

Are We Submitting to the Rule of God?

(Go To Meeting)

Albert Jones—April 6, 2024

Once again, welcome to another Sabbath morning message. It's great to be here to present to you this topic this morning. Thankful to God for His blessing in bringing us through the week to another Sabbath Day.

Dan. 2:37—This is where God had raised up a king on the earth for a specific purpose, even referring to him as His 'servant to do His will.' As we all know that as human beings, we officiate and can effect very little. The entirety of the universe as it exists is within God's preview. He orchestrates things according to His will for the purpose of getting a message across to His most important creation: *mankind!*

This will come into view a little closer as we go on through. In trying to interpret a dream that the king had here

Daniel 2:37^[transcriber's correction] "You, O king, *are* a king of kings, for the God of heaven has given you a kingdom, power, and strength, and glory."

You can imagine any kingdom in the history of mankind, some of the greatest ones, of course, represented by the statue and the vision there in Daniel, that God is orchestrating purpose in it. We sometimes think that the world is thrown out of kilter.

God gives us choice. Mankind has to make choices, and mankind is subject to the consequences of those choices. ***But God is not hindered, hampered, or restrained from His purpose, ever!*** Mankind will not threaten God's plan, God's Plan will come into being.

So, God has given this individual this kingdom, and He is the strength that sustains it.

Daniel 4:9: "O Belteshazzar, master of the magicians, because I know that the spirit of the holy gods *is* in you..."

This is Daniel interpreting these dreams, these visions, God is inspiring him to understand, and again, God is working a purpose here. They've seen God working in his life, they've seen God's power and miracles and special understanding given to him. They know something is uniquely happening here. Again, God is uniquely working in this particular kingdom for a purpose. If you look at the greatness that this kingdom had.

Verse 9: "O Belteshazzar, master of the magicians, because I know that the spirit of the holy gods *is* in you, and no secret causes you trouble, tell

me the visions of my dream that I have seen and its meaning. Thus were the visions of my head upon my bed: I saw, and behold a tree in the midst of the earth, and its height *was* great" (vs 9-10).

Imagine, brethren, if you are familiar with the great Sequoia trees of California. This tree represents the magnificence of this individual's kingdom as it were given by God at that time.

Verse 11: "The tree grew and was strong, and its height reached unto heaven; the sight of it reached to the end of all the earth."

A great magnificent thriving tree that God had raised up; this symbolizing God raising up this kingdom for the purpose.

Verse 12^[transcriber's correction]: "Its leaves *were* beautiful, and its fruit plentiful, and in it *was* food for all. The animals of the field sought shade under it, and the birds of the heavens lived in its boughs, and all flesh was fed by it.... [great influence throughout the world] ...I saw in the visions of my head upon my bed, and behold, a watcher and a Holy one came down from heaven. He cried aloud and said this, "Cut down the tree, and cut off its branches; shake off its leaves and scatter its fruit. Let the animals get away from under it, and the birds from its branches"" (vs 12-14).

Something is about to change here and there's a purpose for that; there's a reason for that. God works in our lives, He raises up these leaders, but then they have choices that they must make, *and the consequences of those choices then are what they are!*

Verse 15: "Nevertheless, leave the stump of its roots..."

So, now all of a sudden—you got this wonderful tree providing influence across the entire world—you go from that to a stump because God has cut it.

Verse 15: "Nevertheless, leave the stump of its roots in the earth, even with a band of iron and bronze, in the tender grass of the field. And let it be wet with the dew of heaven, and let his portion *be* with the animals in the grass of the earth. Let his heart be changed from a man's and a beast's heart be given to him. And let seven times pass over him. This matter is by the decree of the watchers, and the demand by the word of the Holy ones, so that the living may know..." (vs 15-17)—*that the living of all of mankind may comprehend!*

As we're reading this example in the Bible today preserved for us to comprehend a very great thing. If you look at the prophecy that comes out of Daniel, it reaches on into the Millennium; it reaches on into eternity, because God is showing mankind something through a great king, as long as that individual understood where it was coming from and had proper relationship. But there is a message here for mankind even more so than we think.

