



2020 1Q Daniel: Lesson 5 From Pride to Humility

by Tim Jennings (announcements last page)

SABBATH

Read second paragraph, “Pride leads to...” We fallen beings are absolutely dependent upon God for our existence, but all living beings—unfallen as well as fallen—are dependent upon God for their existence. He is Creator and sustainer of all life.

However, we fallen need reminding of this and the unfallen do not—why? Because we humans on earth have our minds clouded to reality. Many don’t even believe in God any more, don’t know about God, or have such distorted views about God they don’t realize their life is from Him. Or, pride and selfishness and the survival drives cause them to think they are self-sustaining.

What do you think of this sentence, “Any gifts we have, any things that we accomplish with those gifts, come only from God.”

How is this true and how could this statement be misunderstood?

Did God give Samson strength? Yes, then was everything Samson accomplished with that strength from God? If we mean everything Samson did was made possible because God gave the gift and without the gift of strength Samson couldn’t have done some of the things he did—then yes, it is from God. But if we mean the specific actions were God’s will then no, it wasn’t from God.

Has God given human beings the gift of pro-creation, the ability to have children?

Does that mean when a man rapes a woman and she becomes pregnant, that it was an act of God or a gift from God or God’s will?

My point is that all life and all talents, gifts, abilities ultimately do come from God as He is the source of all Creation—but that doesn’t mean all actions or accomplishments that people do with those gifts are from God. People can abuse the abilities and gifts God has given them to accomplish things that are not God’s will and do not come from God.

Consider giving your child a gift of a new car—they only have the car because you have it to them. They then use the car to smuggle drugs across the border—are the smuggled drugs accomplished by you?

The first sentence in the last paragraph states that it took a long time for Nebuchadnezzar to recognize the importance of humility.



What is healthy humility and what is unhealthy humility?

Healthy humility is a recognition of truth—one's own finiteness, one's own infection with fear and selfishness, one's own limitations, vulnerabilities and weaknesses—yet under the umbrella of one's calling and purpose in God's plan and in that relationship with God there is confidence and strength that we receive from God as we acknowledge our dependence upon Him.

Unhealthy humility:

- feeling worthless, useless, and of no value
- humility that leads to helplessness
- humility that leads to dependency on others such that one doesn't act but follows others
- humility that makes the humility their point of pride—acting in ways to draw attention to their humility—I'm humble and proud of it
- humility that resides in the heart as humiliation

SUNDAY

The lesson focuses our attention on Nebuchadnezzar's dream about a great tree that is cut down for 7 years, the king's pride and then 7 years of insanity and living like an animal and then restoration.

What do we learn from this story?

Who did Nebuchadnezzar see in his dream? The holy watchers—and it is from this story that we got the title and idea for *The Journal of the Watcher*.

Who are the watchers? Some type of heavenly being—are they angels, seraphim, cherubim, or are they some other species of heavenly being? We are not told. But they are involved in the events transpiring upon earth—why?

Because they were involved before the events moved to the earth—because the war between God and Satan is a cosmic war.

What do you make of the fact that they are described as watchers and holy ones?

The names describe function and condition of being. These are beings who are not defiled by sin, yet are watching—what is implied by this description?

Why would holy, sinless beings be watching? Is it because they don't know everything, more than that, is it because some things have actually been misrepresented by Satan and they are watching for evidences, for answers, to observe to see God in action?



And what do we learn when we realize that it was these watchers who suggested the 7 years of insanity upon Nebuchadnezzar?

What law lens are we viewing this through? Was this to punish or was it to save the king?

It was to save, to bring him to repentance and eternal salvation, then this was not punishment for sin, but a therapeutic intervention to heal him and to spread the truth about God.

Do we learn of the methods and character of God—that God intervenes to heal and not to inflict punishment?

Do we learn that God's holy ones are on our side working to help us?

Are not all angels ministering spirits sent to serve those who will inherit salvation?

Hebrews 1:14-2:1

Concerning this salvation, the prophets, who spoke of the grace that was to come to you, searched intently and with the greatest care, trying to find out the time and circumstances to which the Spirit of Christ in them was pointing when he predicted the sufferings of Christ and the glories that would follow. It was revealed to them that they were not serving themselves but you, when they spoke of the things that have now been told you by those who have preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven. **Even angels long to look into these things.** 1Peter 1:20-12

And one of the founders of the SDA church wrote:

If you are in communion with Christ, you will place His estimate upon every human being. You will feel for others the same deep love that Christ has felt for you. Then you will be able to win, not drive, to attract, not repulse, those for whom He died...COL 197.1

In this work all the angels of heaven are ready to co-operate. All the resources of heaven are at the command of those who are seeking to save the lost. Angels will help you to reach the most careless and the most hardened. And when one is brought back to God, all heaven is made glad; seraphs and cherubs touch their golden harps, and sing praises to God and the Lamb for their mercy and loving-kindness to the children of men. COL 197.2

MONDAY

Read first paragraph, "Daniel not only interprets..." What was Daniel's advice to the king? Why did Daniel give this advice? Does Daniel's advice suggest that Daniel thought this prophecy was conditional, that it depended on the king, that if the king humbled himself and repented this prophecy may be averted?



