

WEDNESDAY EVENING (December 18th) • Prayer & Providence

Providence in the Moral Realm: The Heathen Nations

God chose Abraham and his descendants through whom he would bring the “seed of the woman” into the world, and controlled the direction of that people to achieve his purpose. Another aspect of God’s providence in the moral realm which must be considered is his control and use of the heathen nations who continually strove to destroy the Jewish people and to overthrow Jehovah-worship. Unless God could control these in working out his purpose, the heathen nations would succeed in destroying the chosen people. God’s use, judgment, and destruction of them when they had served his purpose is a vital factor in the study of providence.

God’s Universal Rule

- Acts 17:26-31 – Paul: “He made from one man every nation of mankind.”
- Psalm 22:28 – David: “For kingship belongs to the LORD, and he rules over the nations.”
- Jeremiah 10:6-7 – “Who would not fear you, O King of the nations?”
- Proverbs 14:34 – Solomon: “Righteousness exalts a nation.”
- Proverbs 16:12 – “The throne is established by righteousness.”
- Psalm 9:17 – David: “The wicked shall return to Sheol, all the nations that forget God.”
- Jeremiah 27:5-7 – “Now I have given all these lands into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar...”
- Daniel 2:36-37; 4:17 – “O king, the king of kings, to whom the God of heaven has given...”

From the beginning of the development of Abraham’s descendants into a nation, and the disciplining of them in their later years, Jehovah exercised control over the heathen powers. He raised them up, used them, and then destroyed them.

God’s Mighty Hand of Judgment

- Romans 1:18-32 – “The wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness.”
- 2 Peter 3:8-9 – “Not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance.”
- Genesis 15:12-16 – “For the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet complete.”
- Exodus 3:7-10,16-22 – “I know that the king of Egypt will not let you go unless compelled.” In the contest between Moses and Pharaoh, it is said nine times that Jehovah hardened Pharaoh’s heart, and nine times that Pharaoh hardened his heart against the LORD.
- Deuteronomy 28:49-50 – “Because you did not obey the voice of the LORD your God.” This promise was fulfilled by the Assyrians, the Babylonians, and the Romans.
- Ezekiel 32:7,11-12,18,22-23,24,26,29,30,31-32 – “When I blot you out.”
- Daniel 2:31-45 – “The God of heaven will set up a kingdom that shall never be destroyed.”

This use and destruction of the nations is determined by Jehovah; it is the exercise of his providential control over them, determined by their moral character, pride, and cruelty. When Gentiles humbled themselves before him (Melchizedek, Jethro, the mixed multitude of the Egyptians, Rahab, Balaam, Ruth, the widow of Zarephath, Nineveh), God was for them.