"...so that the living may know that the Most High rules in the kingdom of men, and gives it to whomever He will, and sets up over it the basest of men. This dream, I, King Nebuchadnezzar, have seen. Now you, O Belteshazzar, declare the interpretation because all the wise men of my kingdom are not able to make the meaning known to me. But you are able, for the spirit of the Holy gods is in you" (vs 17-18).

Not a converted king, but an instrument of God for sure. God gave him a glimpse, and when God is done with Nebuchadnezzar he will begin to comprehend his limitations and the power of God.

I think this is the whole message as a part of so many other messages in the book of Daniel, but this is a very prime example. When I first came into the Church, I had an opportunity to spend some time with a long-time member of God's Church. With me just coming into the Church, just starting to attend, who was baptized that summer.

Studying the Bible was a little different in my head, but in spending time with this Church member, I would go to his home on Friday evening, spend the night, keep the Sabbath and come back to my job, we had a chance to have Bible study. We did extensive studies in Daniel. Nebuchadnezzar the king all of a sudden became a real individual and not just a story in the Bible.

So, in reading about him and just his characteristics, his perks and everything made a big difference. When we read these Scriptures, let's read them with some clarity and some understanding that these were real figures in the history of mankind and God left an example—that He's dealing with them—for us to learn from.

*Daniel is speaking*_[transcriber's correction], v 20: "The tree that you saw, which became great and strong, whose height reached to the heaven, and the sight of it to all the earth, Whose leaves were fair, and its fruit plentiful, and in it was food for all, under which the animals of the field dwelt, and upon whose branches the birds of the heavens had their home. It is you, O king, for you have become great and strong, for your greatness has grown and reached unto heaven, and your dominion to the end of the earth. And as the king saw a watcher and a

Holy one coming down from heaven, and saying, 'Cut the tree down and destroy it; yet leave the stump of the roots of it in the earth, even with a band of iron and bronze, in the tender grass of the field; and let it be wet with the dew of heaven, and let his portion be with the animals of the field until seven times pass over him.' This is the interpretation..." (vs 20-24).

We know the story, that God raised up Nebuchadnezzar as a great king for His purpose. The children of Israel received somewhat of a disciplinary act from God through him. But God is also setting up an example here that goes across into even the book of Revelation in terms of understanding of affairs in the realm of mankind upon the earth.

We learn a lot from the prophecies associated with the imagery from these dreams that point into all the way until the return of Christ. With the stone from heaven striking the foot of the statue, of course, and other parts of Dan. 9 and so forth.

The point here is very clear that ***God is in charge of the affairs upon the earth!*** We are the created things in His hand. God can raise up, but He can cut down.

Daniel spoke again to King Nebuchadnezzar's son in a different period here.

Daniel 5:9: "Then King Belshazzar was greatly afraid, and his countenance changed in him, and his lords were perplexed. The queen came into the banquet house because of the king's words, and his nobles. And the queen spoke and said, 'O king, live forever. Do not let your thoughts trouble you, nor let your countenance be changed'" (vs 9-10).

Daniel is going to be asked once again, v 11: "There is a man in your kingdom in whom is the spirit of the Holy gods. And in the days of your father there was found in him light and understanding and wisdom like the wisdom of the gods...."

Again, their limited understanding here still not comprehending that there is only ***one God, one power, one might!*** They are still referencing things that they do not understand.

"...And the King Nebuchadnezzar, your father the king, I say, your father appointed him master of the magicians, enchanters, Chaldeans, and astrologers, because a surpassing spirit, and knowledge and understanding, interpreting of dreams, and revealing of hard riddles, and the solving of difficult problems, **were found in this Daniel, whom the king named Belteshazzar. Now let Daniel be called, and he will reveal the interpretation**" (vs 11-12).

Verse 17: “Then Daniel answered and said before the king, ‘Let your gifts be to yourself, and give your rewards to another. Yet, I will read the writing to the king and make the interpretation known to him. O king, the Most High God gave Nebuchadnezzar your father a kingdom, and greatness and glory and majesty. And for the greatness that He gave him, all people, nations, and languages trembled and feared before him.... [God raised him up and placed him in this mighty position] ...He slew whom he would, and whom he would he kept alive. And whom he would, he raised up; and whom he would, he put down. But when his heart was lifted up... [talking about Nebuchadnezzar not recognizing that his strength came from God] ...and his spirit became so proud that he behaved arrogantly, he was put down from his royal throne, and his glory was taken from him” (vs 17-20).