Does this mean that not all prophecy in the book of Daniel is apocalyptic? Remember, apocalyptic is what God brings about and doesn't depend upon human choice. Did this prophecy depend upon the arrogance and pride of Nebuchadnezzar?

Whether we see it as punishment (the legal adherents) or therapeutic intervention (design law), is either action necessary if Nebuchadnezzar repents? So, isn't what is foretold in this prophecy a direct result of Neb's choices and condition of heart?

Read second paragraph, "Nebuchadnezzar performs..." What method of ruling others is employed by Nebuchadnezzar? Power over, coercion, force, enslavement, exploitation.

Notice the contrast between Satan's method of governing and God's:

Lucifer in heaven sought to raise his throne above the Most High in order to rule over all beings, the power over others and make the masses serve him.

Jesus did not think equality with God was something to be grasped but humbled Himself to become one who serves others...God's method is to give to build up others.

The governments of the world have historically all used Satan's methods with a few ruling elites dominating and exploiting the masses:

- Pharaohs of Egypt
- Emperors of China
- Shoguns and Emperors of Japan
- Kings of Babylon, Persian, Greece, Rome
- Kings and Popes of the nations of Europe

Notice through all human history human governments model after Satan—power over—a few ruling elites dominating the masses. This type of governing is only possible by oppressing the masses in such a way that prevents the image of God from being developed in people. In other words, the elite can only stay in power if they keep the masses from developing their own individual God-given potential.

I propose that such actions, to destroy the image of God in people is evil and governments that act in such a way as to prevent individual development, growth, advancement, autonomy, reasoning, etc. are part of Satan's kingdom not God's.

Specific methods used in history to injure the image of God and keep the masses subjugated include:

- Denying education—multiple cultures throughout history have done this, and some continue to do this today.
- Control of education to indoctrinate into conformed thinking



- Falsehoods and propaganda, such as divine right of a few to rule the many or superstitious teachings like the fear of hell, with religious authorities possessing the power to send people to heaven or hell, or lies like one group or class of people are inferior or subhuman.
- Control of the media to promote false narratives and propaganda
- Enslaving, imprisoning, and killing
- Control of resources, such as food, water, housing, and healthcare
- Structured impoverishment, such as high taxes; laws limiting ownership of property to the elite; feudal systems in which homes were owned by the aristocracy and the peasants worked simply to have food and shelter with proceeds going to the landowner; coal and railroad barons in the early U.S. history; sweatshops for illegal immigrants today.
- Practices that keep wages low

In response to the abuses of the elite aristocracies socialism and communism arose purporting to be interested in the welfare of the masses, but these forms of government—in every instance—removed one ruling class only to replace it with another that continued to exploit and abuse the masses. (Whether Soviet Union, Communist China, Nazi Germany, Cuba, Venezuela, North Korea, in every instance an elite ruling class exploited the masses.)

Only one government in the history of the world was established with the express purpose of preventing an elite ruling class from dominating and controlling the masses. Revelation prophesied that this government would arise with lamblike rather than dragon-like principles; a government in which the articles of incorporation were constructed to not only give the power to the people, but to obstruct any attempt toward an aristocracy arising that would dominate the masses—the United States of America. (Of course, since its inception, other governments have arisen that model themselves in some fashion after the USA.)

With the rise of the United States, a radical new form of government was formed. Its constitution was specifically structured to protect the individual citizens and states from a centralization of power into the hands of a few ruling elites. It was designed to protect the individuals—the masses. This is exactly opposite of the exploitive methods of Satan. And ever since its creation, the U.S. Constitution, with the liberties contained within, has been under attack by those who wish to establish a government in which a minority of elites rule the masses.

Some people view the rise of the USA as the fulfillment of the lamblike beast of Revelation 13, which arises with principles of religious and political freedom and yet that eventually those freedoms will be taken away and the lamblike beast will speak like the dragon, meaning a ruling authority that coerces and dominates.

