

Systematic Theology

6. The Doctrines of Creation & Providence

1. Creation

Definition: Creation is the mighty act of God to bring into existence the universe and all it contains, including this world and human beings, for his _____.

God created all things _____, or out of nothing.

[Heb 11:3](#) “*3 By faith we understand that the universe was created by the word of God, so that what is seen was not made out of things that are visible.*” cf. [Gen 1:1](#)

Creation was a Trinitarian endeavor:

1. The _____ spoke the universe into existence: “*And God said...*” [Gen 1:3, 6, 9, 11, 14, 20, 24, 26, 28, 29](#).
2. God spoke the creation into existence through His _____, who is the Son: [John 1:3](#) “*3 All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made.*” cf [Col 1:16](#)
3. In the beginning, the _____ prepared and protected the chaotic core of creation for God’s future work: [Gen 1:2](#) “*2 The earth was without form and void, and darkness was over the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters.*”

The “Why” of Creation

Creation displays God’s goodness and _____. [Psa 19:1](#); [Jer 10:12](#); [Rom 1:20](#)

The Goodness of Creation

God repeatedly declared His creation “_____” ([Gen 1:4, 10, 12, 18, 21, 25](#)) and then “_____” (1:31).

As a result of the Fall, God subjected the creation to “bondage to _____”. [Gen 3](#); [Rom 8:18-25](#).

This state of corruption will be _____ through the renewal of all things in the new heaven and new earth. [Rev 21-22](#).

How should we live?

2. Providence

Definition: Providence is the continuing work of God to _____ in existence the created universe and all it contains, directing it toward its divinely designed end.

2.1. Preservation

Preservation is God's work to sustain the creation in existence and _____ as He designed it.

[Neh 9:6](#) “6 “You are the Lord, you alone. You have made heaven, the heaven of heavens, with all their host, the earth and all that is on it, the seas and all that is in them; and you preserve all of them; and the host of heaven worships you.”

[Heb 1:3](#) “3 ... he upholds the universe by the word of his power...” cf [Col 1:17](#)

[Psa 148:7-8](#) “7 Praise the Lord from the earth, you great sea creatures and all deeps, 8 fire and hail, snow and mist, stormy wind fulfilling his word!” cf [Psa 147:15-18](#)

[Psa 104:14-30](#) “14 You cause the grass to grow for the livestock ...16 The trees of the Lord are watered abundantly, the cedars of Lebanon that he planted. ...21 The young lions roar for their prey, seeking their food from God...24 O Lord, how manifold are your works! In wisdom have you made them all; the earth is full of your creatures...27 These all look to you, to give them their food in due season. 28 When you give it to them, they gather it up; when you open your hand, they are filled with good things. 29 When you hide your face, they are dismayed; when you take away their breath, they die and return to their dust. 30 When you send forth your Spirit, they are created, and you renew the face of the ground.” cf [Matt 10:29](#)

[Psa 139:13-16](#) “13 For you formed my inward parts; you knitted me together in my mother's womb. 14 I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made. Wonderful are your works; my soul knows it very well. 15 My frame was not hidden from you, when I was being made in secret, intricately woven in the depths of the earth. 16 Your eyes saw my unformed substance; in your book were written, every one of them, the days that were formed for me, when as yet there was none of them.”

2.2. Concurrence

Concurrence is God's all-encompassing _____ with His creation in its every action and development.

God cooperates with:

1. _____ to promote their flourishing and terminate their existence [Psa 104:14-30](#).
2. _____, engaging holy angels in his service and engaging Satan and his demons to wreak limited havoc.

[2 Kings 19:35](#) “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.”

[Dan 9:21](#) “21 while I was speaking in prayer, the man Gabriel, whom I had seen in the vision at the first, came to me in swift flight at the time of the evening sacrifice.”

[Matt 4:11](#); [Luke 1](#); [Acts 5:19-20](#); [Heb 1:14](#)

[Job 1:6-12](#) “...8 And the Lord said to Satan, “Have you considered my servant Job...?”... 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.”