Again, brethren, **God rules in the realm of men!** So, all things that are orchestrated upon this earth, God allows choice and the consequences of those choices are what they are.

Now there are many studies that we can do along that line, but think of this, from this great and awesome king *to nothing!* From a great king symbolized by the largest Sequoia tree that you can imagine *to a stump!* This is how quickly God can take away from you what you think you have given to yourself. **We are to give honor to God at all times!**

Job 12:11: “Does not the ear try words? And does not the mouth taste its food? With the ancient *is* wisdom, and understanding in length of days. With Him *is* wisdom and strength; He has counsel and understanding. Behold, if He tears down, no one can rebuild; if He shuts in a man, no one can open. Behold, He withholds the waters, and they dry up; also He sends them out, and they inundate the earth. With Him *is* strength and sound wisdom; the deceived and the deceiver *are* His. He leads counselors away stripped, and makes the judges fools. He loosens the bonds of kings, and binds their loins with a girdle. He leads princes away stripped, and overthrows the mighty. He silences the lips of trusted ones, and takes away the understanding of the elders. He pours contempt upon princes, and unties the belt of the mighty. He uncovers deep things out of darkness, and brings the shadow of death to light. He gives greatness to the nations, and destroys them. He enlarges the nations, and leads them away. He takes away the heart of the chief of the people of the earth, and causes them to wander in a wilderness *where there is* no path. They grope in the dark without light, and He makes them to stagger like a drunken man” (11-25).

Once again, understanding Who God is and Who we are. The prophet Isaiah has something to say here with the example of Hezekiah’s prayer. Let’s think of this great king as it were, raised up by God for the purpose in providing leadership and rulership in Israel.

Isaiah 37:15: “And Hezekiah prayed to the LORD, saying, ‘O LORD of hosts, God of Israel, who dwells *between* the cherubim, You *are* God, You alone of all the kingdoms of the earth. You have made the heavens and the earth. Bow down Your ear, O LORD, and hear...”

This is a realization for us where we’re asking God to hear our prayer, to be attentive to our needs. We recognize Him as the One and Only True Source of life and everything that’s good. We pray to Him.

Here Hezekiah is petitioning God, v 17: “Bow down Your ear, O LORD, and hear; open Your eyes, O LORD, and see; and hear all the words of Sennacherib which he has sent to mock the living God.... [this is where he was taunting Israel] “Truly, O LORD, the kings of Assyria have laid waste all the countries and their lands” (vs 17-18).

They had a reputation, another force on the scene: *Babylon, Assyria!*

Verse 19: “And have cast their gods into the fire...”

What do you expect? *Their gods were not God!* Hezekiah is praying to the one and only true God. But he’s making this comparison in his prayer.

“...for they *were* no gods, but the work of men’s hands, wood and stone; so they have destroyed them. And now, O LORD our God, save us from his hand, so that all the kingdoms of the earth may know that You *are* the LORD, You alone” (vs 19-20).

You can read the rest of the story, but the point here again is very clear: God—the only God, the true God—rules in the kingdom of men.

So, brethren, we look at Nebuchadnezzar, and we comprehend this Truth:

- God is above all
- God is above everything
 - we exist in His realm
 - we didn’t create Him and ours
 - we were brought to life

All things that exist were created by God, for God! This is a Truth that we have to truly comprehend about things.

God tells us every single day, 1-Timothy 6:12: “Fight the good fight of the faith! Take hold of eternal life...”—as God has revealed to us so that we have it and we’re walking in it!

- we were called to hope in Christ
- we were called to a resurrection of life

Our hope is not in this physical existence!

When we look around us and we see all this happening in the world, we perceive that the world is coming apart somehow. ***God hasn’t lost control of His purpose!*** He told the children of Israel and coming out of Egypt at the Red Sea to ***stand still***—‘these are My words: stop fretting, stop worrying’—God said. See that power performed for them.

