



October 11, 2024

### **Reflections on the ancient king Nebuchadnezzar**

Warm hellos once again friends, brethren, fellow laborers, spiritual family, and scattered children of God from here on the Gulf Coast of lower Alabama. My wife and I pray and hope this finds you doing well, and that again your week has been blessed.

I detest looking at most all news updates as they come at me from every direction. That's the downside of these smart phones most of us have. The weather, wars, no I don't necessarily mean those...although those by themselves can become depressing.

I'm seriously having to purposely stay focused on the upcoming Feast of Tabernacles just 5 days away.

Like most of you, I've been reflecting on the possible results of our soon upcoming presidential election here in the United States. Although it may not be in the forefront for many of the international nations who read my Friday pastor's letter, there will be ramifications that will affect the world in one form or another.

So, yes, the U.S. elections will soon be over, but the close election results I believe will confirm that this country is still very deeply divided.

What will be the fallout? Can either candidate for president make good on what he/she has promised in dealing with the challenges the nation is facing? Forces (both spiritually and physically) that have been bringing us down and weakening the nation financially, militarily, economically, and morally are still there and those directing them are not going to easily give up.

Several feel before the election that "it would take a miracle for Donald Trump to win the election and become President again considering the odds and the forces against him". Several feel they will vote for Kamala because somehow she'll solve our nation's problems. The apostle Paul directs the disciples (applicable to us today) to pray for those in authority that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life. (1 Timothy 2:1-2) Do we pick a candidate or take sides? I don't see that from scripture.

You and I must realize that no man and no human institutions can bring about really righteous government, the Kingdom of God, or anything close to it.

However, if correct principles are followed, there will be a blessing from that with the dynamic of cause and effect - either for good or for evil. "*When the righteous are in authority, the people rejoice; But when a wicked man rules, the people groan.*" (Proverbs 29:2)

The Hebrew word "righteous" is tsaddiyq and can refer to being "lawful and just and righteous (in government)." (Online Bible Hebrew Lexicon). Our nation is being heavily hurt by an attitude of lawlessness and defiance of constituted authority such as toward the police. This is a dangerous situation, which creates danger and trauma for everyone, and can lead to anarchy. I pray that this might be reversed and overcome by right leadership and upholding the law with appropriate consequences for lawless and criminal behavior. Maybe it's gone too far...time will tell.

To some it seems that Donald Trump is seeking the counsel of others and considering the input of others in making decisions. I hope and pray that our new physical leader selects wise and competent individuals for his/her cabinet and other offices. "*Without counsel, plans go awry, but in the multitude of counselors they are established.*" (Proverbs 15:22) "*For by wise counsel you will wage your own war, And in a multitude of counselors there is safety.*" (Proverbs 24:6) One who seeks wise counsel will tend to resist giving in to ego and pride, feeling they have all the answers, and take all the credit for their accomplishments.

Recorded in God's Word, ancient king Nebuchadnezzar exhibited a lot of pride and arrogance, acted like a controlling dictator, and mistreated his subjects. The great God revealed by way of a dream a dire warning about giving in to pride, arrogance, and ruthless rule. Daniel was summoned to interpret the dream. Daniel told the king that he had become great and strong and his influence and territory under his rule had greatly grown. However, unless he changed his ways he was going to be humbled by losing his sanity and acting like an animal for a period of time. Daniel appealed to him, *"Therefore, O king, let my advice be acceptable to you; break off your sins by being righteous, and your iniquities by showing mercy to the poor. Perhaps there may be a lengthening of your prosperity."* (Daniel 4:27)

Eventually one's pride and arrogance will catch up to them. *"When pride comes, then comes shame; but with the humble is wisdom."* (Proverbs 11:2) Twelve months after he had his dream and received the warning when Daniel interpreted it, the king was admiring his palace in Babylon. *"The king spoke, saying, 'Is not this great Babylon, that I have built for a royal dwelling by my mighty power and for the honor of my majesty?' 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!'"* (Daniel 4:30-31)

What was predicted clearly befell the king and he lost his sanity and his rule for 7 times (likely 7 years). At the conclusion of the period his sanity and his kingdom and rulership were restored and he "sang a different tune". *"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."* (Daniel 4:37)

The coming months and years will be a time of testing for the newly elected President of the country I live in, his/her cabinet and advisors, and for the nation.

Maybe like the situation with Nebuchadnezzar and the people under his rule, there will be a "*lengthening of our prosperity.*"

We must not forget though, that you and I are likened to pilgrims temporarily in the country where we live (in a sense as exiles). (Hebrews 11:13) God sent a message to the exiles in Babylon through the prophet Jeremiah. "*And seek the peace of the city where I have caused you to be carried away captive, and pray to the LORD for it; for in its peace you will have peace.*" (Jeremiah 29:7)

We can draw an example from this as we wait to be delivered from this present world and be taken to the "promised land" of the coming and setting up the kingdom of God...that's what we will be commemorating and celebrating as we keep this upcoming Feast of Tabernacles.

Arms up friends! Our sincere prayers and thoughts are with you daily. Thanks in advance for your heartfelt prayers for us.



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