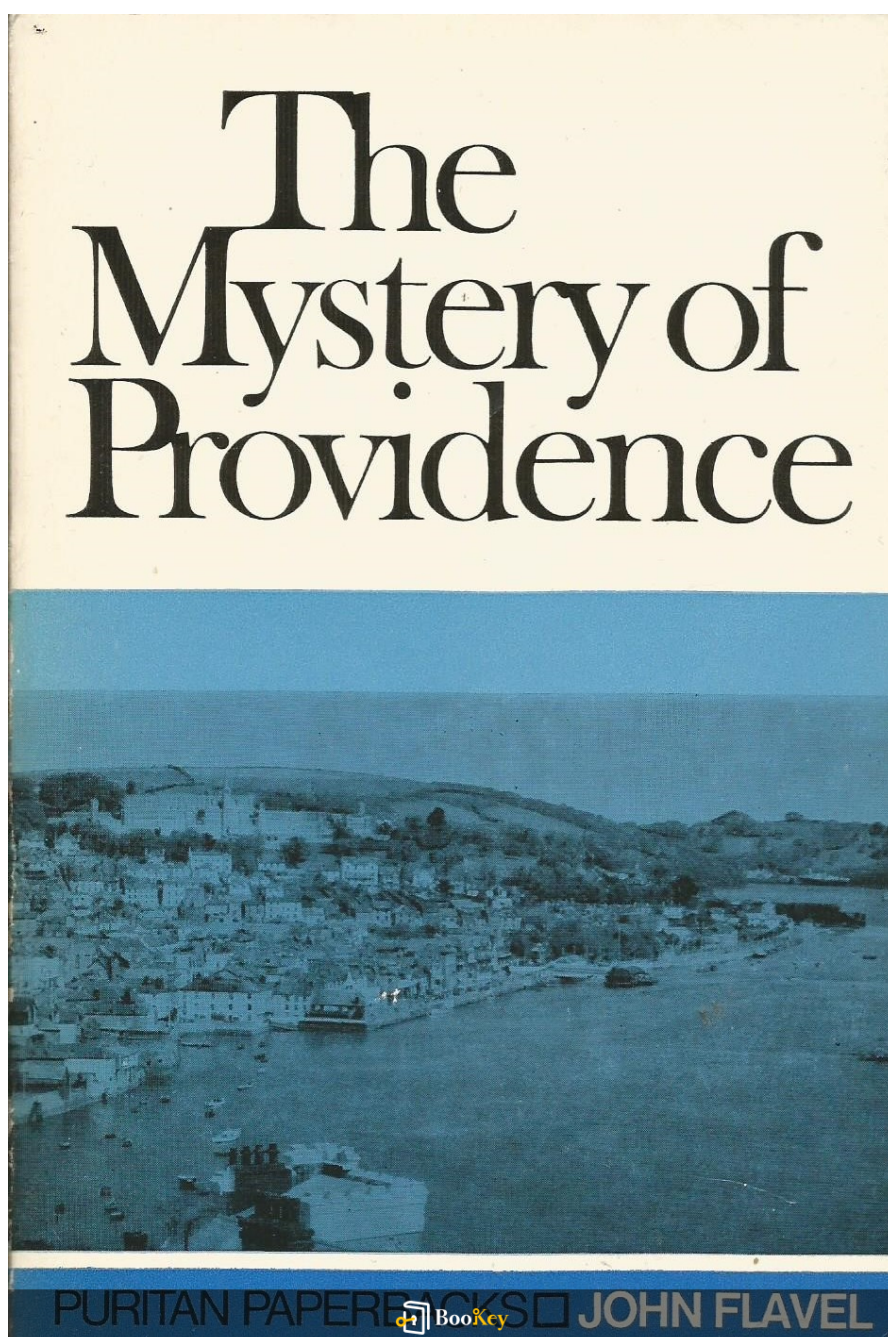


The Mystery Of Providence PDF (Limited Copy)

John Flavel



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The Mystery Of Providence Summary

Understanding God's unseen guidance in our lives.

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About the book

In "The Mystery of Providence," John Flavel delves into the profound complexities of divine sovereignty and the intricate tapestry of God's workings within the lives of individuals and nations alike. Through a compelling blend of scripture, anecdote, and personal reflection, Flavel invites readers on a journey to uncover the hidden hand of Providence that guides every circumstance, both joyous and tragic. His insights challenge us to rethink our understanding of fate and chance, encouraging a deeper connection with faith amidst life's uncertainties. As readers navigate through the layers of this theological exploration, they will find not just answers, but an invitation to trust in the greater purpose that weaves through the fabric of existence.