God fought for them and God tells us; v 12: “Fight the good fight...” *That isn’t you and I beating after the wind!*

We’re not going to have any effect on anything, but the fight that you and I are in, ***we are in it together with God the Father and Jesus Christ working in our lives!*** God has given us those examples throughout history for the purpose of understanding.

- it isn’t the mind of a man
- it isn’t the mind of an army
- it isn’t savvy
- it isn’t well-spokenness
- it isn’t riches or gain

It is faith in the living God!

- the One God
- the Only God
- the True God
- the One Whom we worship

In this generation, as they have worshiped God, the true believers

- whom God has called
- whom God has given His Spirit to
- who died in that faith
- who have trusted Him throughout the ages of time

Verse 12: “Fight the good fight of the faith! Take hold of eternal life to which you were also called, and did profess a good profession in the presence of many witnesses.”

Yes, at your baptism, there was God the Father and Jesus Christ, and the brethren that were there maybe. But don’t forget all the angels that ‘shouted for joy’ when you were converted. They were there, as well. We did profess a good profession in the presence of many witnesses!

Paul says, v 13: “I charge you in the sight of God, Who gives life to every living thing, and Jesus Christ, Who in testifying before Pontius Pilate gave the exemplary profession of faith, that you keep this commandment without fault and without rebuke until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ” (vs 13-14).

Yes, He is coming back! This entire work of God will be fulfilled. We will be changed from this physical realm into the very spirit realm of God. If we are born into His Family, we’ll experience that.

Verse 15: “Which in His own times the blessed and only Sovereign will make known, the King of kings and Lord of lords;

Now, this is with a big ‘K’; not the little one that Nebuchadnezzar had. He was a physical king in a physical realm appointed by the mighty God. This is God Himself.

Verse 16 “Who alone has immortality, dwelling in light which no man can approach; Whom no man has seen, nor has the ability to see; to Whom belong eternal honor and power. Amen.” *So, we have that relationship!*

Revelation 17:1: “And one of the seven angels who had the seven vials came and spoke with me, saying to me, ‘Come here; I will show you the judgment of the great whore who sits upon many waters; with whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication...” (vs 1-2

This is the end of it all where God has brought it to a conclusion that mankind will recognize Who God is; for God now will intervene at a very personal way in the affairs of mankind. Very much so!

“...and those who dwell on the earth were made drunk with the wine of her fornication.’ Then he carried me away in the spirit to a wilderness; and I saw a woman sitting upon a scarlet beast that had seven heads and ten horns, full of names of blasphemy. And the woman was clothed in purple and scarlet, and was adorned with gold and pearls and precious stones; and she had a golden cup in her hand, filled with abominations and the filthiness of her fornication; and across her forehead a name was written...” (vs 2-5).

Here again, the masses from Daniel and Nebuchadnezzar and the kingdom of Babylon. Here’s the message here that that prophecy speaks to across time.

This woman upon this beast had this written on her forehead: “...MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF THE HARLOTS AND OF THE ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH” (v

5).

We're talking about a system that needs to be purged, cleansed and scraped. Not even the stump will be left when God is done, because this is the system that Satan will unleash on the world and God will have to rescue us from it. God will intervene, but He wants us to understand—as His created beings—that that system does not work. And mankind today doesn't seem to want to get that point.

Verse 6: "And I saw the woman drunk with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus. And after seeing her, I wondered with great amazement. Then the angel said to me, 'Why are you amazed? I will tell you the mystery of the woman, and of the beast that carries her, which has the seven heads and the ten horns. *The* beast that you saw was, and is not, but is about to come up out of the abyss and to go into perdition. And those who dwell on the earth, whose names are not written in the Book of Life from *the* foundation of *the* world, shall be astonished when they see the beast that was, but is not, and yet, is" (vs 6-8).

Without God's Truth, they will be amazed! They will fret, they will worry, but those who have God's Truth, those written in the Book of Life, ***we understand!***

I'm only giving a thumbnail sketch of this. This is a study that we would probably do after the days of Unleavened Bread on across the seven weeks into Pentecost. But the message here, as I said from the book of Daniel, reaches across all the way to the return of Christ.

