

PROVIDENCE

The Oxford English Dictionary

I. The foreknowing and beneficent care and government of God (or of nature); divine direction, control, or guidance.

1727, Defoe, *Histor. Appar.*

providence which is...the administration of heaven's government in the world.

II. The lot assigned to one by Providence.

III. Applied to the deity as exercising prescient and beneficent power and direction.

1704, Defoe, *15th Rep. Hist. MSS. Comm.*

What Providence has reserved for me he only knows.

IV. An instance or act of divine intervention; an event or circumstance which indicates divine dispensation. *Special Providence*, a particular act of direct divine intervention.

1718, Defoe, *Crusoe*.

How can he sweeten the bitterest providences!

Daniel Defoe, *Serious Reflections of Robinson Crusoe*, 1720

To be utterly careless of ourselves, and talk of trusting Providence, is a lethargy of the worst nature; for as we are to trust Providence with our estates, but to use, at the same time, all diligence in our callings, so we are to trust Providence with our safety, but with our eyes open to all its necessary cautions, warnings, and instructions.