

# God's Providence: The English Colonies

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Idea of God's providence permeated throughout the thoughts and writings of the leaders of the early English colonists to America. Contemporaries take for granted the religiosity of the New England colonists, but for the Chesapeake Bay, especially around Jamestown, God's providence gave explanations for why certain things happened the way that they did and acknowledged the presence of God everywhere that they went. The settlers of the Chesapeake Bay area were discoverers, adventurers, (primarily) men who sought wealth, riches, and authority in a land untouched; a "land as God made it" while those who chose to lead [New England](#) came for very different reasons and saw themselves as the chosen, the ones tasked with carrying onward and outward, to escape persecution and conduct their lives and religion the way that they wanted to. Out of these differences, there developed two separate, but connected, understandings of and uses for God's providence.

For the New England colonies, faith and the concept of "God's Providence" was more than a simple English pleasantry or a casual afterthought in conversation. Unlike their Chesapeake Bay forbearers, the leaders of the New England colonies, on whose accounts we base much of our information of the early founding, and the decisions that they made were shaped by their understanding of God's role in their lives and their role in his plan.

Whereas for the Jamestown colonists, which will be looked at later, it appears that “God’s Providence” was referred to in a way not unlike the phrase “thank God” is used today, as in, when something good happens or a risky endeavor goes surprisingly well. For the leaders and predominant founders of the New England colonies, however, “God’s Providence” was an ...

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