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About the author

John Flavel was a prominent English Puritan minister, theologian, and author of the 17th century, born in 1628 in Bromsgrove, Worcestershire. Known for his profound insights into the nature of God's providence and the human condition, Flavel was an influential figure in the Puritan movement, committed to promoting a deep, personal faith and a practical understanding of Christian doctrine. His significant works, including "The Mystery of Providence," reflect his pastoral heart and rigorous scholarship, addressing complex theological concepts with clarity and simplicity. Flavel's writings continue to resonate with readers seeking to explore the intricate ways in which divine sovereignty interacts with human affairs, and his enduring legacy underscores the richness of Puritan spirituality during a tumultuous period in English history.

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author thoughtfully presents the profound truth that the lives of believers, referred to as "saints," are governed by God's special Providence. This concept is juxtaposed against natural occurrences and mere coincidences, arguing the case for divine oversight and intervention in the affairs of the faithful.

1. To begin, Flavel stresses that Providence operates in two distinct ways: a general Providence governing all of creation and a special Providence that specifically benefits the Church. While the latter receives God's deliberate attention and care, the former encompasses all creatures—rational and irrational, animate and inanimate—indicating God's sovereignty over the entire universe.

2. Flavel highlights a troubling tendency among modern believers to profess faith without comprehending the depth of their relationship with God. Many live as if Providence does not influence their lives, merely attributing occurrences to chance. In response, he seeks to address the skepticism surrounding the idea of special Providence, challenging the non-believers and those merely educated in faith but lacking personal experience of its truth.

3. The author sets forth a series of demands for those who challenge the notion that all events affecting saints are dictated by natural law. His first demand calls attention to the unusual mercies and deliverances that clearly



disrupt natural laws, suggesting a supernatural influence rather than mere coincidence. He cites various biblical examples, such as the parting of the Red Sea for Israel and the preservation of Daniel in the lion's den, as clear acts of divine intervention.

4. Next, Flavel highlights the strange coincidences of natural causes aligning to benefit God's people, illustrating how events unfold in a manner that suggests divine orchestration. The timing and sequence of such events often mirror historical accounts, reinforcing the improbability of them occurring through chance alone.

5. The third demand explores the inverse relationship between means and outcomes—where potent efforts to destroy God's people frequently fail, while seemingly weak strategies succeed. Flavel recounts biblical instances where the ungodly were thwarted, emphasizing God's hand in these miraculous outcomes.

6. Following this, he considers the perplexing diversions and obstacles that prevent both the righteous and wicked from achieving potentially ruinous ends. These unanticipated interventions hint at a divine force that works to shield His chosen from harm.

7. Flavel examines the principle of just retribution, noting how acts of kindness towards God's people are met with divine rewards, while malicious



intentions often bounce back on the perpetrator. He cites numerous historical and biblical examples to underscore the observable patterns of divine justice that align perfectly with the teachings of Scripture.

8. The author also addresses the correspondences between God's providential actions and scriptural promises. He argues that the fulfillment of Providence is intricately linked to God's word, demonstrating an inseparable connection where providential occurrences reflect biblical truths.

9. Flavel underscores the remarkable timing of divine providences, arguing that the precise alignment of circumstances, especially in response to prayer, illustrates a divine design instead of mere coincidences.

10. Finally, he emphasizes the alignment of providential outcomes with the prayers of believers. Flavel asserts that many extraordinary instances of deliverance coincide closely with the faithful's supplications, thus showcasing God's responsiveness and attentiveness to the needs of His people.

In conclusion, Flavel's argument reinforces the belief that God's special Providence plays an undeniable and distinct role in the lives of the faithful. Through the interplay of divine intervention, just retribution, and a harmony with scriptural promises, he invites readers to affirm their faith in a caring and involved God.



Chapter 2 Summary: Unknown Text

In Chapter 2 of "The Mystery of Providence," John Flavel delves into the profound workings of God's Providence during our formative years, underscoring how divine care is evident from our very conception and throughout our childhood. He emphasizes notable aspects of God's providential care, which primarily manifest in three significant areas.

1. Formation and Protection in the Womb: Flavel begins by highlighting the marvelous act of God in shaping us in the womb. He draws attention to the intricate design of the human body, where every part is made with divine purpose, as illustrated by the psalmist's admiration of being "wonderfully made" (Psalm 139:14). Each person is uniquely crafted, reflecting God's intentionality. The author points out that this careful formation is complemented by providential protection, allowing us to be born rather than becoming part of the vast number of embryos that never see the light of day. This initial act of Providence not only gifts us life but also grants us the faculties and abilities necessary to engage with the world meaningfully.

