see the genealogy the family tree of the Lord Jesus and you see the generations after generations after generations that led up to the birth of the Savior and how does it start Abraham the father of Isaac Isaac the father of Jacob we don't get that far unless Isaac gives him a wife right here you see the significance Isaac must find a wife Abraham knows God will do it God has promised it and because God has promised it Abraham pursues it in confidence now that's what God's sovereignty rightly understood it produces confident pursuit in the life of a believer so he calls his servant apparently he's the most trusted servant Abraham has he's his oldest servant he's in charge of all that he has he makes him promise swear to me that you will go get a wife but not a

[18:22] Canaanite wife we got some standards here okay you're going to go back to my homeland and find him a wife God has promised it now go pursue it servant raises a good question I think verse 5 he says well what if this woman won't come back here do I need to take Isaac back there and what does Abraham say no you are not bringing Isaac back there why God has promised it God has promised this land to my offspring therefore that's what we're pursuing you're not going back there you're establishing this family here he's pursuing he's working he's striving forward in alignment with the plan and the purposes of a sovereign and faithful God God God's promises ought to be the driving force behind all of our pursuits to believe that God will fulfill his promises should not lead

God's people to in action it ought to propel us to get up to get to work in confidence that the purposes of our God cannot fail if God has promised it we can pursue it with confidence for example God promises one day all nations will bow before the Lord Jesus Christ every knee will bow every tongue will confess heaven will be filled with every tribe and tongue so therefore we take the gospel to the unreached we take the gospel to the nations in confidence that the Lord is committed to this work I spoke with a friend this week who's preparing to move his family and his young children to Azerbaijan I can't even pronounce it outside of Turkey Azerbaijan to bring the gospel to this 87%

Muslim nation Why? He is committed to it because he believes! is committed to it and God will not fail!

Jesus has promised I will build my church the gates of hell will not prevail against it so Craig and Patty Simon give their retirement years to drive up and down highway 17 and help establish a healthy church here in Allendall Why?

It's the safest investment they can make is a plan that can't fail a right understanding of God's providence leads us to faithful pursuit not only this second God's providence encourages prayer God's providence encourages prayer look there to verse 10 now I love the faithfulness of the servant in this passage don't you he takes some camels he goes with all sorts of gifts from his master he is ready he goes to Mesopotamia he goes to Nahor and he is strategic isn't he with what he is doing he knows what he is doing he goes to the well right outside the city right at evening time right at the time when the women go out to draw water you see how that works he believes that God will provide a wife for Isaac so what does he do he doesn't just stay in the tent and wait he gets up and he goes to where the women are again this is faithful pursuit!

[22 : 13] Just a side note here guys if you believe that God desires for you to be married and if you want a spouse that might just involve being around people of the opposite sex talking with them interacting with them pursuing that by faith just trying to help you out here a little bit the servant goes he pursues but then look what he does in verse 12 he prays he said Lord God of my master Abraham please grant me success today and show steadfast love to my master Abraham behold I am standing by the spring of water the daughters of the men of the city are coming out let the young woman to whom I shall say please let down your jar that I may drink and who shall say drink and I will water your camels let her be the one whom you have appointed for your servant Isaac by this I shall know that you have shown steadfast love to my master here's another misapplication of God's providence

I wonder if you've heard this if God is sovereign why pray if God already knows the end from the beginning if God is working all things to that end why in the world why pray if God is in control of all things big and small what's the point for one thing we pray because God is sovereign and we are not God knows the plan we don't God is the omniscient!

