



The God We Worship, Part 2: He is Sovereign Lord

Series: The Wonder of Worship

Daniel 4

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Pastor Nick Shaffer

You'll remember that last Sunday, I said that if we are going to worship God properly, we have to know the God who is. We must do away with thoughts of God that are too shallow, too superficial and too simplistic and replace them with biblically accurate and theologically rich truth. These first few sermons in the series are going to be focused in just that direction – establishing, refreshing and refining a proper vision of who God is. Last week we considered God's holiness; this week His sovereignty.

This text today is a particularly rich and picturesque passage. What we have before us is the testimony of the conversion of the greatest king, up until this point, in human history – Nebuchadnezzar. This is the testimony of God's breaking and remaking of Nebuchadnezzar, a testimony of his personal experience with God's irresistible power and exceeding grace. It is the story of how a man who was the conqueror and destroyer of Jerusalem, the enslaver of the Jews, goes from being a persecutor of the faithful to becoming a worshipper and witness of the God of Israel. And at the center of the entire account is the sovereignty of God over all. It is the theme throughout the entire story, the purpose for which God acted in both judgment and mercy against Nebuchadnezzar. The purpose of all of this was so that this king might testify to God's glory before his entire kingdom: "At the end of the days I, Nebuchadnezzar, lifted my eyes to heaven, and my reason returned to me, and I blessed the Most High, and praised and honored him who lives forever, for his dominion is an everlasting dominion, and his kingdom endures from generation to generation; all the inhabitants of the earth are accounted as nothing, and he does according to his will among the host of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth; and none can stay his hand or say to him, "What have you done?"" (Daniel 4:34–35, ESV)

This text is laden with testimony to the sovereignty of God. Nebuchadnezzar declares the truth of God's sovereign glory, of his own experience of sovereign humiliation, God's sovereign grace,

and of his own worship of the Sovereign God. This is a powerful and awesome testimony to God's sovereignty and to God's pursuit of His glory for our own good.

Now, just a little background before we begin. Before this experience recorded for us in chapter 4, Nebuchadnezzar had been nothing more than a pagan idolater, a polytheistic worshipper of the gods. He was, as well, the master of a vast kingdom. He had conquered nearly every kingdom in the known world. Nebuchadnezzar had extended his empire to India in the east, and as far north as the Caspian Sea. He conquered all of what is now Pakistan, Iraq, Iran, Afghanistan and parts of Turkey and Syria, Lebanon and Israel, Jordan and Egypt. The entire inhabited world belonged to him. He ruled it with an iron fist. He was the mightiest man in all the earth. He alone seemed to be sovereign. He was the one who determined if you lived or died, if you had land or not, if you were rich or poor. He was the one who basically decided everyone's fate – or at least it seemed that way.

As I alluded to before, he had been the one to conquer Judah, the instrument used by God to bring judgment upon the nation for their sinful rebellion against the Lord, for their idolatry and wickedness. This was the glory of Nebuchadnezzar, the great king, the ruler of all the world.

Nebuchadnezzar, as well, was a man who had been impervious to spiritual truth. The events of chapter 4 were now the third time that Nebuchadnezzar had a supernatural encounter with the sovereign God of the universe. In chapter two, God had given to him a dream of the kingdoms of the world. Nebuchadnezzar had a dream in which he saw the image of a man – the head of fine gold, the chest and arms of silver, the belly and thighs of bronze, the legs of iron, and the feet of iron and clay. The four metals – gold, silver, bronze and iron, along with the clay– signified four world empires that would follow the one after the other and he divided kingdom that would result. And he saw how “the God of heaven will set up a kingdom that shall never be destroyed, nor shall the kingdom be left to another people. It shall break in pieces all these kingdoms and bring them to an end, and it shall stand forever, just as you saw that a stone was cut from a mountain by no human hand, and that it broke in pieces the iron, the bronze, the clay, the silver, and the gold.” (Daniel 2:44–45, ESV) if you are familiar with the story you know that not only did Daniel tell Nebuchadnezzar the interpretation of the dream, but also by the Spirit of God, he told him the actual dream itself. So amazed was Nebuchadnezzar, Scripture says: “Then King Nebuchadnezzar fell upon his face and paid homage to Daniel, and commanded that an offering and incense be offered up to him. The king answered and said to Daniel, “Truly, your God is God of gods and Lord of kings, and a revealer of mysteries, for you have been able to reveal this mystery.”” (Daniel 2:46–47, ESV)

