

Giving God His Due - Sovereignty
or
They Just Think They Are in Charge
Daniel 4:34–37

34 And at the end of the time I, Nebuchadnezzar, lifted my eyes to heaven, and my understanding returned to me; and I blessed the Most High and praised and honored Him who lives forever:

For His dominion is an everlasting dominion,
And His kingdom is from generation to generation.

35 All the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing;
He does according to His will in the army of heaven
And among the inhabitants of the earth.

No one can restrain His hand
Or say to Him, “What have You done?”

36 At the same time my reason returned to me, and for the glory of my kingdom, my honor and splendor returned to me. My counselors and nobles resorted to me, I was restored to my kingdom, and excellent majesty was added to me. 37 Now I, Nebuchadnezzar, praise and extol and honor the King of heaven, all of whose works are truth, and His ways justice. And those who walk in pride He is able to put down.

Nebuchadnezzar had a problem in this chapter. His problem was his pride. Remember he was the golden head of the image in his dream of chapter 1 and it went to his head.

We saw in chapter 3 that he builds great statue to represent himself and his kingdom. What pride does to us. But when God demonstrates through the incident of the fiery furnace that God could cancel even the king’s commands, he learns.

But the lessons he learns do not stick and they must be taught again.

His false idea was that he was so great that none was greater. And when it came to men, that might have been true, but he was not greater than God.

So he was lifted up with pride. Even though he had been warned in a dream by God of the consequences of his pride. Daniel 4:25 (NKJV) They shall drive you from men, your dwelling shall be with the beasts of the field, and they shall make you eat grass like oxen. They shall wet you with the dew of heaven, and seven times shall pass over you, till you know that the Most High rules in the kingdom of men, and gives it to whomever He chooses. So we come to chapter 4, a personal testimony by Nebuchadnezzar.

One day he was in his palace. He said, “–31 Is not this great Babylon, that I have built for a royal dwelling by my mighty power and for the honor of my majesty?” Da 4:30

Da 4:31 While the word was still in the king’s mouth, a voice fell from heaven: “King Nebuchadnezzar, to you it is spoken: the kingdom has departed from you!

Pride and the desire to take control was Satan's fall.

Isaiah 14:12-15 (NKJV) 12 "How you are fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! How you are cut down to the ground, You who weakened the nations! 13 For you have said in your heart: 'I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God; I will also sit on the mount of the congregation On the farthest sides of the north; 14 I will ascend above the heights of the clouds, I will be like the Most High.' 15 Yet you shall be brought down to Sheol, To the lowest depths of the Pit.

I. The Bible consistently testifies of God's Sovereign position.

- A. Daniel 2:21 (NKJV) 21 And He changes the times and the seasons; He removes kings and raises up kings; He gives wisdom to the wise And knowledge to those who have understanding.
- B. Jeremiah 32:17 (NKJV) 17 'Ah, Lord GOD! Behold, You have made the heavens and the earth by Your great power and outstretched arm. There is nothing too hard for You.
- C. Jeremiah 18:6 (NKJV) 6 "O house of Israel, can I not do with you as this potter?" says the LORD. "Look, as the clay is in the potter's hand, so are you in My hand, O house of Israel!
- D. Jeremiah 27:5 'I have made the earth, the man and the beast that are on the ground, by My great power and by My outstretched arm, and have given it to whom it seemed proper to Me.
- E. Psalm 115:3 (NKJV) 3 But our God is in heaven; He does whatever He pleases.
- F. Ephesians 1:11 (NKJV) 11 In Him also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestined according to the purpose of Him who works all things according to the counsel of His will,

II. God establishes the nations according to His will

- A. Ac 17:23–27 Therefore, the One whom you worship without knowing, Him I proclaim to you: 24 God, who made the world and everything in it, since He is Lord of heaven and earth, does not dwell in temples made with hands. 25 Nor is He worshiped with men's hands, as though He needed anything, since He gives to all life, breath, and all things. 26 And He has made from one blood every nation of men to dwell on all the face of the earth, and has determined their preappointed times and the boundaries of their dwellings, 27 so that they should seek the Lord, in the hope that they might grope for Him and find Him, though He is not far from each one of us;
 - 1. Acts 12:23 (NKJV) 23 Then immediately an angel of the Lord struck him, because he did not give glory to God. And he was eaten by worms and died.