What makes the U.S. Constitution specifically hated by Satan and those who wish to dominate the masses are the following:

- Decentralization of power into three equal branches (legislative, executive, judicial)



- The limitation of congress to remove the president except for specific listed crimes (treason, bribery, high crimes and misdemeanors). The framers did not want the U.S. government to be parliamentary, as in Britain, in which the prime minister *serves* at the behest of the parliament and can be removed for political reasons at any time by a majority vote of the parliament.
- Formation of an electoral college, rather than simple majority vote, to determine the national election of a president, which is another way to decentralize power and protect the rights of the minority.
- The separation of church and state—having seen the abuses in Europe when religious institutions controlled the power of the state, the framers specifically sought to limit the power of religions to control state agencies in order to enforce religious dogmas.
- The right of the citizenry to carry and bear arms—purposefully written into the constitution as a means for the citizens to protect themselves from threats, including those of an abusive government. (Many people are rightly concerned about the rise in mass shootings, but wrongly believe that removing guns is the way to protect the masses. History has documented in multiple societies that when guns are removed from the citizenry and socialism or communism enters or dictators or despotic sovereigns take over then millions die violently). The problem with increasing violence is because love is being destroyed in our society, not because of gun availability. When people love each other, they don't kill each other. And love is decreasing because people are becoming ever more godless.
- The right to a free and independent press, intended to investigate and expose corruption in government so that the people could act via their power to vote to bring about change. (When the press no longer operates independently but aligns with one group or party it is a threat to the liberties of a country).
- The right to privacy, including no search and seizure without a warrant—again, giving power to the citizen and requiring the ruling authority to have legitimate justification to overrule individual liberties.
- The right to not self-incriminate. During the Inquisition, if an inquisitor asked you, “Did you steal from the church?” and you refused to answer, it was considered the same as an admission of guilt. The framers took power from the state and gave it to the individual.
- An educated citizenry who could read and write in order to be informed and to think for themselves and understand the processes involved to help elect qualified leaders.
- The requirement of elections every two years for the house, six years for the senate, and four years for president, thus, ultimately putting the power into the hands of the electorate and preventing an elite minority from ruling over the majority
- High hurdles to amend and change the constitution.

The USA, with its constitutional protections specifically designed to limit the power of the ruling class, is the most significant governmental obstacle in the world today to the ruling elites who seek to implement a world body to control the nation states. This is quite significant to the informed Christian who understands that before Christ returns, a global-coalition governance will form to subjugate the masses. This is one reason why Satan hates the U.S. Constitution—it obstructs his method of power over the masses.



Thus, we can be “watchers” who are vigilant to observe the movements of forces that are undermining the liberties contained in the Constitution.

The next paragraph points out that God seeks to bless and uplift the poor, which is the exact opposite of the practices of Satan which exploits and dominates the poor.

Let’s examine one issue that has been hotly debated in the US over the last three years and consider the impact upon the poor.

What impact does an unregulated border have on a society—particularly the poor in a society? (Notice, an unregulated border, i.e. open borders allowing anyone to enter without any conditions)

Do wages for those with the least education, least social connections, and least skills rise or sink? Would suppressing wages result in people developing and advancing, or would it result in them becoming dependent on those with resources and power (either wealthy people, corporations, or government) to provide for them? Would social resources, such as Medicaid, low-cost housing, mental-health treatment programs, social support systems, student aide, etc., be more available or would those systems be overwhelmed and, thus, those with the least resources find themselves with less opportunity to get assistance to develop and advance? Would an unregulated border tend to diminish the number of poor in society or perpetuate and expand masses of people to be ruled by those in power?

What if such open borders also allowed in immigrants who were from cultures that did not value the principles of the U.S. Constitution, but rather believed in having a supreme leader who would direct and govern the masses?

If immigration was unregulated and migrants could enter freely without conditions, what impact would it have upon the countries they are fleeing? Would the people fleeing be those persons most content in their countries of origin or those most likely to seek change? And if a critical mass of people who want change is constantly siphoned off by migrating to another country, does this prevent the overthrow of abusive governments? Do open borders perpetuate the abuse and exploitation of the masses in other countries? Would the original nations and their people ultimately be better off by forming governments modeled after the USA or by the continual removal from their society of those who would bring about positive change?

Can there be people who love God and want to uplift others, help them grow and develop to the fullness of their God-given abilities who are on the exact opposite sides of an issue like how to deal with a national border and immigration?

Does any government on earth rightly represent God’s government? No!

What then is a healthy approach for those who want to implement Godly principles?