But this “confession” was short lived, wasn’t it? It wasn’t long before his pride blinded him once again and he rejected the revelation of God and instead had erected a massive idol of pure gold 90 feet high on the plains of Dura. He was the head of gold in his dream and he did not want to believe that his kingdom would come to an end to make room for another. Nor did he want to acknowledge God’s eternal kingdom. His desire was that his golden empire should last forever. And so he made an image of the one metal only: gold. No succession of kingdoms, but one kingdom only: his eternal Babylonian empire! He commanded that at the appointed time, when certain instruments were played, that all of the people were to bow down and worship the golden image that Nebuchadnezzar had erected. But three of the Hebrews – Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego (Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah) – refused to do it. Nebuchadnezzar was furious and had them thrown into a super heated furnace so that they would be destroyed for their insolence and for their insistence upon remaining faithful to God. You remember what he saw. “Then King Nebuchadnezzar was astonished and rose up in haste. He declared to his counselors, “Did we not cast three men bound into the fire?” They answered and said to the king, “True, O king.” He answered and said, “But I see four men unbound, walking in the midst of the fire, and they are not hurt; and the appearance of the fourth is like a son of the gods.” Then Nebuchadnezzar came near to the door of the burning fiery furnace; he declared, “Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, servants of the Most High God, come out, and come here!” Then Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego came out from the fire. And the satraps, the prefects, the governors, and the king’s counselors gathered together and saw that the fire had not had any power over the bodies of those men. The hair of their heads was not singed, their cloaks were not harmed, and no smell of fire had come upon them. Nebuchadnezzar answered and said, “Blessed be the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, who has sent his angel and delivered his servants, who trusted in him, and set aside the king’s command, and yielded up their bodies rather than serve and worship any god except their own God. Therefore I make a decree: Any people, nation, or language that speaks anything against the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego shall be torn limb from limb, and their houses laid in ruins, for there is no other god who is able to rescue in this way.”” (Daniel 3:24–29, ESV) But again, just as quickly as it had come, Nebuchadnezzar’s seeming understanding was stripped away by his fierce and unrelenting pride. And that brings us to his testimony this morning. For Nebuchadnezzar, the third time would be the charm. This last display of God’s sovereignty would finally break him and bring him to worship the One True God. Let’s look at it.

Nebuchadnezzar’s Introduction (v.1-3) “King Nebuchadnezzar to all peoples, nations, and languages, that dwell in all the earth: Peace be multiplied to you! It has seemed good to me to show the signs and wonders that the Most High God has done for me. How great are his signs, how mighty his wonders! His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and his dominion endures

from generation to generation.” (Daniel 4:1–3, ESV) You can tell from his very introduction that this is going to be good. He writes this public press release, if you will, of his personal encounter with the power and might of God to everyone in his kingdom, everyone in the land who had previously been commanded to worship the idol in the plain of Dura under the penalty of death and his first words are: Peace be multiplied to you! Peace, not oppression, not tyranny, not threatenings – peace!

He goes on to tell them of the great signs and mighty wonders that the Most High God had accomplished. But notice – it isn’t about some impersonal display of God’s sovereign power, it is very personal – it’s what the Most High God has done for me. This is personal for Nebuchadnezzar now. This testimony is all about the true God, the real God, the God whose dominion is forever. Something has happened to Nebuchadnezzar and he wants everyone to know. So he starts with:

The Dream and its Interpretation (v. 4-27) Nebuchadnezzar tells us how this all came about. He says: “I, Nebuchadnezzar, was at ease in my house and prospering in my palace. I saw a dream that made me afraid. As I lay in bed the fancies and the visions of my head alarmed me. So I made a decree that all the wise men of Babylon should be brought before me, that they might make known to me the interpretation of the dream. Then the magicians, the enchanters, the Chaldeans, and the astrologers came in, and I told them the dream, but they could not make known to me its interpretation.” (Daniel 4:4–7, ESV) Nebuchadnezzar was lounging around, enjoying the fruits of his kingdom, congratulating himself for all of his prosperity, not giving a thought to God at all when the sovereign God gives him a dream that shakes him to the core. Like he had done in the past, he has all of his wise men, not named Daniel, brought to him to tell him the dream and despite the relative ease of interpretation – as we will see – God sovereignly closes their mouths.

