

When we shoot an arrow, we look to the fall of it; when we send a ship to sea, we look for the return of it; and when we sow seed, we look for a harvest; and so when we sow our prayers into God's bosom, shall we not look for an answer? —Richard Sibbes

The Baptist Catechism

AS PRINTED BY THE CHARLESTON ASSOCIATION IN 1813 *(Presented here as originally published – this does not constitute a full endorsement of the Riverside Baptist Church)*

4. Q. What is the word of God?

A. The holy scriptures of the Old and New Testament are the word of God, and the only certain rule of faith and obedience (2 Tim. 3:16; Eph. 2:20).

5. Q. May all men make use of the holy scriptures?

A. All men are not only permitted, but commanded and exhorted to read, hear, and understand the holy scriptures (John 5:38; John 17:17,18; Rev.1:3; Acts 8:30).

6. Q. What things are chiefly contained in the holy scriptures?

A. The holy scriptures chiefly contain what man ought to believe concerning God, and what duty God requireth of man (2 Tim. 1:13; 3:15,16).

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Sunday Morning Bible Study -- 10:00 AM

Sunday Morning Worship -- 11:00 AM

Prayer and Bible Study Wednesday Evening 6:30 PM

WCWV 92.9 FM – 8:00 AM Sunday Morning

THE RIVERSIDE BAPTIST REPORT

THE RIVERSIDE BAPTIST CHURCH

“The Pillar and ground of the Truth” -- 1 Timothy 3:15

Volume 13, No. 48

November 29, 2020

THE ABSOLUTE CONTROL OF GOD

Daniel answered and said, Blessed be the name of God for ever and ever: for wisdom and might are his: And he changeth the times and the seasons: he removeth kings, and setteth up kings: he giveth wisdom unto the wise, and knowledge to them that know understanding: He revealeth the deep and secret things: he knoweth what is in the darkness, and the light dwelleth with him. (Daniel 2:20-22)

Daniel is one of three men mentioned in the Book of Ezekiel as delivering their own souls by the righteousness they manifested in the midst of divine reaction to the sinfulness of the people. It was for the continued rebellion and rejection of the nation of Israel that Daniel was in Babylon as a captive. He is classic among the few mentioned in the Word of God that obtained divine favor as the captive of a heathen nation. His faithfulness is noted from the beginning of his captivity along with those commonly referred to as the three Hebrew children. These were Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah. We read of the prosperity in health, wisdom, and appearance given them when they refused to eat the king's food and chose rather the meagre diet that would be of greater benefit. They were found to be so blessed and as a result were promoted to places of prominence in the government. They were included among the wise men of Babylon.

A more obvious manifestation of the wisdom and sovereignty of God came through a dream of Nebuchadnezzar. This man, who was the most powerful man in the world ruling over the most powerful nation in the world was brought to something he could not control. This is the man that considered himself to be an object of worship by his subjects and would admit to no competition. It is to be noted that men of power in the absence of the knowledge of God hold

human life in contempt. This has been manifested by horrible incidents of genocide down through the ages and even in modern times. While the actions he contemplated here was not so drastic, it manifested the murderous nature of wicked men in power.

His dream must have been deeply troubling. It was to the degree that he felt compelled to find out about it. The problem to the wise men was that he could not remember what he dreamed. But the impression of it upon him was such that he believed that his men with supposedly supernatural powers should be able to discern the whole matter. When they were frustrated and unable to comply, he issued the order to have them all killed. This would have included Daniel and his companions. Daniel's plea for time was granted and they joined to pray for the mercies of God that the secret might be revealed. Daniel sensed that the thing was from God and that only He could reveal it. And God did just that.

Our thoughts turn to the reaction of Daniel in that our God is honored therein. His first desire was that God be blessed forever. It is not that he would have anything added to God and His glory; it was that men would extoll the very name of God in all its manifestations. He is worthy of this because two essential things pertaining to a right rule belong to Him. Wisdom and might are His. The ability to determine the

right order of things and the ability to carry out His designs.

His observations continue with the declaration of things that are true about God that refute the vain claims of men and speak comfort and peace to the hearts of His people. It is He that orders the times and seasons. It is He that will determine the characteristics of an era and it is He that will order the conditions of the seasons. It is sad that men claim to observe changes in the climate but deny the only One who can bring about that change. It is the height of audacity that men should think themselves to be able to manipulate climate. Men of power seem bound to exalt their thoughts above those of God. And there seems to be a growing desire to unite the nations of the world in the war against the righteousness of God. It is God who removes and sets up kings. They that are truly wise have their wisdom from God.