One not you not me God knows those who are his we don't often we know the big picture of God's promises but we really don't know all the details do we this servant he doesn't know if his efforts are actually going to work out he has no clarity whether or not this is the way God intends to give Isaac a spouse he knows that God will give Isaac a spouse the promise requires it and he's pursuing it the best way that he knows how but God doesn't tell him to go to the well God doesn't tell him to find a wife in this way he doesn't know for sure even Abraham gives him an out in verse 8 hey if this doesn't work out if she won't come then you're free from this oath that you've made church we pray! because God is sovereign we don't know everything God knows and so as we pursue his purposes by faith we ought to pray Lord give me wisdom Lord direct my steps Lord give me success in this pursuit Lord bless my efforts to be faithful to you we also pray because God is sovereign so he can actually answer our prayers I will never for the life of me understand why in the world would I pray to a God who's not actually in control this servant actually believes this God is capable of providing a woman at this well at this time at this moment because God is sovereign he prays with confidence and so can we also because God is sovereign we can pray with specificity specificity you see how specific he is here this servant asks

God to direct this woman's steps to direct this woman's actions to direct this woman's vocabulary he is incredibly specific isn't he down to the finest details I've shared in here before some stories of George Mueller how he prayed for his orphanage if you read his journals I won't have to repeat stories because if you read his journals you see he recorded at least 50,000 examples of direct and specific answers to his specific prayers that's a lot of sermon material y'all there's one story about the orphanage running out of money running out of food they had nothing to feed the children for breakfast and so George prayed and he asked specifically for exactly what they needed the children you can imagine the scene they gather for breakfast nothing to eat and George prays to bless the food that they don't yet have and when he finished his prayer they heard a knock on the door the town baker was there at the door he had had a dream the night before where God told him to go to the orphanage give enough bread for the rest of the week right behind him was the milk man his truck broke down right in front of the orphanage so what can he do except give away his whole supply of milk so it doesn't spoil is that a happy accident that is providence these are

providential answers to specific prayers offered up to a good and faithful sovereign capable God if we truly believe our

[27 : 34] God is directing all things we will pray we will pray and when God answers our prayers and provides as we ask what do you think the result will be in your heart we see it in our third point this morning third understanding God's providence leads to praise when he provides leads to worship and exaltation magnification of the glory of God look at verse 15 before he had even finished speaking behold Rebecca who was born to Bethuel the son of Milcah the wife of Nahor Abraham's brother came out with her water jar on her shoulder the young woman was very attractive in appearance a maiden whom no man had known she went down to the spring filled her jar and came up I mean talk about an immediate answer to prayer he's not even he hasn't even said amen and here comes this beautiful young woman and it says that he ran to meet her and he gives her this little test he said please give me a little water to drink from your jar and she says verse 18 drink my lord and she quickly let down her jar upon her hand and gave him a drink and when she had finished giving him a drink she said let me water your camels also until they finished drinking so she quickly emptied her jar into the trough and ran again to the well to draw water and she drew for all his camels and this man is just watching all of this unfold and wondering is the lord doing this is the lord providing he can hardly believe it and so when the camels had finished drinking he gave her these gifts of gold and said just tell me whose daughter you are please don't be a

Canaanite right is there room in your father's house for us to spend the night she says I am the daughter of Bethuel the son of Milca whom she bore to Nahor and she said and we got plenty of straw and fodder and we got room to spend the night come on this is a direct providential answer to a specific prayer of faith and it seems to this servant as far as he can tell like God has provided a spouse for Isaac God has done this God is working this out and so what's his response the servant bows his head and worships the Lord and says blessed be the Lord the God of my master Abraham who has not forsaken his steadfast love and his faithfulness toward my master as for me the Lord has led me in the way to the house of my master's kinsman the response is worship that's the right response by the way he gives glory to God for answering his prayers he ascribes to the Lord steadfast love and faithfulness this God has been faithful to my master