“At last Daniel came in before me—he who was named Belteshazzar after the name of my god, and in whom is the spirit of the holy gods—and I told him the dream, saying, “O Belteshazzar, chief of the magicians, because I know that the spirit of the holy gods is in you and that no mystery is too difficult for you, tell me the visions of my dream that I saw and their interpretation.” (Daniel 4:8–9, ESV) Finally he calls for Daniel, the one whom he had formerly named Belteshazzar – now he calls him by his Hebrew name, “God is judge.” He calls for him because -- using his former language -- the spirit of the holy gods was in Daniel. He knew that Daniel would be able to tell him exactly what the dream meant.

“The visions of my head as I lay in bed were these: I saw, and behold, a tree in the midst of the earth, and its height was great. The tree grew and became strong, and its top reached to heaven, and it was visible to the end of the whole earth. Its leaves were beautiful and its fruit abundant, and in it was food for all. The beasts of the field found shade under it, and the birds of the heavens lived in its branches, and all flesh was fed from it. “I saw in the visions of my head as I lay in bed, and behold, a watcher, a holy one, came down from heaven. He proclaimed aloud and said thus: ‘Chop down the tree and lop off its branches, strip off its leaves and scatter its fruit. Let the beasts flee from under it and the birds from its branches. But leave the stump of its roots in the earth, bound with a band of iron and bronze, amid the tender grass of the field. Let him be wet with the dew of heaven. Let his portion be with the beasts in the grass of the earth. Let his mind be changed from a man’s, and let a beast’s mind be given to him; and let seven periods of time pass over him. The sentence is by the decree of the watchers, the decision by the word of the holy ones, to the end that the living may know that the Most High rules the kingdom of men and gives it to whom he will and sets over it the lowliest of men.’ This dream I, King Nebuchadnezzar, saw. And you, O Belteshazzar, tell me the interpretation, because all the wise men of my kingdom are not able to make known to me the interpretation, but you are able, for the spirit of the holy gods is in you.” (Daniel 4:10–18, ESV)

What a dream. As we look at it, it seems pretty easy to determine the interpretation, doesn’t it? Clearly the tree stands for Nebuchadnezzar and his reign. I want you to notice that this is a vision from the perspective of Nebuchadnezzar himself. He sees his kingdom as overall – reaching to heaven and visible to the ends of the earth. He also perceives it as very beautiful and bountiful. Ironically enough, despite his cruelty and tyranny, he sees himself and his kingdom as benevolent and kindly – fruit for everyone, a shade for all, food for everybody. There hasn’t been a megalomaniac leader in history that didn’t think he was kind and merciful and Nebuchadnezzar was no different. He sees himself and his reign as this tree in his dream. Suddenly, everything takes a turn for the worst.

In his dream, a decree comes from heaven, from the watchers, from an angelic being to cut off the branches of the tree, to scatter its fruit and the beasts, to lay it waste. The tree is to be cut down but the stump is to remain, banded by iron and bronze so it cannot grow, but the roots are to remain in the ground -- it is not to be completely destroyed. Then suddenly the stump takes on human qualities –he is to be wet with the dew of heaven, living among the beasts of the earth, his mind is to be changed to that of a beast for seven periods of time – that is a biblical way of saying “until the purpose is complete.” And what was the purpose? -- that the living may know that the Most High rules the kingdom of men and gives it to whom he will and

sets over it the lowliest of men. It was so the whole world, all the living, would know that God alone is sovereign and He truly reigns over all. Nebuchadnezzar isn't quite sure what to make of it, but he knows Daniel will have the answer.

"Then Daniel, whose name was Belteshazzar, was dismayed for a while, and his thoughts alarmed him. The king answered and said, "Belteshazzar, let not the dream or the interpretation alarm you." Belteshazzar answered and said, "My lord, may the dream be for those who hate you and its interpretation for your enemies!" (Daniel 4:19, ESV) It isn't hard for Daniel to see what is coming. In fact, it dismays him. He knows the power and might that God is going to bring against Nebuchadnezzar and he feels a sense of compassion for him. That, in itself, is amazing. So much does this dream bother Daniel, that he wishes that it could be about Nebuchadnezzar's foes. There is a heart of mercy and compassion in Daniel for this tyrant. Still, Daniel is faithful and tells Nebuchadnezzar the deal.