Nebuchadnezzar was dealt with, he is no more; he's long decayed into dust. But this system that was represented there, this system that Satan influences, this Babylon is alive and well even today. ***God is calling us out of her!***

Revelation 18:4: "And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, 'Come out of her, My people...'" *These are God's people:*

- those of us who have faith in God
- those of us who are yielding to God
- those of us who are humble before Him

He tells us to come out of her.

- don't be a part of this system
- don't be embracing this world

There's not a single aspect of it that is worth embracing, quite honestly, ***because it's not from God!***

God is the key focus for us in everything that we do. We live in the world, we work in the

world, and we have interaction in the world. ***But we are not of this world!***

"... 'Come out of her, My people, so that you do not take part in her sins, and that you do not receive of her plagues, for her sins have reached as far as heaven, and God has remembered her iniquities'" (vs 4-5).

Punishment, wrath, vengeance is coming; but not exercised by you and me. We don't have the power or the inclination or authority to do it, ***but God does! In God, His rule will take care of it!***

God is calling us out of that. He wants us to fulfill His purpose in us. He made us in His image. God has told us it's time for us to come away from this foolish vanity that the world seems to be so wrapped up in. It is them today for mankind to seek after God!

Here's another opportunity for God to make a great contrast between what is in this world and what is true. He did that here in:

Acts 17—Paul stands in the center of Mars Hill surrounded by representatives, the great philosophers of the world, if you can imagine it. Here is this man whom they looked down at as being this ignorant, uneducated individual. Paul has had as much education as they did as far as the world is concerned, but they didn't view his education as having any merit, looking down upon him, not unlike he did upon the Jews that he persecuted.

But nonetheless, God has turned that thing around and Paul is in His hand for good.

Acts 17:21: "(Now, all *the* Athenians and the strangers sojourning *among them* spent their leisure in nothing other than to tell and to hear something new.) Then Paul stood in *the* center of Mars Hill *and* said, 'Men, Athenians, I perceive *that* in all things you are very reverent to deities; for *as* I was passing through and observing the objects of your veneration, I also found an altar on which was inscribed, "To an unknown God." So then, He Whom you worship in ignorance *is* the One *that* I proclaim to you. He *is* the God Who made the world and all things that *are* in it. Being *the* Lord of heaven and earth, He does not dwell in temples made by hands; nor is He served by the hands of men..." (vs 21-25).

- Do we understand that?
- What can we do for God other than
 - ✓ obey Him?
 - ✓ reach out to Him?
 - ✓ cry out to Him?
 - ✓ ask Him for help?

Are We Submitting to the Rule of God?
(Go To Meeting)

- What are you going to do to aid God in any significant way that you're going to add something to God? *He created all things!*

Verse 25: "Nor is He served by the hands of men, as *though* He needs anything, *for* He gives to all life and breath and all things." *You see the position now!*

- here we are in great need always
- here is God providing me always
- here are we physical
- here is He eternal
 - ✓ we are striving for Him
 - ✓ we desire to be a part of who He is

But so many in the world want to bring God *into their realm*, reshape him, make Him *like them*. This is not going to happen.

- God rules!
- Men obey!

Verse 26: "And He made of one blood all the nations of men to dwell upon all the face of the earth, having determined beforehand *their* appointed times and the boundaries of their dwelling."

So, you look around the globe—this is a very true thing that we need to comprehend—that every human being that has existed and every human being that exists today and will exist all begin with the one man in his life, Adam and Eve.

We are all material that God has shaped and formed and caused to come to be. So, there is nothing unique there. He has determined before time their appointed times.

The appointed time for the Gentile kingdoms of the earth to know God was when Paul took it to them as the apostle. But there is a time coming when all mankind will comprehend the power that is God.

The Great Tribulation will bring it to bear. They will comprehend that they are nothing and that God is all power. This is a part of the journey that we're on. Today we belong to Him.

Verse 27: "In order that they might seek the Lord, if perhaps they might feel after Him and might find Him; though truly, He is not far from each one of us, for in Him we live and move and have our being; as some of the poets among you also have said, 'For we are His offspring.' Therefore, since we are the offspring of God, we should not think that the Godhead *is* like that which *is made* of gold, or silver, or stone... [things that are material] ...a graven thing of art *devised by the* imagination of man" (vs 27-29).

