



The Good News

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Lessons from Nebuchadnezzar

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In seeking to do the will of God, we often take lessons and applications from the writings of men such as Paul, Peter, Moses, or John. We read the words of Jesus and seek to glean the spiritual truths that have been written for our benefit. In addition, we also have examples given to us of what not to do, as in the cases of Ananias and Sapphira, the scribes and Pharisees, Judas, and Demas. However, how often are we given the opportunity to learn spiritual lessons from individuals that were not inspired by the Holy Spirit or were not even godly individuals? We have this opportunity in the case of King Nebuchadnezzar in Daniel 4. We find that King Nebuchadnezzar had a dream, and this dream troubled him. He sought out Daniel to provide him with an interpretation. We find that Daniel tells King Nebuchadnezzar that God was going to teach Nebuchadnezzar several lessons in humility, saying in Dan. 4:25, 32, "...until you know that the Most High rules in the kingdom of men and gives it to whomever He chooses." We find that Nebuchadnezzar indeed does learn this lesson and therefore glorifies the Lord as being God over all. What lessons can we learn from this?

God continues to oversee the kingdom of men and is aware of all things – It is important to understand that, even during our times of political turmoil, God is still in control. Nothing happens in the kingdoms and politics of men that escapes His knowledge or that does not happen according to His will. In **Rom. 13:1-7** Paul encourages the saints in Rome to be subject to the governing authorities. He goes on to tell them that God has appointed and established the concept of authority and that it is intended to protect that which is good. Obviously, this does not always happen as many authorities throughout history have persecuted Christians, but it does not change the fact that God has instituted

governing authorities to be guardians of righteousness. Paul, therefore, continues to encourage the saints to pay their taxes and to render honor and fear to whom it is due.

God continues to give the kingdom of men to whomever He chooses – This is not to be interpreted that God specifically appoints presidents, prime ministers, or dictators. Rather, the understanding is that God has appointed the position of authority to man and He uses those in power to do as He wills. In **Proverbs 21:1**, Solomon says "*The king's heart is in the hand of the Lord, like the rivers of water; He turns it wherever He pleases.*" God will use those in power to bring about His will.

As mentioned before, there have been authorities that have persecuted Christians. However, God has allowed this to take place to test and strengthen the faith of those who claim to follow His Son. In fact, Paul encouraged the saints through Timothy to pray for those in power that "*we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and reverence.*" However, if our faith should be tested again, let us not say that God has forgotten us or that He is not aware. Let us endure the persecution, allowing it to test us, proving us to be true followers of Christ.