"The tree you saw, which grew and became strong, so that its top reached to heaven, and it was visible to the end of the whole earth, whose leaves were beautiful and its fruit abundant, and in which was food for all, under which beasts of the field found shade, and in whose branches the birds of the heavens lived— it is you, O king, who have grown and become strong. Your greatness has grown and reaches to heaven, and your dominion to the ends of the earth. And because the king saw a watcher, a holy one, coming down from heaven and saying, 'Chop down the tree and destroy it, but leave the stump of its roots in the earth, bound with a band of iron and bronze, in the tender grass of the field, and let him be wet with the dew of heaven, and let his portion be with the beasts of the field, till seven periods of time pass over him,' this is the interpretation, O king: It is a decree of the Most High, which has come upon my lord the king, that you shall be driven from among men, and your dwelling shall be with the beasts of the field. You shall be made to eat grass like an ox, and you shall be wet with the dew of heaven, and seven periods of time shall pass over you, till you know that the Most High rules the kingdom of men and gives it to whom he will. And as it was commanded to leave the stump of the roots of the tree, your kingdom shall be confirmed for you from the time that you know that Heaven rules." (Daniel 4:20–26, ESV) Daniel tells him the clear interpretation of the dream and it is a hard one to hear. Nebuchadnezzar is the tree and God is going to teach him a lesson that he will never forget. God is going to afflict Nebuchadnezzar in a way that he could never imagine, but it is not an interpretation without hope. God is going to afflict Nebuchadnezzar, He is going to magnify His sovereignty over him and over the whole world, not to destroy him, but to deliver him from his proud delusions and to make it known over all the earth that Heaven rules, that God alone reigns.

I want you to see the mercy and the grace in this decree from God. God will afflict Nebuchadnezzar with madness until he knows that God is God. That is what is going to happen. God is going to afflict Nebuchadnezzar to make him see and confess the truth, to know and believe that God is God, to make Him a worshiper of the Living God. He will not be like Pharaoh, for instance, who hardened his heart and whom God confirmed in his hardness of heart until he was destroyed. God would grant to Nebuchadnezzar grace and a heart to believe the truth. That was the plan all along. The kingdom would be returned to him, but only after God humbled him and brought him to his knees in worship before Him. This was no message of what may or may not happen; this was the eternal decree of the Sovereign God. "The king's heart is a stream of water in the hand of the Lord; he turns it wherever he will." (Proverbs 21:1, ESV) God would return Nebuchadnezzar to the throne, but only after He manifested His sovereign overall and changed Nebuchadnezzar's heart. That he would even have a throne to which to return is an evidence of God's sovereignty. I love what Sinclair Ferguson has to say here: "The purpose of this dream and decree was not left to Nebuchadnezzar's imagination. It was to teach men that God reigns, that He sets up and pulls down kingdoms, that His action in history focuses on the work of humbling men in order that they may dispense with their foolish pride and acknowledge Him as their God." That is clearly the purpose of the dream.

Knowing the decree of the Lord, still Daniel cannot resist the opportunity to call Nebuchadnezzar to repentance. "Therefore, O king, let my counsel be acceptable to you: break off your sins by practicing righteousness, and your iniquities by showing mercy to the oppressed, that there may perhaps be a lengthening of your prosperity." (Daniel 4:27, ESV) Daniel calls Nebuchadnezzar to repentance, to cease from his sins and iniquity, to manifest the fruit of repentance, but the truth is that Nebuchadnezzar couldn't, not apart from the grace of God, not apart from the Lord granting him repentance. It simply was not in him, apart from the sovereign grace of God, to humble himself and repent of his pride and arrogant self-exaltation. That was not God's plan, not yet anyway, not until God displayed His sovereignty in an unforgettable way. The dream is serious business, but apparently, it had no effect on the king. All that was left was...