Abraham this God has led my way he just breaks out in praise he's seen the hand of the Lord providentially answering prayers directing his steps supplying his need you know the more God saturated our view of everything is the more our hearts will praise him in every moment God if you take him out of the equation even in the slightest degree to the point where there is just a chance occurrence just luck just coincidence nothing special about this you are robbing God of the praise that he's due to have a God saturated view of the world is to see his hand at work at all times in every event in all ways and in doing so your heart will be ready to praise him when he provides all of this of course assumes fourth number four that you actually view all things through the lens of God's providence so fourth a right understanding of God's providence gives us a proper understanding of all things look there what happens starting in verse 29 Rebecca goes back home her brother Laban comes out and she starts sharing about everything that's happened and so now Laban invites him in he plays host for this servant verse 33 says he he feeds him he sets food the meal before him but the servant says I'm not eating until I share this story with you I gotta say what I gotta see you gotta hear what God just did you're not gonna believe this and now for about 15 verses from verse 34 to verse 49 he recounts the story that we've just seen this is him just pouring out this version of what's just happened but I want you to notice the emphasis here in how he tells it he says I am Abraham's servant the Lord has greatly blessed my master he's become great he sees the

Lord's hand in blessing Abraham he talks about all the things the Lord blessed him with he talks about how Sarah bore Abraham a son in her old age man that's a story in and of itself isn't it he talks about how God has given Abraham everything he has Abraham sent the servant on this mission to find him a wife and he reminded him he assured him of God's promises how he told him the angel of the Lord would go before him would lead him would prosper his way how he comes to the spring and he prays to the Lord and he knew this whole thing was dependent on the Lord's hand for success he recalls his prayer to God and he is like you are not going to believe what happened next before I was done talking here's Rebecca and she comes with her water and she goes to draw water can you believe that it gets better I said give me a drink and she passed the test just exactly like I prayed she gave me drink and she gave the camel's drink and so

[34 : 11] I said whose daughter are you she said I am the daughter of Bethuel Nahor's son whom Milca bore to him and my mouth just dropped and hit the floor this is exactly the type of woman that my master sent me to retrieve don't you see God's hand in this so I put that ring on her nose and bracelets on her arms and I bowed my head and worshipped the Lord blessed the Lord the God of my master Abraham who led me by the right way to take the daughter of my master's kinsman for his son see his perspective on the whole story has the Lord right at the center doesn't it his story from beginning to end is that God has done this this servant is rightly understanding

God's work of providence and the events of his life let me ask you something ought to be an easy question okay look through the passage and tell me what's the servant's name anybody I don't know what it is you don't know what we're not told what his name is are we the servant isn't named in the story did you catch that it's kind of odd isn't it strange way to tell a story it's one of the longest narrative chapters in Genesis and this guy seems to be right at the center of the action and he's the main actor in the scene right wrong the Lord is the main actor in the scene the servant is quick he gets it he's quick to point to God and his work as the main actor in all the events of this account the same is true for our lives you realize that you and

I are not the main character we need to be reminded of that don't we you and I are not the main character in our life God is the main character of our life your life is not about you God is the point and the purpose and the orchestrator and the leader and the main actor of all of our lives it is not ultimately about us it is about him just think about your life for a minute just think about the big things okay big successes in your life major milestones your education your success in the workplace major promotions personal accomplishments your relationships your marriage your children now ask yourself who gets the glory for these things how do you tell the story are you the main character is it about you when we see the depth of

God's work in every detail of our life we will see it is not really about us church it is all about him do you see the hand of God in every detail of your life do you tell the story of your life with God as the main character right at the center so that he receives the glory the servant gets it doesn't he but even so he still doesn't know if this whole thing is going to work out he doesn't know until it's done God's providence is often best read in retrospect but he ends his speech here in verse 49 and says now then if you're going to show steadfast love and faithfulness to my master tell me and if not tell me I can turn to my right hand or to my left I think God is in this I think God is at work in this but I need you to seal the deal here verse 50 Laban and Bethuel answered and said this thing has come from the Lord it's undeniable we can't speak to you good or bad behold Rebecca is before you take her and go let her be the wife of your master's son as the Lord has spoken how incredible is this God has done exactly as he promised his providence has ensured that every promise is kept which is our fifth and final point this morning fifth God's providence ensures all promises are kept verse 52 when Abraham's servant heard their words he bowed himself again to the earth before the [39 : 29] Lord and the servant brings out jewelry and silver and gold and garments he gives them to Rebecca he gives them to her brother he gives them to her mother and then they eat and drink they spend the night there and when they get up in the morning they say let's go send me away to my master brother!

