

DIVINE PROVIDENCE AS GOD’S UNIVERSAL AND UNCONTESTED DOMINION

DANIEL 4:34-35

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I. INTRODUCTION:

Divine Providence and our Culture of Presumed Human Autonomy

II. DEFINITION:

Divine providence flows directly out of the doctrine of divine creatio ex nihilo (i.e., creation out of nothing) and may be defined as follows:

God continually oversees and directs all things pertaining to the created order in such a way that 1) He preserves in existence and provides for the creation He has brought into being (see Neh 9:6; Matt 6:25-34; Acts 2:25; Col 1:16-17; and Heb 1:2-3; Jas 1:17), and 2) He governs and reigns supremely over the entirety of the created order in order to fulfill all of His intended purposes in it and through it (see Deut 32:39; Psa 135:5-7; Prov 21:1; Isa 45:5-7; Dan 2:21; 4:34-37; Eph 1:11) — From Ware, *God’s Greater Glory*, pp. 17-18.

III. GOD’S UNIVERSAL DOMINION OVER HUMAN AFFAIRS DEMONSTRATED (Daniel 4:1-37)

A. BACKGROUND TO NEBUCHADNEZZAR’S RISE AND FALL

Key teaching: “. . . the Most High is ruler over the realm of mankind and bestows it on whomever He wishes” (4:17, 25, and 32)

B. ASPECTS OF GOD'S PROVIDENTIAL DOMINION

1. EVERLASTING DOMINION

"His dominion is an everlasting dominion" (4:34)

Cf. Ps 93 (esp. v. 2)

2. UNCONTESTED DOMINION

"All the inhabitants of the earth are accounted as nothing" (4:35a)

Cf. Isa 40:15-17 (esp. v. 17)

3. UNIVERSAL DOMINION

"the host of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth" (4:35b)

Cf. Ps 135:5-12 (esp. vv. 5-7)

4. VICTORIOUS DOMINION

"no one can ward off His hand" (4:35c)

Cf. Deut 32:39; Job 42:1-2 (w/ also v. 11)

5. RIGHTEOUS DOMINION

"no one can say to Him, 'What have You done?'" (4:35d)

Cf. Rom 9:10-21 (esp. v. 14)

IV. CONCLUSION:

The Twin Biblical Themes of God's Universal Dominion and Human Moral Responsibility Must be Held Together