My current understanding is to create opportunity. The role of human government—at its best—is to restrict evil, to set boundaries that create atmospheres for maximal opportunity for individuals to thrive. To set limits on the use of power, just as the US Constitution does.

Thus we have the right to life, liberty and the *pursuit* of happiness. Government can protect life, can protect liberty by restricting the power or ability of others to take your life and liberty—but government cannot give happiness, it can only create an atmosphere most conducive to the pursuit of happiness. It does this by removing obstacles to our liberties.

Understanding these principles, we understand that it is healthy in societies to surrender absolute freedoms as long as in so doing it results in greater opportunity for individual development and advancement.

One example is that we give up the absolute freedom to drive our cars any way and anywhere we want, choosing to cede such freedom to traffic laws and to participate in a society that recognizes the authorities that enforce those laws. Such surrender protects us from accidents and physical harm and, thereby, increases our health and ability to develop and grow.

Other examples of the same principle exist regarding food and water regulations, as well as having a standing army for common defense.

TUESDAY

The lesson focuses on the truth that God rules, and in the second paragraph states, “In fact, the ultimate lesson God wants to teach to the arrogant king is that ‘Heaven rules.’” Do you agree this is the “ultimate” lesson?

Is the ultimate lesson in the universe that God rules? Or, is it *how* God rules?

Not by might nor by power but by the Spirit says the Lord Zech 4:6

Why is how God rules important?

One of the founders of the SDA church wrote:

God could have destroyed Satan and his sympathizers as easily as one can cast a pebble to the earth; but He did not do this. Rebellion was not to be overcome by force. Compelling power is found only under Satan's government. The Lord's principles are not of this order. His authority rests upon goodness, mercy, and love; and the presentation of these principles is the means to be used. God's government is moral, and truth and love are to be the prevailing power. DA 759.1



The law of God is immutable. Were it otherwise, no confidence could be placed in his government. God rules the world in omnipotence, and **all that His love inspires He will execute. He who rules the world in wisdom and love is a God who changes not.** He does not abolish today that which He enforced yesterday. RH June 4, 1901, par. 7

Through all the ages Satan's work has been the same,—to make of none effect the law of God. He has infatuated men and women, leading them to mistake darkness for light, and error for truth. He began this work in heaven, and ever since, he has been trying to deceive. **He tells men and women that God has abrogated all law,** and will now open the gates of heaven to transgressors...RH June 4, 1901, par. 8

Those who accept Satan's reasoning are terribly deceived. They accept a position which has no true foundation. **God is unchangeable. He is satisfied with nothing short of perfect obedience.** [Why? Because God's law is the protocol of life and God is satisfied with nothing less than perfect health, which is only possible in harmony with the protocols upon which life is built] Perfection is the only title which will gain admittance to heaven. The law is the only standard of character. RH June 4, 1901, par. 9

The law of God and the law of Caesar have come into collision, and will come into collision again. The question we have to answer is, Shall we obey God, or Caesar? [What type of law is God's and what type of law is Caesar's?] RH June 4, 1901, par. 10

So, is the question of whether God rules, or *how* God rules? And how does God rule? Design law, truth, love, freedom—"not by might, nor by power, but by the Spirit says the Lord." Zech 4:6

Why does God rule this way? What is it God wants from His intelligent beings? Is it the obedience of a well-trained dog? Is it the programmed actions of a robot? No, it is understanding friendship, love, loyalty, devotion, and willing and eager obedience to live in harmony with God's design laws.

WEDNESDAY

Read fourth paragraph, "But this story is not..." Do we see that while the king did not humble himself after seeing the exceptional wisdom of the Hebrews, after the dream of the statue, after the fiery furnace, nor after the dream of the tree, that each of these events were seeds planted in the king's mind that worked together to bring him to repentance along with the 7 years of insanity?

In other words, God was working mercifully for the salvation of the king and the spreading of His healing truth the entire time. And these events unfolded as God knew they would to maximize the opportunity for the king's repentance.

I would say the exact same principles were at work with Moses and Pharaoh—God presented the events to Pharaoh in the way that was most likely to bring conviction to Pharaoh and bring Pharaoh to



repentance, but in the case of Pharaoh, after each conviction and acknowledgement of truth, Pharaoh turned around and rejected the truth and chose to believe a lie—thus hardening his heart.

Both stories, Pharaoh and Nebuchadnezzar reveal a God of truth, love and freedom who is kind, gracious and compassionate seeking to heal and save. These stories reveal how God works, how His design laws operate and how God governs the universe.