The Humiliation of Nebuchadnezzar (v.28-33) "All this came upon King Nebuchadnezzar. At the end of twelve months he was walking on the roof of the royal palace of Babylon, and the king answered and said, "Is not this great Babylon, which I have built by my mighty power as a royal residence and for the glory of my majesty?" (Daniel 4:28-30, ESV) God mercifully delayed his

judgment for a year – a whole year in which Nebuchadnezzar did not seek repentance. Then as he walked on the roof of the royal palace, looking upon the great hanging gardens of Babylon, one of the wonders of the ancient world, and upon the walls around the city, the outer one so large that four chariots could ride abreast upon the top of it, looking at all of the golden buildings and temples to various gods, the limestone streets and the great river Euphrates running in its midst, he congratulated and exalted himself. “Is not this great Babylon, which I have built by my mighty power as a royal residence and for the glory of my majesty?”

Immediately his self-glorifying came to an abrupt end. “While the words were still in the king’s mouth, there fell a voice from heaven, “O King Nebuchadnezzar, to you it is spoken: The kingdom has departed from you, and you shall be driven from among men, and your dwelling shall be with the beasts of the field. And you shall be made to eat grass like an ox, and seven periods of time shall pass over you, until you know that the Most High rules the kingdom of men and gives it to whom he will.” Immediately the word was fulfilled against Nebuchadnezzar. He was driven from among men and ate grass like an ox, and his body was wet with the dew of heaven till his hair grew as long as eagles’ feathers, and his nails were like birds’ claws.” (Daniel 4:31–33, ESV) In an instant, before the words were fully out of his mouth, a voice from heaven sounded and God’s hammer fell. The time of his humbling was at hand. Nebuchadnezzar was judged. The kingdom was taken from his hands. He lost his power, his glory, his kingdom, his wealth, everything that he had boasted in was taken away from him. He became like a beast, driven from the presence of men. This man, who was the greatest king on earth, became an object of scorn and ridicule. He lived out in the fields, eating grass, his hair growing until it was grossly long and matted like the feathers of an eagle, his nails grew to become claws. He was reduced to the level of a beast – in modern times this is something called “boanthropy.” For seven periods of time – perhaps seven years (Historians have identified a seven-year period during his reign when he engaged in no military activity, ca. 582-575 B.C.) – Nebuchadnezzar was afflicted until the purposes of God were completed. When King Nebuchadnezzar exalts himself, it is God who humbles him to the dust, makes a spectacle of him, demonstrating God’s glorious sovereignty. And then God graciously restored him.

The Restoration of a Changed Man (v. 34-37) We read: “At the end of the days I, Nebuchadnezzar, lifted my eyes to heaven, and my reason returned to me, and I blessed the Most High, and praised and honored him who lives forever, for his dominion is an everlasting dominion, and his kingdom endures from generation to generation; all the inhabitants of the earth are accounted as nothing, and he does according to his will among the host of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth; and none can stay his hand or say to him, “What have

you done?”” (Daniel 4:34–35, ESV) At the end of the appointed time, the king does the only thing that he in this humbled and beastly state can do; he lifts his eyes toward heaven as a confession, as a humble realization that God is God and he is not. His sanity returned to him and with his whole heart and with a sound mind he worshipped the Most High God. He praised Him as the God who lives forever, the One who is from before the beginning to after the end. He blesses the God whose kingdom and throne is forever and ever. He honors the God who infinitely superior and gloriously supreme over all humankind, the God who does what he wills, who is subject to none and who is truly sovereign over all. How insignificant and trivial the kingdom of Nebuchadnezzar now appears in contrast to the glorious kingdom of the eternal, all-wise and all-powerful God.

And notice something else. Notice the tone. No longer is he threatening people who speak against God. Nor does he number God as great God among other gods. Here, he just praises the Lord for what God has done for Him. He acknowledges God to be the Sovereign Ruler of the universe, declaring the glory of God before all and he does so without shame or reservation. It is this repentance, graciously granted to him by the Sovereign Lord, which leads to his restoration.