[1 Kings 22:20-22](#) “20 and the Lord said, ‘Who will entice Ahab, that he may go up and fall at Ramoth-gilead?’ And one said one thing, and another said another. 21 Then a spirit came forward and stood before the Lord, saying, ‘I will entice him.’ 22 And the Lord said to him, ‘By what means?’ And he said, ‘I will go out, and will be a lying spirit in the mouth of all his prophets.’ And he said, ‘You are to entice him, and you shall succeed; go out and do so.’”

[Jdg 9:23](#) “23 And God sent an evil spirit between Abimelech and the leaders of Shechem, and the leaders of Shechem dealt treacherously with Abimelech...”

[1 Sam 18:10-11](#) “10 The next day a harmful spirit from God rushed upon Saul, and he raved within his house while David was playing the lyre, as he did day by day. Saul had his spear in his hand. 11 And Saul hurled the spear, for he thought, ‘I will pin David to the wall.’ But David evaded him twice.” cf 16:14-15, 23; 19:9, 20.

[Luke 22:31](#) “31 “Simon, Simon, behold, Satan demanded to have you, that he might sift you like wheat...”

3. _____, to responsibly will and work for the accomplishment of His plan, or to culpably reject His goodness out of hardness of heart.

God _____ works good in and through man.

[Phil 1:3-5](#) “3 I thank my God in all my remembrance of you, 4 always in every prayer of mine for you all making my prayer with joy, 5 because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now.” cf [Col 1:3-4](#)

[Gen 6:5](#) “5 The Lord saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intention of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.”

[Jer 17:9](#) “9 The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately sick; who can understand it?”

[Eph 2:8-10](#) “8 For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, 9 not a result of works, so that no one may boast. 10 For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.”

He _____ controls the evil acts of man.

[Gen 20:1-7](#); [Job 1-2](#); [Luke 2:31-32](#)

[Exo 21:12-13](#) “Whoever strikes a man so that he dies shall be put to death. 13 But if he did not lie in wait for him, but God let him fall into his hand, then I will appoint for you a place to which he may flee.

[Exo 21:13](#) CSB But if he didn't intend any harm, and yet God caused it to happen by his hand, I will appoint a place for you where he may flee.

[Psa 105:23-25](#) 23 Then Israel came to Egypt; Jacob sojourned in the land of Ham. 24 And the LORD made his people very fruitful and made them stronger than their foes. 25 He turned their hearts to hate his people, to deal craftily with his servants.

[Amo 3:6](#) 6 Is a trumpet blown in a city, and the people are not afraid? Does disaster come to a city, unless the LORD has done it?

(Amo 3:6 CSB) *If a disaster occurs in a city, hasn't the LORD done it?*

[2 Sam 24:1](#) *"1 Again the anger of the Lord was kindled against Israel, and he incited David against them, saying, "Go, number Israel and Judah."... 10 "10 But David's heart struck him after he had numbered the people. And David said to the Lord, "I have sinned greatly in what I have done. But now, O Lord, please take away the iniquity of your servant, for I have done very foolishly.""* cf [1 Chron 21:1](#)

So is God then morally responsible for all this evil?

[Psa 145:17](#) *"17 The Lord is righteous in all his ways and kind in all his works."*

[Jas 1:13-15](#) *"13 Let no one say when he is tempted, "I am being tempted by God," for God cannot be tempted with evil, and he himself tempts no one. 14 But each person is tempted when he is lured and enticed by his own desire. 15 Then desire when it has conceived gives birth to sin, and sin when it is fully grown brings forth death."*

2.3. Government

Government is God's work of directing the creation toward it's _____ planned end.

[Eph 1:9-11](#) *"9 [He has made] known to us the mystery of his will, according to his purpose, which he set forth in Christ 10 as a plan for the fullness of time, to unite all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth. 11 In him we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to the purpose of him who works all things according to the counsel of his will..."*

[Acts 17:24-31](#) *"...26 And he made from one man every nation of mankind to live on all the face of the earth, having determined allotted periods and the boundaries of their dwelling place, 27 that they should seek God, and perhaps feel their way toward him and find him....30 The times of ignorance God overlooked, but now he commands all people everywhere to repent, 31 because he has fixed a day on which he will judge the world in righteousness by a man whom he has appointed; and of this he has given assurance to all by raising him from the dead."*

Major Errors:

1. Overemphasizing divine providence and minimizing human responsibility.
2. Overemphasizing human responsibility and minimizing divine providence.

How should we live?