2. Designation of Time and Place of Birth: Flavel proceeds to consider the critical significance of the specific time and place of our birth. He posits that the environment into which one is born is no trivial matter, as it has profound implications for both current comfort and future happiness. He invites readers to contemplate the blessings of living in a civilized, nurturing



environment compared to the dire conditions faced by countless individuals in the world. Being born in a land where the gospel is accessible and education in Christian values is prevalent is a significant mercy from God. The chapter underscores the spiritual danger of being born in regions dominated by heathenism or heresy—where the knowledge of God and the gospel is absent—highlighting the privilege and responsibility it entails to be raised in a Christian context.

3. Heritage and Family Background: Finally, Flavel reflects on the importance of our familial heritage and upbringing. He celebrates the mercy of being born to parents who fear God and instill righteousness. This godly heritage opens pathways for spiritual blessings, enabling children to inherit not just temporal stability but also eternal life through their lineage of faith. He stresses that prayerful parents, through their dedication and example, can shape a child's spiritual journey, often mitigating the natural tendencies towards sin that are innate to humankind.

By examining these aspects, Flavel calls upon readers to cultivate a deep sense of gratitude for the providential care that has shaped their existence. He advocates for an acknowledgment of God's blessings in their lives, particularly in light of the privileges they enjoy in contrast to others who suffer due to the lack of such divine favor. The chapter culminates in a call to parents to fulfill their duty towards their children and to children to honor their parents, as such relationships are vital for cultivating a legacy of faith



and obedience to God.

Through his reflections, Flavel encourages an introspective acknowledgment of God's gracious workings, inspiring both gratitude for individual blessings and a commitment to nurturing faithfulness in future generations.

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Chapter 3: Unknown Text

In Chapter 3 of "The Mystery of Providence," John Flavel focuses on the remarkable workings of God's Providence in the salvation of individuals, illustrating how seemingly ordinary events are orchestrated to lead people to conversion.

1. Flavel emphasizes the magnitude of salvation as the most extraordinary benefit one can receive from Providence, far surpassing any other blessings in life. He notes that the personal connections to the circumstances of one's conversion—places, instruments, and times—are cherished memories that evoke strong emotional responses. For those who may struggle to remember the specifics of their conversion, Flavel reassures them that the essence of the transformative work is what truly matters, rather than the details that may remain elusive.

2. The chapter then explores various instances of how Providence orchestrates events to facilitate conversion. Flavel shares examples involving biblical figures, such as the Ethiopian eunuch and Naaman the Syrian, to

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Chapter 4 Summary: Unknown Text

In Chapter 4 of "The Mystery of Providence" by John Flavel, the author delves into the theme of God's Providence and its influence on our work and callings in life. He emphasizes that divine Providence does not merely concern our spiritual salvation, but also our well-being in this earthly existence. Flavel articulates several key aspects of God's involvement in our vocations, illustrating how Providence significantly impacts both our personal and communal lives.

1. Firstly, Flavel highlights how Providence directs individuals towards meaningful work from a young age, preventing them from leading idle and sinful lives. He contrasts this with those who become burdens to society, emphasizing that being engaged in a lawful vocation is a blessing that fosters self-sufficiency and reduces temptation. The diligent worker, who earns their bread through honest labor, is shown to be favored by Providence, enabling them to offer mercy to others, thereby living out the biblical principle that it is more blessed to give than to receive.
2. Secondly, Flavel discusses the importance of being appointed to a vocation that not only respects moral law but also aligns with one's strengths and capacities. He reflects on the prevalence of sinful occupations that harm others and underscores the mercy of finding a calling that honors God while also being suited to one's abilities. By engaging in work that is appropriate



for one's talents and energies, individuals are provided the means for a more fulfilling and less burdensome existence, allowing for spiritual pursuits alongside their responsibilities.

3. The author next considers how Providence can place individuals in roles they or their parents never anticipated. He provides historical examples from scripture and biography where individuals transitioned from humble beginnings to positions of honor and influence, asserting that it is ultimately God's plan that determines our paths. Such transformations serve as a testament to the intricate workings of Providence, demonstrating that the divine has a purpose for each individual that may surpass their previous aspirations.

4. Flavel also emphasizes the protecting aspect of Providence, which creates a safeguard around our livelihoods. He cites Job, demonstrating how God's providential protection can preserve one's possessions from ruin, illustrating the importance of divine favor in our labor.

5. Flavel articulates the notion that a sufficient calling is, in itself, a blessing. He acknowledges that while some may have labor-intensive jobs, God's wisdom often chooses our path for our benefit, enabling us to avoid temptations and maintain our health. He reassures readers that even if their earnings are modest, they are better invested in spiritual communion than in idle wealth, encouraging gratitude for what is provided.



Throughout the chapter, Flavel addresses possible complaints about hard labor or insufficient means, reminding readers to contextualize their experiences against the backdrop of those in greater need. He reassures believers that their lesser circumstances might be divinely ordained for their eternal benefit, positing that satisfaction should be found in recognizing God's hand in their assigned roles.