We're going to make God in our own image now! Mankind needs to wake up for sure!

Verse 30: "For *although* God has indeed overlooked the times of this ignorance, He now commands all men everywhere to repent."

- Was that not John the Baptist's message ahead of Christ? *Repent!*
- Will not the two witnesses scream in their time: Repent! Repent!?

When they're done the angels will take (inaudible). God wants us, mankind,

- to be a part of His Family
- to fulfill our purpose for which He called us
- to fulfill our purpose for which He created us

He is going to continue that work!

Psalm 104:1: "Bless the LORD, O my soul! O LORD my God, You are very great; You are clothed with honor and majesty." *This isn't just beautiful poetry, this is Truth!*

Verse 2: "Covering Yourself with light as with a garment, and stretching out the heavens like a curtain." ***God did that!***

Verse 3: "Who lays the beams of His upper chambers in the waters. He makes the clouds His chariot; He walks upon the wings of the wind." ***God does that!***

Verse 4: "He makes His angels spirits, His ministers a flaming fire."

They are His servants to go out and do His will. They minister to us and carry out all the necessary functions that God needs them to carry out, in order for us to have a sustainable life environment and everything else that.

Verse 5: "He established the earth on its foundations... [***God did that!***] ...so that it should not be removed forever."

We can't even comprehend a thousand years of life, let alone forever!

Verse 6: "You covered it with the deep as with a garment; the waters stood above the mountains. At Your rebuke they fled; at the voice of Your thunder they hastened away. The mountains rose; the valleys sank down to the place that You had founded for them. You have set a bound that they may not pass over..." (vs 6-9)—*any ocean in the world!*

God said that this is your limit; you cannot go past. ***That's God Who does that!*** He allows the tides to come in, yes, but that limit is not broken.

“...so that they might not return again to cover the earth. He sends forth the springs into the valleys; they flow between the mountains” (vs 9-10).

You’ve seen the beautiful rivers and streams here in America; we have some of the most beautiful mountainous, scenic settings in the world. I’ve seen photos and video from other parts of the world, as well. **God did that!**

Verse 13: “He waters the mountains from His upper chambers; the earth is full of the fruit of Your works. He causes the grass to grow for the livestock, and herbs for the service of man, to bring forth food from the earth, and wine that makes glad the heart of man, and oil that makes his face shine, and bread to strengthen the heart of man” (vs 13-15).

God is orchestrating all that we enjoy! The Bible tells us to give thanks to Him and glory and honor to Him.

Verse 16: “The trees of the LORD are full of sap, the cedars of Lebanon, which He has planted, where the birds make their nests; as for the stork, the fir trees are her home” (vs 16-17).

It is conveying this fact that God is defined. God is defined in Scripture as:

- eternal
- all purposeful
- perfect in love
- perfect in purpose
- perfect in character
- Lawgiver
- Creator
- sustainer of life in all things

God gave us breath! We draw breath from Him! Inhale, brethren, take a breath at this very moment and hold it, and exhale. Take another breath. He won’t hold it from you. *He gives breath to the living!* **God does that!**

If we think that we don’t need God, try sustaining yourself without His breath that He gives us. Create your own if you can. This is the reality that I’m wanting to convey with this message.

It is God who rules in our life! It is an effect of us doing something nice for God by obeying Him and yielding to Him.

- you can fight God
- you can struggle against God
- you can make choices contrary to God

But you have the consequences of those things that you have to bear!

God is not going to be deterred. When it’s all said and done, there will be God. That is what’s going to be left. **God will prevail!**

You will either be with Him or you will be no more. It really isn’t a hard choice, is it? We don’t get to affect the rules to the extent that we can change God. God has already extended to us the greatest love. **He’s demonstrated His love to us, His desire for us!**

His creation itself defines this love that He has for us. We need to truly comprehend that. God holds up and controls the universe, known and unknown. **God made us and not we Him!** God is the reality of the image and the likeness from which man is created.

So, we have this kind of an understanding given to us, through God’s Word and the work of His Holy Spirit in our mind and in our heart. We often ask, why? Why invest so much in beings who are for the most part that reject Him? *They haven’t been told all that you and I are reading here that this that I’m saying to you, it’s available in God’s Word!*

If you just read the Psalms alone, they would make you wonder and think about the true reality that is. So, those who look to the things made and not the Maker are looking in the wrong direction.