2. Revelation 13:5–7 (NKJV) 5 And he was given a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies, and he was given authority to continue for forty-two months. 6 Then he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme His name, His tabernacle, and those who dwell in heaven. 7 It was granted to him to make war with the saints and to overcome them. And authority was given him over every tribe, tongue, and nation.

B. God reserves the right to affect the lives of all.

1. Exodus 4:21 (NKJV) 21 And the LORD said to Moses, "When you go back to Egypt, see that you do all those wonders before Pharaoh which I have put in your hand. But I will harden his heart, so that he will not let the people go.
2. 1 Samuel 2:25 (NKJV) 25 If one man sins against another, God will judge him. But if a man sins against the LORD, who will intercede for him?" Nevertheless they did not heed the voice of their father, because the LORD desired to kill them.
3. 1 Kings 22:20-23 (NKJV) 20 And the LORD said, 'Who will persuade Ahab to go up, that he may fall at Ramoth Gilead?' So one spoke in this manner, and another spoke in that manner. 21 Then a spirit came forward and stood before the LORD, and said, 'I will persuade him.' 22 The LORD said to him, 'In what way?' So he said, 'I will go out and be a lying spirit in the mouth of all his prophets.' And the LORD said, 'You shall persuade him, and also prevail. Go out and do so.' 23 Therefore look! The LORD has put a lying spirit in the mouth of all these prophets of yours, and the LORD has declared disaster against you."
4. Job 1:12 (NKJV) 12 And the LORD said to Satan, "Behold, all that he has is in your power; only do not lay a hand on his person." So Satan went out from the presence of the LORD.
5. Acts 4:27-28 (NKJV) 27 "For truly against Your holy Servant Jesus, whom You anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles and the people of Israel, were gathered together 28 to do whatever Your hand and Your purpose determined before to be done.

III. Man hates the idea of God's sovereignty and rebels against it most violently.

- A. I have heard of preachers getting in the pulpit and claim that they can control God or that they can hinder God.
 1. Their idea is that somehow God is dependent up us.
 2. Now it is true that God has chosen you and me to accomplish much of His work in this world.
 3. But to say that we hinder God is blasphemy.

4. All of that kind of talk goes directly against what Nebuchadnezzar discovered when God sent him to school for his Dr. Degree in theology.
- B. There are many in so called Christianity today who claim that we are the ones with the power and that God is powerless without us.
1. God cannot do anything in the earth without a human's permission.
 2. God lost His authority in this world by delegating it to Adam and the human race. As a result, the Holy Spirit was powerless to bring Jesus into physical existence; He was forced to wait until willing human participants made the incarnation possible by speaking the right faith-words.
 3. "The reason it took four thousand years for Jesus to come on the scene is because it took four thousand years for God to find enough people who would yield to Him, who would speak, and who would deliver the words-to create this physical body of the Lord Jesus. . . . The Holy Spirit took these words and impregnated Mary."
 4. Taken from *Strange Fire* by John MacArthur
- IV. There is great comfort to be taken from this doctrine.
- A. There is no one who will ever overpower God or hinder him.
1. Joni struggled with this after her diving accident.
 - a. She could not understand how God could allow this to happen.
 - b. How could Satan over power God and bring such a tragedy into her young life.
 - c. She finally came to the conclusion that God was not asleep that day.
 - d. But that in His sovereign wisdom and love He had allowed this to accomplish much good.
- B. God is holy and just and therefore all that He does is good.
1. We may not understand all that takes place in our lives but God does.
 2. God loves us so much He sent His Son to die for us, in our place.
 3. If He did that, can He then do something to us evil or wicked? No!!
- C. We can come to Him in faith knowing that He does not change.
- D. We can come to Him knowing that His desire for us is only for our good.
- E. We can fully but our trust in the One who loves and works all things according to the council of His own will.