“At the same time my reason returned to me, and for the glory of my kingdom, my majesty and splendor returned to me. My counselors and my lords sought me, and I was established in my kingdom, and still more greatness was added to me. Now I, Nebuchadnezzar, praise and extol and honor the King of heaven, for all his works are right and his ways are just; and those who walk in pride he is able to humble.” (Daniel 4:36–37, ESV) Not only did Nebuchadnezzar regain his sanity, he regained his kingdom. Such was the sovereign grace of God to him. His power and his greatness exceeded even what it had been before God had crushed him. His final words of exultation and praise and honor are those of worship, those of a humbled and changed man, addressed to the God over all, praising Him for His truth, His ways, His justice, and His compassion in the lives of human beings but particularly in his own life. He worships God in full that God is sovereign, God is gracious, that God is God and Nebuchadnezzar is not. Worship is the only sane response of men and women everywhere. Worship turns men to God in humility, gratitude, and worship, based upon the wonder of His grace. Worship is the way to wisdom, because it humbles us and exalts God.

But here’s the key thing, beloved, what was it that brought forth such praise from this humbled king? It was his experience of the sovereignty of God. The sovereignty of God made a

worshipper out of a rebel, a God-exalter out of self-promoter, a witness out of a wicked man. The glory of the sovereignty of God was the source of Nebuchadnezzar's worship and it should be a source of our worship as well. See with me...

The Glory of God's Sovereignty - What do we mean when we say that God is sovereign? "The Lord has established his throne in the heavens, and his kingdom rules over all." (Psalm 103:19, ESV) "Clap your hands, all peoples! Shout to God with loud songs of joy! For the Lord, the Most High, is to be feared, a great king over all the earth." (Psalm 47:1-2, ESV) "Our God is in the heavens; he does all that he pleases." (Psalm 115:3, ESV)

What is the sovereignty of God? The sovereignty of God is simply God's free exercise of His supremacy. God is the high and lofty One; no one is greater than He, or equal to him, nor anywhere near to Him. And when this great God acts, when He decrees and accomplishes His divine purposes, He does so with absolute freedom, absolute authority, and absolute right to rule. He decides what is good and evil; He demands obedience; He has the right to reward obedience and to punish disobedience; He has the right to be gracious and merciful to some and not to others. He reigns over all and is answerable to no one. Nor can any limits be placed on His sovereignty. He is the only one who has the right to act for His own glory. The sovereignty of God means that He does as He pleases, always as He pleases, and only as He pleases. God is in control of all things and people, and is directing all things after His own will and to the praise of His own glory. That is what it means that God is sovereign. God has the right to do whatsoever He pleases, however He pleases and yet He always does what He pleases in harmony, in agreement with His glorious character – in perfect holiness, unerring wisdom, overflowing love, unimpeachable justice, unchanging truth, and amazing grace. Sovereignty means, as Charles Spurgeon said: "The Lord's place is on the Throne, and our place is to obey; it is His to govern, ours to serve; His to do as He wills, and ours, without questioning, to make that Will our constant delight." Just think, for example, how God has demonstrated His sovereignty.

He has exercised His sovereignty in creation. According to His own will, God freely created. God did not have to create anything, but it pleased Him to do so, to do it by the Word of His power out of nothing. God freely decided what He would call forth into being: the heavens, the earth, and all they contain to reveal His power, greatness, and glory. He freely determined to make man in His own image.

He exercises His sovereignty in His providence. He raises and brings down nations, raises and puts down kings and leaders. He determines peace and war, matters such as nations having or not having oil, iron, and other raw materials. He commands the waves and the wind, the seas and all that is in them. He rules all things in the grand scheme and over the small – where you would be born, the family into which you would be born, the physical and mental gifts you have, the advantages or disadvantages, the circumstances and situations – all of it is in His hands.

And, praise God, He exercises His sovereignty in His eternal plan of redemption. God did not have to save a single soul, but He willed to do so! And He willed to save freely of grace, by faith in the sacrificial sin-atonement, substitutionary, soul cleansing bloody death and resurrection of Jesus Christ for sinners, a faith that He graciously bestows upon His elect. God chose His saints without regard to their merits or demerits, without regard to riches, talents, or personalities. He chose according to the good pleasure of His will. He brought you low, if you are a believer, as he did with Nebuchadnezzar, made you see your need, stripped you of everything that you held as more valuable than Him, revealed Christ to you, opened your heart to believe the gospel, saved you by His mercy, placed you into His family, into the local church of his choosing. He sets the course for your sanctification, guarantees by His sovereign promise all you need for godliness and for perseverance in the faith, sets the course for your growth in grace and knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ, guarantees that all of the events of your life will work together for good because you love Him and He has chosen and called you unto Himself, by His sovereign promise hears your prayer and moves in the heavens on our behalf and for His glory, and by His sovereign power promises to accomplish his eternal plan to make His glory known throughout this universe and to make you eternally joyful in His glory with Him, where He is, in a new heavens and a new earth completely free from the contamination of sin. All of this He did according to His own sovereign plan. This He does and so much more.