Additionally, Flavel presents a series of cautions for the faithful. He warns against idleness in work, emphasizing diligence and consistency with the divine call. Moreover, he encourages individuals to ensure that their daily occupations do not overshadow their spiritual commitments. Furthermore, he reminds readers that success in any endeavor is fundamentally rooted in God's grace, urging them to engage in prayerful dependence on God for their endeavors. Lastly, Flavel stresses contentment within one's current station, prompting individuals to trust in God's superior wisdom over their own desires.

Through this chapter, Flavel ultimately seeks to instill a sense of gratitude, awareness, and responsibility toward the Providence that shapes our work and lives, encouraging believers to recognize and celebrate God's involvement in their everyday endeavors.



Chapter 5 Summary: Unknown Text

In Chapter 5 of "The Mystery of Providence," John Flavel delves into the overarching theme of divine providence in family life, illustrating how God's careful guidance touches various aspects of familial relationships and needs. Flavel emphasizes that God's providential care is evident in our selection of lifelong partners, the harmony within marital relationships, and the blessings of children, all reflecting His wisdom and benevolence.

1. The guidance of providence is integral in the realm of relationships, particularly in marriage. Scripture highlights this, asserting that a prudent partner is a gift from the Lord, and holy figures like Abraham acknowledged God's guiding hand when seeking spouses for themselves and their heirs. Flavel notes how divine providence often leads individuals towards unexpected blessings that align with God's wisdom rather than human desires.

2. There is an unmistakable harmony achieved through divine providence among married couples. Despite differing backgrounds, when individuals come together under God's ordinance, they often experience a bond stronger than mere kinship. This spiritual union fosters a supportive environment for the mutual growth in faith, ultimately aimed at the eternal good of each partner.



3. The gift of children is another manifestation of providential kindness, showcasing God's mercy. Flavel highlights the joy and fulfillment that children bring, reinforcing the notion that family continuity serves as a sign of divine favor. The inability to have children or the experience of loss serves as a poignant reminder of how deeply interconnected familial relationships can be with an individual's emotional and spiritual well-being.

4. Flavel draws attention to the contrast between those blessed with families and those who suffer from discord or childlessness. He acknowledges the sorrow some experience in family life, as poor relationships can lead to greater pain than any external hardship. Yet he also presents the idea that such challenges can be sanctified through faith, encouraging believers to trust in God's overarching plan.

5. Flavel emphasizes the importance of recognizing and appreciating God's provision in family life. He urges readers to ascribe glory to God for their familial blessings, encouraging them to fulfill their duties within these relations. Acts of gratitude and acknowledgment of God's role are paramount, as neglecting to see His hand in one's life can lead to bitterness and discontent.

6. The chapter further reflects on God's promise of constant provision for families. Flavel points out that throughout life, divine care is continuous and reliable, echoing Scripture that assures believers they will lack nothing if



they seek Him. The mention of God's care at various life stages reinforces that His provisions are not only abundant but also timely and wise.

7. In conclusion, Flavel issues practical reminders for how to benefit from the providence experienced in family life. He warns against forgetting God's past kindnesses, distrusting His future provisions, and allowing discontent to fester during times of need. Emphasizing the importance of prayer and faith, Flavel calls on believers to engage with Providence actively, trusting in God's righteous deliberations that govern their lives. Overall, the chapter serves as a rich meditation on the significance of divine providence in family, encouraging a deep sense of gratitude and responsibility.

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Chapter 6: Unknown Text

In Chapter 6 of "The Mystery of Providence" by John Flavel, the author delves deeply into God's providential care in preserving believers, particularly focusing on how Divine Providence protects them from the temptations of sin and the numerous dangers that threaten both their souls and bodies.

1. Divine Providence as a Shield Against Temptation Flavel emphasizes how God's providential care intervenes during critical moments of temptation, providing a means of escape as promised in 1 Corinthians 10:13. This is illustrated by the internal grace that believers receive, which combats the desires of the flesh, and the external workings of Providence that act as a guard against sin.

2. Intervention in Our Lives: The author notes various ways Providence prevents sin. For instance, sometimes it directs others to advise believers against wrongful actions, echoing how Abigail counseled David. Historical accounts, such as those of Mr. Dod and Mr. Bolton, further illustrate how

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Chapter 7 Summary: Unknown Text

In Chapter 7 of "The Mystery of Providence" by John Flavel, the author delves into the vital role of Divine Providence in the sanctification of believers, emphasizing the process of mortification as foundational to spiritual maturity. The chapter unfolds through several key principles that elucidate the nuances of God's providential guidance.