Daniel further observed that the deep and secret things are God's to reveal. And when such revelations are given it is obvious to all that they are of God and not of man. Such has been the mystery of the Gospel of our Lord and the sense given to the faithful that it is all of grace and for His glory. And God would be glorified in this revelation. Furthermore, it is obvious to them that they could have never discovered these things themselves. The grace of our God in Christ remains a source of amazement to the faithful.

So, Daniel revealed both the dream and the interpretation to king Nebuchadnezzar. He did so with proper praise given to God and the disavowal of any wisdom on Daniel's part. It was

the sole determination of God to reveal the dream, and it was with the understanding that the One revealing the dream would also be the one to carry out what was interpreted.

What followed then was the revelation to Daniel and to the king that, beginning with his kingdom, there would be a succession of inferior kingdoms that would ultimately be destroyed by the stone that smote the image. That stone became a mountain picturing the everlasting Kingdom of God.

The effect upon the king was profound and he worshiped Daniel and acknowledged the God of heaven in a proper manner – God of Gods! Not only had the king felt the hand of God in the dream, he to whom all others bowed, was constrained to humble himself before the Most High God.

It is time for we who know the Lord to declare Him and the victory obtained by Him through Christ our Lord. We are inundated with the wicked plans of men where God is not in any of their thoughts and where they openly assert that the Word of God and faith is out of place. Daniel was not deterred and faced the King who might have killed him. He declared that God was truly wise and mighty to save. Shall we bow or shall we stand and sing “The Mighty Power of God.” The kingdoms of this world shall fall before the Kingdom of our God and we are assured that Jesus Christ is Lord of All. It is He that is in absolute control of all things and will order them in such a way as to bring glory to Himself, exalt Christ our Lord, and be to the good of His people. *bhs*

Little Mud Puddles at Night – Tim Challies Blog, August 2, 2020

We are mirrors. We are mirrors that reflect something of Christ. We gaze upon him, and as we do so some of his character, some of his attributes, some of his loveliness is reflected in us. The old author J.R. Miller once pondered this reality in a sweet little devotional. Take a few moments and appreciate what he says:

We look into a little puddle of water at night, and see the stars in it; or by day and see the blue sky, the passing clouds and the bright sun high in the heavens. So we look upon Christ in loving, adoring faith, and the glory shines down into our soul. Then our neighbors and friends about us look at us, see our character, watch our conduct, observe our disposition and temper and all the play of our life, and as they behold us they perceive the image of Christ in us! We are the mirrors, and in us men see the beauty of the Lord.

A little child was thinking about the unseen Christ to whom she prayed, and came to her mother with the question, "Is Jesus like anybody I know?" The question was reasonable one—it was one to which the child should have received the answer "Yes." Every true disciple of Christ ought to be an answer—in some sense, at least—to the child's inquiry. Every little one, ought to see Christ's beauty mirrored in its mother's face. Every Sunday-school teacher's character, should reflect some tracings of the eternal Love on which the scholars may gaze. Whoever looks upon the life of any Christian, should see in it at once the reflection of the beauty of Christ.

Of course the mirroring never can be perfect. Muddy puddles give only dim reflections of the blue sky and the bright sun. Too often our lives are like muddy puddles. A broken mirror gives a very imperfect reflection of the face that looks into it.

Many times our lives are broken, shattered mirrors—and show only little fragments of the glory they are intended to reflect. If one holds the back of a mirror toward the sun, there will be in it no reflection of the orb of day; the mirror's face must be turned toward the object whose image one wants to catch. If we would have Christ mirrored in our lives—we must turn and hold our faces always Christward. If we continue ever beholding the glory, gazing upon it, we shall be mirrors reflecting Him into whose face we gaze. Then those who look upon our lives will see in us a dim image at least—a little picture of Christ!

GOD'S WILL, NOT OURS

Jesus Christ is known for praying to His Father "not My will, but Yours, be done" (Luke 22:42). Jesus acknowledged that His will was subject to His Father's will, and that it was His will to see His Father's will performed.

People in "free will" religion do otherwise. They believe God's will is subject to their will. For example, they say it is God's will to save every one, but He cannot save any one except those who of their "free will" let Him do so. They would pray to God, if they were honest, "Your will may not be done until my will is done."

Let us not be of such a sort!

For the salvation of sinners is of God's will, not ours (Romans 9:15-18): "For He says to Moses [in Exodus 33:19], 'I will have mercy on whomever I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whomever I will have compassion.' So then it is not of him who wills, nor of him who runs, but of God who shows mercy. ... He has mercy on whom He wills, and whom He wills He hardens."

O sinner, if you desire God's salvation, do not be so foolish as to think that it depends upon your will and that God's will is subject to your will!

Rather, surrender your will to God's will, and throw yourself onto God's mercy and compassion – and He will save you!

And do so before He hardens your heart like He did Pharaoh's. – Daniel E. Parks