Our God is a great God to whom belongs righteousness, glory, wisdom, power and might; an everlasting, eternal God, righteous in judgment, tender in mercy; a God of love and patience, reserving the wicked for destruction yet showing steadfast love unto thousands, the great “I AM”, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the One “who saved us and called us to a holy calling, not because of our works but because of his own purpose and grace, which he gave us in Christ Jesus before the ages began,” (2 Timothy 1:9, ESV)

“To whom then will you compare me, that I should be like him? says the Holy One. Lift up your eyes on high and see: who created these? He who brings out their host by number, calling them all by name, by the greatness of his might, and because he is strong in power not one is missing. Why do you say, O Jacob, and speak, O Israel, “My way is hidden from the Lord, and my right is

disregarded by my God"? Have you not known? Have you not heard? The Lord is the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth. He does not faint or grow weary; his understanding is unsearchable. He gives power to the faint, and to him who has no might he increases strength. Even youths shall faint and be weary, and young men shall fall exhausted; but they who wait for the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings like eagles; they shall run and not be weary; they shall walk and not faint." (Isaiah 40:25–31, ESV) What other sovereign God would we possibly want?

Hear me when I say, beloved, that the sovereignty of God is not be feared or dreaded. And here is why. Beloved, if you are a Christian, this Sovereign King is your Father, and He loves you with an everlasting and unbreakable love and He exercises His sovereignty for His eternal glory and for your eternal good. And your greatest good is your salvation in Christ. Keep these things ever in mind: God is absolute in sovereignty. God is infinite in wisdom. God is perfect in love. When God deals with His children, God in His love always wills what is best for us. In His wisdom, He always knows what is best for us. In His sovereignty, He has the power to bring His best about for us. For that reason, we can trust Him.

Charles Spurgeon said: "There is no attribute more comforting to His children than that of God's sovereignty. Under the most adverse circumstances, in the most severe trials, they believe that Sovereignty has ordained afflictions, that Sovereignty overrules them, and that Sovereignty will sanctify them all. On the other hand there is no doctrine more hated by worldlings, no truth of which they have made such a football, as the great, stupendous, but yet most certain doctrine of the Sovereignty of God. Men will allow God to be everywhere except on His throne. They will allow Him to be in His almonry to dispense alms and bestow blessings. They will allow Him to be in His workshop to fashion worlds and make stars. They will allow Him to sustain the earth and bear up the pillars thereof, or light the lamps of heaven, or rule the waves of the ever-moving ocean; but when God ascends His throne, His creatures gnash their teeth, and when we proclaim an enthroned God, and His right to do as He wills with His own, to dispose of His creatures as He thinks well, without consulting them in the matter, then it is that men turn a deaf ear to us, for God on the throne is not the God they love. But it is God upon the throne we love to preach. It is the God upon the throne Whom we trust."

The doctrine of God's sovereignty is an anchor, a hope, a stability, a high mystery to keep us humble, and let it be for us, as it was for Nebucahnezzar, a source of endless praise.

Does the sovereignty of God bring joy to your heart as it should? Does it cause you to worship Him? If not, why is that? Are you contending with God's sovereignty, with His authority, striving against Him and His will? You cannot win.

What end is God's sovereignty working in you right now? To bring you to faith, to deepen your dependence, to refine you and make you holier in you walk and thought and actions, to enflame your love for Him, to bring you to the end of some destructive sin, to humble you, to cause you hold fast to His word, to make you die to yourself even more, to serve His church with unswerving faithfulness, to love your neighbor, to lift your eyes from the false promises of this earth, to find your greatest joy in him? All of these things and more – submit yourself to Him, joyfully give yourself to the sovereign reign of God and know He does all He does with perfect love. There is no greater blessing than knowing that God is on His throne, that He is working all things to His glory and for the good of His children. May it fill our souls with the reverent worship that it should.

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