- 1. The Essence of Mortification:** Flavel posits that the mortification of sinful affections is a crucial aspect of sanctification, providing a clear reflection of one's relationship with Christ. He identifies this process as necessary for spiritual safety, particularly during times of temptation, where the corrupting allure of the world poses continual challenges for believers.
- 2. Agents of Mortification:** Two instrumental forces are highlighted in the journey of sanctification: the Holy Spirit, which performs inner transformation, and Divine Providence, which operates outwardly. The Spirit is the primary agent, indicating that without the internal work of the Spirit, no external providence could facilitate true mortification.
- 3. Providential Harmony and Support:** Flavel describes a harmonious relationship between the workings of the Spirit and the dispensations of Providence. Divine interventions are orchestrated to align with and support the Spirit's work in believers, which includes providing barriers against sin.



and afflictions that facilitate growth and moral development.

4. Afflictions as Tools for Purification: The author further explains how providential afflictions are not mere punitive measures but purposeful instruments for cleansing. They serve to confront believers with their sinfulness, as well as to purge impurities from their hearts. Flavel stresses that while afflictions in themselves cannot cleanse sin, they can bring about transformative experiences through the efficacy of Christ's sacrifice.

5. God's Method of Purification: Flavel illustrates how God employs various providences to counteract the believer's propensity to idolize worldly comforts or to become complacent in spiritual matters. By disrupting earthly dependencies, such as wealth, relationships, or even health, God nudges His people toward a deeper reliance on Him alone.

6. Pride and Corruption: The chapter also addresses the danger of pride fostered by human praise and recognition. Flavel notes that God frequently allows believers to face dishonor or failures to stifle pride and remind them of their inherent humility before Him. This process aims to keep believers grounded and aware of their dependence on Divine grace.

7. Divine Care for Humanity: Flavel expresses profound gratitude for the overwhelming kindness and attention God affords humanity, especially given the disparity between God's greatness and human frailty. His love,



demonstrated through grace and the gift of Christ, leads to a historical pattern of providential care which is worthy of continuous remembrance and celebration.

In summary, Flavel's chapter articulates a comprehensive view of Divine Providence as an active force in the sanctification process of believers, guiding them toward mortification of sin and deeper reliance on God. The interplay of internal transformation by the Spirit and external providential events creates a robust framework for understanding how God orchestrates life's challenges towards spiritual growth. Through trials and comforts alike, believers are continually reminded of God's diligent care and the necessity of maintaining an eternal perspective over temporal attachments. This holistic view not only enriches a believer's appreciation for Providence but also reaffirms the importance of ongoing sanctification in a world filled with temptations and distractions.

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Chapter 8 Summary: Unknown Text

In Chapter 8 of "The Mystery of Providence" by John Flavel, the author emphasizes the critical duty of reflecting on God's providence, particularly in times of distress and trouble. He asserts this responsibility through several compelling points.

1. First and foremost, Flavel underscores that it is an explicit command from God for His people to engage in serious reflection on His works, whether they manifest as mercies or judgments. He references biblical examples, such as the admonition given to the people of Israel to look back at Shiloh after they faced judgment (Jer. 7:12) and the call to remember the Lord's faithfulness from Shittim to Gilgal (Mic. 6:5). This emphasis illustrates that if people fail to contemplate these divine interventions, they risk obscuring the recognition of God's faithfulness and potentially exposing their own unfaithfulness.

2. Furthermore, the neglect of contemplation on God's providence is condemned as a sin in Scripture. Flavel cites passages like Isaiah 26:11, which highlights God's displeasure towards those who choose to remain heedless of His hand at work. This admonition stresses the importance of being attentive and observant, lest one falls into judgment or punishment for such negligence (Psalms 28:4-5).



3. The author goes on to note that the Holy Spirit has deliberately included calls for attention in the narratives of providential events in Scripture. He mentions significant occurrences such as the Israelites' escape from Egypt (Exod. 3:2, 9) and the defeat of Rabshakeh (2 Kings 19:7), emphasizing how these calls compel us to observe and reflect upon God's faithfulness and intervention throughout history.

4. A critical component of Flavel's argument is that without observing providences, meaningful praise to God becomes unattainable. He elaborates by illustrating how Psalm 107 recounts various instances where God's providence saves people in distress but continuously prompts them to offer thanks and praise. The act of observation is thereby framed as essential to recognizing God's loving-kindness.

5. Moreover, neglecting to reflect on God's past providences leads to a loss of faith and benefit derived from His works. Flavel illustrates how faith is nourished by recalling God's previous actions, encouraging believers to use past deliverances to inspire confidence in future ones. This is exemplified in scriptural references from David and Paul, who draw on their experiences of deliverance as a basis for trusting God in their current predicament.