Acts 17:29: “Therefore, since we are the offspring of God, we should not think that the Godhead *is* like that which *is made* of gold, or silver, or stone—a graven thing of art *devised by the* imagination of man”—*even an image in our mind!*

Imagine that God is something that He is not. Read the Scripture; it defines Who He is.

Verse 30: “For *although* God has indeed overlooked the times of this ignorance, He now commands all men everywhere to repent”—*because that day is coming!*

So, if we are to gain one very key understanding from the example of God’s relationship that He demonstrated to the world, that relationship that He had toward ancient Israel, that he has toward Israel, it would be this Truth:

God in his infinite wisdom designed the way in which we, that is mankind, who *being made* in God’s image; we who are being made by God; *created and formed in His image!* After His life; ***the way that we should walk!***

Not like mankind on the other side of the Flood. In other examples through history, ***each one doing what seemed right in his own eyes, having left the Way!***

- that is the path
- that is the purpose
- those are the instructions of our Maker

Let's read Gen. 6 and to the record just to put some foundation here. God is ***the Way!***

Genesis 6:1: "And it came to pass, when men began to multiply on the face of the earth, and when daughters were born to them, *that* the sons of the mighty ones saw the daughters of men, that they *were* beautiful; and they took wives for themselves from all whom they chose. And the LORD said, 'My Spirit shall not always strive with man in his going astray, for he is but flesh, and yet, his days shall be a hundred and twenty years'" (vs1-3).

This is what God is revealing to us that our strength and our stamina as created beings, tie directly to the spirit of man in many ways.

Verse 4: "There were tyrants on the earth in those days, and also after that, the sons of God came in to the daughters of men, and they bore *children* to them. They were mighty men who *existed* of old, men of renown. And the LORD saw that the wickedness of man *was* great on the earth, and every imagination of the thoughts of his heart *was* only evil continually. And the LORD repented that He had made man on the earth, and He *was* grieved in His heart. And the LORD said, 'I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth, both man and beast, and the crawling thing, and the fowl of the air; for I repent that I have made them.' But Noah found grace in the eyes of the LORD" (vs 4-8).

So, here again is the father of mankind from that point forward, but still he came from Adam.

Verse 9: "These *are* the generations of Noah. Noah was a righteous man and perfect in his generations, for Noah walked with God. And Noah begat three sons: Shem, Ham, and Japheth. Now the earth also was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence.... [we can relate to that even today] ...And God looked upon the earth, and behold, it was corrupt, for all flesh had corrupted its way upon the earth. And God said to Noah, 'The end of all flesh has come before Me...'" (vs 9-13).

That day at the return of Christ, the Tribulation will take us up to that point, there will come a time when flesh will have fulfilled its purpose and all that will be left is righteousness, and God's purpose would have been fully fulfilled in man.

Those who yield, those who commit themselves, those who let God rule in their lives and say let because you're not fighting him, ***you're not***

being insolent, stiff neck, disobedient, ***but you're*** yielding, head bowed, humble, approaching God, recognizing that this relationship is one of grace and you have a great opportunity as a firstfruit to be in His Kingdom.

"...for the earth is filled with violence..." (v 13).

In the time that we're living in is reminiscent of that and will escalate further and further and lower and lower and to decay in violence and evil in which God will step in and take care of things once more.

So, not like those on the other side of the Flood is what God is not looking for us to behave that way. He wants us to submit and to get in line with His program, yield to Him and His purpose for us.

Yes, Noah's relationship with God was one of grace, which engendered ***obedience, faith and action*** in agreement with God. Peter and Paul gives us greater insight into this Truth.

Once again the message is preserved in the Word of God for us to comprehend and understand, and Bible study requires that. It's one thing to read the Bible and have knowledge of the Bible and have knowledge of Scriptures and all of that. ***We have to ask God to give us understanding of:***

- His Purpose
- His Word
- His Truth
- His Way

***To help us understand it so that we can walk in it!
To help strive after it more perfectly!***

1-Peter 3:10: "For the one who desires to love life..."