THURSDAY

Read first paragraph, “How do we know...” I like the conclusion that Nebuchadnezzar repented and was saved. What lessons can we learn about God and God’s kingdom and how God operates from realizing that Nebuchadnezzar was brought to salvation?

- God is the God of all humanity
- God loves all people
- God’s plan of salvation is for all people and God is working to reach all people
- The OT focuses on the Jewish people because they are the branch of the human family through whom Jesus the Messiah will come, not because they are the only ones God cares for or who God wants to save or because God loves them more than any other human
- That the OT ceremonial laws were not necessary for salvation—they were only theater, teaching tools, to teach the larger reality. Nebuchadnezzar never sacrificed at Temple or partook of Passover, as far as we know he was never circumcised in his body—and why didn’t any of that matter? Because it was all symbolic, theater. Nebuchadnezzar was circumcised in his heart, i.e. died to self and had the law of God written in his heart. This is the reality.

FRIDAY

Read second paragraph, “God’s purpose...” Consider the theme of the Bible. After Adam and Eve sinned the human race has a terminal condition and will die if the Messiah doesn’t come. Jesus is promised in Genesis 3:15 to come and crush the serpent’s head.

The focus of the OT is the battle between God and Satan with God focused on bringing Jesus to earth to save humanity and Satan trying to stop the plan.

After God chose Abraham’s family to be the avenue for the Messiah, Satan focuses his attention on destroying this branch of the human family:

- Sarah, Rebekah, and Rachel are all sterile—think about that. These people were still closer to the perfection of Eden than we are today. Sarah at 90 was still beautiful enough that Pharaoh wanted her for his wife. Abraham lived to be 175 years of age, yet the first two women in the Messiah’s Abrahamic line were sterile and Rachel had Joseph who was the representative of the Messiah and who saved the family from starvation? Is this just random chance, or is it possible Satan was working here to stop the plan? Is there evidence Satan can effect physical



health? Consider the story of Job. But God overrules and heals their infertility and uses the events of their infertility to advance His cause.

- Do you think the conflict between Jacob and Esau was because of God's love in their hearts, or Satan working to inflame fear and selfishness and jealousy? What method did Jacob use—deception—who is the father of lies and deceit? Was Satan at work in this family to cause conflict? Did Jacob's actions anger Esau? Would Satan like to flame up anger in Esau to get Esau to kill Jacob? Was this a real threat? Did Jacob flee for his life? Did he later, when returning still have fear for his life? Was Satan trying to get Esau to kill Jacob and Jacob's family?
- What about Jacob's sons? When God gave Joseph dreams why didn't the brothers celebrate this? Where did the jealousy come from? What about the famine, is it possible Satan worked on nature to try and kill the family of Jacob and destroy the avenue for the Messiah? Did God allow the events to transpire, and in fact send the dreams to Joseph as part of the plan to place Joseph where he could save the family and keep open the avenue for Messiah?
- They go down to Egypt and eventually a Pharaoh arises that doesn't remember Joseph. Who inspired the Pharaohs to enslave the Hebrews? What was Satan trying to accomplish—was it the destruction of the avenue for the Messiah? But God sent Moses and delivered the people in a way that brought renown to God by demonstrating all the gods of Egypt were false and kept open the avenue for the Messiah.
- After establishing Israel in Canaan, did Satan work to infect Israel with pagan gods and get them to rebel against god and what happened to the 10 tribes to the north? They were assimilated and disappeared.
- Did Satan, not only infect Israel with false god worship but also inspire the various nations to continually attack Israel and Judah seeking to destroy the avenue for the Messiah?
- Did God allow the captivity in order to keep open avenue for Messiah, to bring the truth through his faithful friends to Nebuchadnezzar who sent royal decrees throughout his empire proclaiming the truth about the God of heaven.

This is the focus of Scripture and as we see it and understand it things become much more reasonable.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Thank you to all of our supporters!!! We appreciate your prayers and financial support.

February 8, 2020: Come and Reason Class will meet at Bake Crafters at 10673 S Lee Hwy, McDonald, TN 37353 for this Sabbath only. Class will start at our regular time.

March 27,28, 2020: Dr. Jennings will be speaking at an AACC River Conference at Plano, TX. More info at <http://theriverconference.com/>

April 17,18, 2020: Dr. Jennings will be speaking at the Lakewood SDA church in Lakewood OH.



September 17-19 2020: Dr. Jennings will be speaking at the AACC National Conference in Dallas, TX

October 3, 2020: Come and Reason will have a one day seminar in Chattanooga TN on Healing the Mind, Recovering from Sexual Abuse, the Impact of Digital Media on Kids and more. Details coming soon.