6. The author points out that failing to recognize God's manifestations in providence constitutes a severe disregard for divine scrutiny. He articulates that God approaches His people through both judgments and mercies and



that failing to acknowledge these moments is akin to a contemptible act against Him. This neglect contrasts sharply with the honor one would extend to a respected person in their life.

7. Lastly, Flavel asserts the necessity of observing providences to inform one's prayers, guiding them to align appropriately with one's current conditions. By observing and reflecting on God's workings, believers can tailor their requests and praises, whether seeking to turn away impending judgment or expressing gratitude for previous mercies. The varying nature of David's psalms illustrates how personal reflection leads to a suitable approach in communication with God.

In summary, Flavel compellingly argues that reflecting on God's providence is not simply a suggestion but a commanded duty essential for faith, gratitude, and appropriately addressing God in prayer. Ignoring this duty risks spiritual impoverishment, misunderstanding, and distancing from the divine presence.

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Chapter 9: Unknown Text

In Chapter 9 of "The Mystery of Providence" by John Flavel, the author provides profound insights into the practice of meditating on God's providence. This spiritual exercise is essential for enriching one's Christian life, helping believers recognize and savor the multifaceted workings of God in their lives. Flavel emphasizes that engagement with God's providence is more than a superficial acknowledgment; it requires deep, meaningful reflection.

To effectively meditate on God's providence, Flavel outlines critical directions:

1. Thorough Recognition of Providence: It is crucial to acknowledge God's providential acts both extensively and intensely. Believers should look back over their lives, recalling instances of divine mercy and care, similar to Asaph's approach in Psalms. This historical recount leads to a fuller understanding of how God's hand has participated in their journeys, enhancing their appreciation of His faithfulness.

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Chapter 10 Summary: Unknown Text

In Chapter 10 of "The Mystery of Providence" by John Flavel, the author emphasizes the critical importance of reflecting on God's providence as a means of deepening one's relationship with Him and encouraging spiritual growth. Flavel presents several compelling motives for why believers should engage consistently in observing God's workings throughout their lives.

1. The first motive posits that daily reflection on providence fosters sweet and sensible communion with God. This communion is essential for spiritual vitality, allowing believers to find joy and refreshment in God's deeds, much as they would from His words. Flavel illustrates that God reveals Himself through providential acts, which can lead to a heart softened in humility, as seen in examples like David and Jacob, who recognized their unworthiness compared to God's abundant mercy.

2. Secondly, the observation of providence lends itself to the enjoyment and delight in the Christian life. Flavel argues that understanding the harmony of divine attributes in providence offers practical encouragement amid life's difficulties. The careful consideration of how God orchestrates events allows believers to affirm the connection between their prayers and God's responses, often manifesting as blessings that emerge from situations that initially seemed adverse.



3. Flavel further emphasizes that a keen awareness of providence helps combat natural distrust in God—often stemming from the apparent prosperity of the wicked. By observing how God ultimately fulfills justice, believers strengthen their confidence in His righteous governance of both their lives and the world at large.
4. The fourth motive underscores that recognizing God's providential acts bolsters faith, particularly in challenging times. Flavel illustrates how recalling former experiences of God's guiding hand serves as a reservoir of strength during present trials, equipping believers to face uncertainty with assurance.
5. Another significant theme is that reflecting on God's providential dealings cultivates continual reasons for gratitude and praise. Flavel teaches that proper acknowledgment of God's mercies encourages a heart full of thankfulness, prompting a life dedicated to glorifying Him.
6. The sixth motive presents that observing providence enhances one's appreciation for Jesus Christ, as it makes evident His role in redemption and the sanctification of all blessings. Believers are reminded that all mercies stem from Christ's sacrificial love, reinforcing their bond to Him.
7. Flavel stresses the emotional impact of reflecting on providence, suggesting that such meditation will naturally lead to a tender heart before



God. By considering previous mercies and grace, individuals are encouraged to repent and seek renewed closeness with their Creator.

8. The eighth motive highlights that observing God's providence brings inner tranquility amidst life's uncertainties. By trusting in God's sovereignty, believers can find rest, free from the burdens of anxiety over past disappointments or fears of future troubles.

9. The penultimate motive asserts that reflection on God's providential works promotes holiness in individuals. Such observations reveal God's righteousness and call believers toward greater integrity and sanctification by illuminating the consequences of sin and the beauty of a holy life.

10. Finally, Flavel notes that the study of providence is particularly valuable at the time of death. Reminiscing about God's faithfulness throughout their lives serves to sweeten the believer's last moments, allowing them to conclude their earthly journey with gratitude and assurance of God's eternal promises.

Overall, Flavel implores believers to cultivate a habit of observing and recording God's providences, predicting that such attentiveness will yield a life rich in mercy and divine engagement, cultivating joy, holiness, and peace along the way.