Yes, not just in this physical body, because I do enjoy time with the brethren, and I do enjoy time with my family. But eternal life, I desire life,

"...and to see good days, let him restrain his own tongue from evil, and not allow his lips to speak deceit. Let him avoid evil, and let him *continually* practice good. Let him seek peace, and let him *earnestly* pursue it because the eyes of *the* Lord *are* on *the* righteous, and His ears *are open* to their supplications...." (vs 10-12).

But here's something God wants us to understand:

"...But ***the face of the Lord is against those who practice evil***" (v 12)—*God does not abide with sin! He abhors sin! ***But He loves us!****

Verse 13: “And *is there* anyone who will harm you if you be followers of that which *is good*?”
We follow God, we seek after Him!

1-Peter 4:1: “Consequently, since Christ has suffered for us in *the flesh*, arm yourselves also with the same mind because the one who has suffered in *the flesh* has finished *living* in sin *to this end*... [this is the purpose] ...*that* he no longer live *his* remaining time in *the flesh* to *the* lusts of men, but to the will of God” (vs 1-2).

Now we are the lights that the world needs to see. We are the salt that the world needs to taste! To give flavor, purpose to life. They see God working in you.

Verse 3: “For the past time of our lives *is* sufficient to have worked out the will of the Gentiles, when we ourselves walked in licentiousness *and* lusts, *and were* debauched with wine, carousing, drinking and wanton idolatries. In *seeing* this *difference* in *your behavior*, they are astonished *that* you do not rush with *them* into the same overflowing debauchery, *and* they revile *you*. *But* they shall render an account to Him Who is ready to judge *the* living and *the* dead” (vs 3-5).

That day is coming! So, when John was baptizing and the Pharisees and the Sadducees came around, he said to them:

- Who warned you to escape the coming wraths,
- Who warned you?
- Who forewarned you?

It is understood

- that we are to be warned
- that we are to be informed
- that we are to be made aware

of what God is doing!

To be apart from God is not walking in step with Him. Believe God and it was accounted to Him for grace. God calls us and He instructs us in the right way. God has made known to us the things that we need to know. He has revealed to us the things that we need in order to be in harmony with Him. And even more than that, brethren, even more than that.

Psalm 65:1: “Praise waits for You, O God, in Zion; and to You shall the vow be performed. O You Who hears prayer, unto You shall all flesh come. Iniquities prevail against me; as for our transgressions, You shall forgive them” (vs 1-3)—*as they are repented of, brethren!*

Verse 4: Blessed is the one whom You choose and cause to come near You, that he may dwell in Your courts; we shall be satisfied with the

goodness of Your house... [even if we're at the doorstep] ...even Your Holy temple.”

But God is pulling us in close to his bosom and love. He has expressed the greatest love of all, willing to divest himself of his existence as God and come and save us.

Verse 5: “By awesome works in righteousness You will answer us, O God of our salvation; You are the hope of all the ends of the earth and of those of the distant sea.”

Yes, all mankind, everywhere there is one hope, one God! We are going to assist Christ in getting that message to the ones who are left. Then we are going to assist Christ with all the other converted saints and the Great White Throne Judgment. They will know God and understand Him.

- know God
- submit to God
- confess His name

fully, wholly, committing yourself to Him, for He is above all things and He is our God!

Scriptural References:

- 1) Daniel 2:37
- 2) Daniel 4:9-18, 20
- 3) Daniel 5:9-12, 17-20
- 4) Job 12:11-25
- 5) Isaiah 37:15-20
- 6) 1-Timothy 6:12-16
- 7) Revelation 17:1-8
- 8) Revelation 18:4-5
- 9) Acts 17:21-30
- 10) Psalm 104:1-10, 13-17
- 11) Acts 17:29-30
- 12) Genesis 6:1-13
- 13) 1-Peter 3:10-13
- 14) 1-Peter 4:1-5
- 15) Psalm 65:1-5

AJ:bo/po
Transcribed: 6/7/24

Copyright 2024—All rights reserved. Except for brief excerpts for review purposes, no part of this publication may be reproduced or used in any form or by any means without the written permission of the copyright owner. This includes electronic and mechanical photocopying or recording, as well as the use of information storage and retrieval systems.