and her mother say let the young woman remain with us for a while at least ten days and after that she may go but he said no don't delay me any longer the Lord has prospered my way send me away that I may go to my master so they call Rebecca and ask her Rebecca says yes I will go they send her away with her nurse and they bless Rebecca and say to her oh sister may you become thousands of ten thousands may your offspring possess the gate of those who hate him Rebecca and her young woman arose and they ride the camels they follow the man and Rebecca and her servant are sent away and we see the rest of the passage it details this new bride Rebecca coming to meet her new husband they lay eyes on each other for the first time and the two become one in marriage you know from an earthly perspective this might just seem like just another marriage happy coincidence good fortune just happy it worked out for

Isaac good for him but in view of God's providence we know this is the hand of God God so orchestrated all the events of this chapter big and small every detail to the finest points in order to bring this marriage together and beyond this in order to bring about the birth of Jesus the savior of the world don't we see there's purpose here in every step every word every action far beyond what any of these people could have possibly dreamed God is arranging it all God is directing it all God is painting the picture stroke by stroke why to magnify the glory of his name in the gospel of

Jesus Christ in fact we see a picture of the gospel here don't we every marriage is a pointer to the gospel Paul tells us that in Ephesians chapter five every marriage has within it this picture of Christ and the church but think about this marriage in particular just think about it with me the father plans for the son to receive a bride Isaac the only son of promise who like Christ Isaac was born miraculously of the power and the promise of God Isaac who like Christ was nearly sacrificed on top of the mountain this Isaac seeks out a bride a bride who doesn't know him a bride who lives far away a bride who must leave everything behind and come to be with her new husband a bride who has no rightful claim to any of God's promises but has made an heir together with the son church this is us this is a picture of the gospel is it not by the eternal plan of a good and sovereign God he has prepared for his son a bride from heaven he came and sought her to be his holy bride with his blood he bought her and for her life he died by the eternal plan of a good and sovereign God he is working all things to this end that sinners like us might be united with a savior that the bride of Christ would be made one and wed to her husband all things are working together to this end so that when he returns and we see him at last we will be one with him for the rest of eternity God has a plan to magnify the glory of his name in the gospel of Jesus Christ and this plan will not fail our sovereign

[44 : 24] God is working all things according to the purpose of his will for his glory for our good his providence ensures every promise will be kept there are no accidents it will be exactly as he planned from the beginning how does God's providence affect you non believer God's providence would lead us to believe that it is not an accident that you are here this morning hearing the gospel proclaimed hearing this invitation turn from your sin put your faith in Christ and you too will be made one with him would you come to the Lord this morning church because we believe he is in complete control friend we can pursue him and his promises faithfully we can pray confidently we can praise him constantly we can perceive all things as from his fatherly hand and so trust him totally and one day our faith will be sight we read this morning from the heidelberg catechism question 27

I'd like to read it again as we close what do you understand by the providence of God question answer God's providence is his almighty and ever present power whereby as with his hand he still upholds heaven and earth and all creatures and so governs them that leaf and blade rain and drought fruitful and barren years food and drink health and sickness riches and poverty indeed all things come not to us by chance but by his fatherly hand follow up question question 28 what does it benefit us to know that God has created all things and still upholds them by his providence answer we can be patient in adversity thankful in prosperity with a view to the future we can have a firm confidence in our faithful

God and father that no creature shall separate us from his love for all creatures are so completely in his hand that without his will they cannot so much as move is this how you see the world no happy accidents no dumb luck nothing random nothing meaningless all things are in the hand of our good and faithful God to him be the glory father we pray would you give us eyes to see the world this way give us eyes to see your hand at work in our lives lives of others around us in the so called chance encounters we have with others lord would you lead us to praise you and thank you and worship you for your work in all things especially so for your your sovereign plan of salvation in Christ that will not fail so we rejoice lord that sin and death and the devil will not have the last word but Christ is triumphant he will return and we will be with him at last we praise you for this in the name of Jesus amen