Chapter 11 Summary: Unknown Text

In Chapter 11 of "The Mystery of Providence" by John Flavel, the author explores the practical implications of God's providence for believers, emphasizing a deep recognition of divine involvement in both joys and trials. The conversation pivots around several corollaries that elucidate the believer's response to God's providential care.

First, believers are reminded to acknowledge God's hand in all experiences, whether joyful or sorrowful. This recognition not only enhances gratitude for God's blessings but also fosters awareness during afflictions. The biblical example of Israel, who failed to recognize God's gifts, underscores the importance of perceiving divine involvement in daily circumstances. Believers are urged to cultivate awareness of God's sovereignty, asserting that both their comforts and challenges stem from His divine ordaining.

Second, Flavel underscores the immense love and condescension of God towards humanity. He highlights the persistent oversight God maintains over His people, essentially safeguarding them from potential harm. Without this divine vigilance, believers face vulnerabilities that could lead to ruin. Hence, God's unrelenting attention reflects His deep love and commitment to their well-being.

Third, there is an exhortation that, in light of God's ongoing providence,

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believers bear a reciprocal obligation to serve Him. Flavel challenges readers to be active participants in their faith, reflecting on the profound relationship they share with God. Just as God consistently works for their good, so too should they engage in good works, fostering a spirit of thankfulness and a willingness to contribute positively in service to God.

Fourth, a reassurance is presented about the necessity of trust in God amidst adversity. Recognizing past instances of God's faithfulness should bolster the believer's confidence in His ongoing provision. Flavel emphasizes that doubts often stem from human failings rather than a lack of divine capability. Believers are encouraged not to succumb to distrust but instead to rest in the knowledge that God's historical acts of care provide the foundation for future trust.

Fifth, Flavel highlights the importance of prayer as a means to seek and acknowledge God's hand in all matters. He posits that prayer engages divine providence and aligns human desires with God's will. Relying solely on personal efforts without prayer diminishes the effectiveness of one's endeavors. Prayer is portrayed as a critical instrument that enlists God's power in personal and communal pursuits.

Lastly, believers are reminded of their ultimate interest in pleasing God, the source of all providence. Flavel suggests that fostering a close relationship with God can offer solace amidst life's turmoils. Serious contemplation of



one's character and the pressures of sin becomes essential; it is through steadfastness and integrity that believers can navigate adversity without succumbing to despair. Encouraging a focus on divine favor rather than worldly troubles, he suggests that a heart aligned with God can diminish the weight of earthly trials.

In summary, Flavel's insights culminate in a comprehensive view of divine providence and the believer's responsibilities, presenting a philosophy grounded in acknowledgment, service, trust, prayer, and the pursuit of righteousness, all aimed at a fulfilling relationship with God that sustains believers through every circumstance of life.

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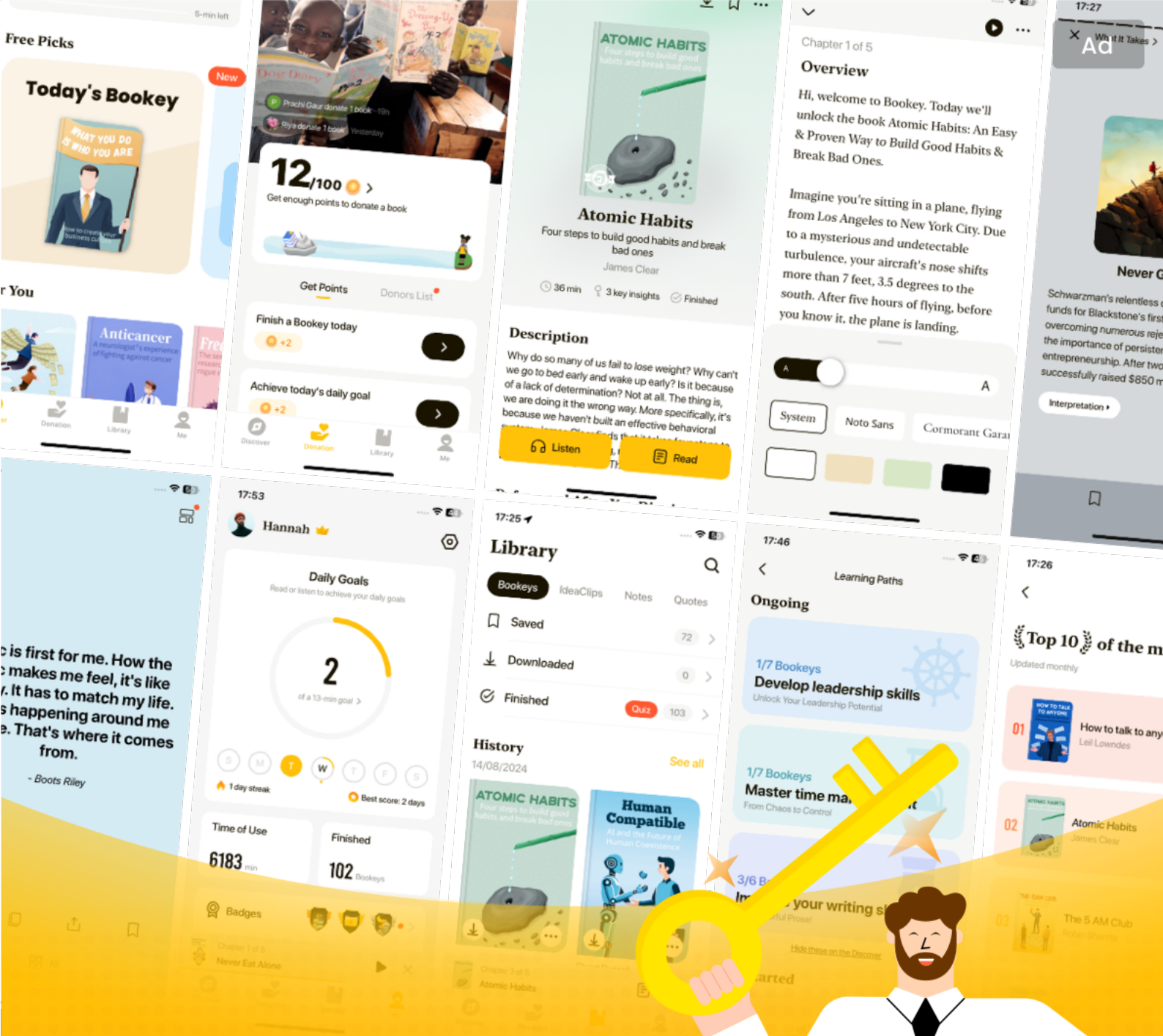
Chapter 12: Unknown Text

In Chapter 12 of "The Mystery of Providence," John Flavel delves into practical applications of understanding God's providence through various challenging scenarios faced by Christians. The chapter outlines several key cases to guide believers in discerning God's will and finding strength during periods of uncertainty and adversity.

1. A Christian's Discovery of God's Will: Flavel begins by addressing the struggle to discern God's will amid unclear providences. He distinguishes between God's secret will, known only to Him, and His revealed will, accessible through Scripture and natural occurrences. The revealed will serves as the guiding principle for believers, emphasizing that God's intentions may be more evident in matters of significant moral importance outlined in His Word. The author stresses the importance of studying Scripture carefully, praying for guidance, and reflecting on personal conscience while rejecting any providence that contradicts biblical commandments. He emphasizes the necessity of firmly relying on God's Word and avoiding presumptuous interpretations of providential events,

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Chapter 13 Summary: Unknown Text

In Chapter 13 of "The Mystery of Providence" by John Flavel, the author emphasizes the significance of journaling as a means to remember and reflect on God's providential workings in our lives. He asserts that maintaining written records of personal experiences with divine providence can serve as an invaluable resource, both for individuals and for the larger Christian community. Flavel highlights several key principles regarding this practice of journaling.

1. Observing and recording providence is imperative for Christians. Flavel encourages believers to diligently note their encounters with God's providential care. He draws a comparison to the development of the art of medicine, which was perfected through shared observations. In the same vein, personal experiences should not only be cherished but also communicated for the benefit of others.
2. Journaling helps safeguard against forgetfulness. Flavel warns that even significant experiences can fade from memory if not recorded. He cites Dr. Harris's saying that he never relied solely on his memory. By writing down experiences, individuals can ensure they don't lose these treasures after their time and can provide lasting encouragement to others.
3. Continuous reflection is crucial. Simply writing down experiences isn't



sufficient; believers are encouraged to revisit their journals regularly, especially when faced with new fears or challenges. By reflecting on past divine interventions, individuals can draw strength and reassurance during trying times, recognizing that they have faced hardships before and emerged strengthened.

4. Evaluating past crises in light of present challenges is essential. Flavel acknowledges that immediate circumstances can overshadow recollections of previous trials and mercies. He urges Christians to maintain an appreciation for God's past faithfulness, ensuring that they do not underestimate the significance of earlier providences in the face of current struggles.

Overall, Flavel advocates for the practice of journaling as a means of cultivating awareness of God's actions in believers' lives, drawing attention to the treasure trove of encouragement that such records can provide, not only for the writer but for the broader Christian community as well. By engaging in this practice, Christians can fortify their faith, combat doubt, and recognize the intricate workings of divine providence in their journeys.

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