
Proverbs

Wisdom and Relationships: Kings, Rulers and Leaders

Outline:

I. God, Kings and Rulers

II. The Character of Kings and Rulers

III. Kings, Rulers and Their Subjects

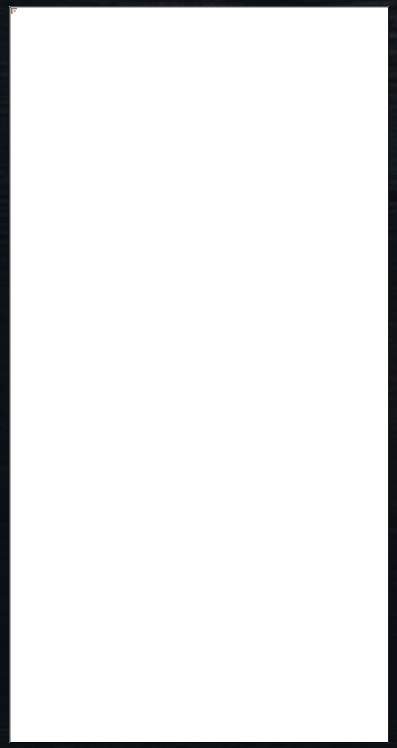
IV. Kings, Rulers and Believers



I. God, Kings and Rulers

21:1 “The king's heart is *like* channels of water in the hand of the LORD; He turns it wherever He wishes.”

Pharaoh



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Nebuchadnezzar



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I. God, Kings and Rulers

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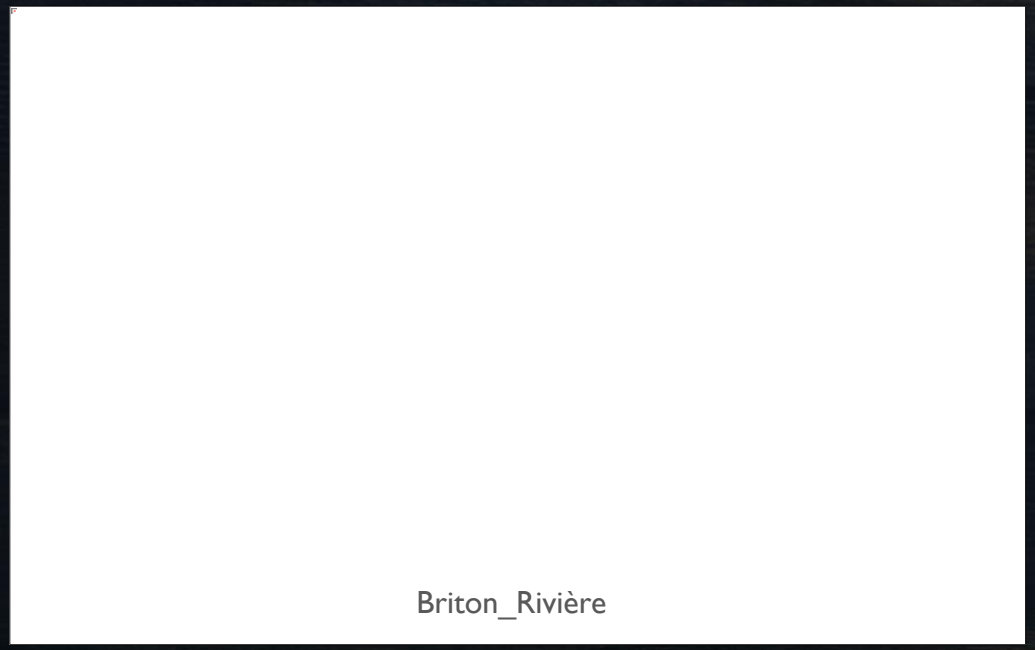
Daniel & King Darius



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“I make a decree that in all the dominion of my kingdom men are to fear and tremble before the God of Daniel; for He is the living God and enduring forever, and His kingdom is one which will not be destroyed, and his dominion will be forever.” Dan. 6:26



I. God, Kings and Rulers

21:1 “The king's heart is *like* channels of water in the hand of the LORD; He turns it wherever He wishes.”

Persian King Cyrus (538 BC)



God says of Cyrus, “*He is* My shepherd! And he will perform all My desire. And he declares of Jerusalem, ‘She will be built,’ and of the temple, ‘Your foundation will be laid.’”
Isa 44:28

Proverbs Seek Wisdom Find Life

I. God, Kings and Rulers

21:1 “The king's heart is *like* channels of water in the hand of the LORD; He turns it wherever He wishes.”

Artaxerxes King of Persia’s decree (458 BC)

Ezra 7:21 "I, even I, King Artaxerxes, issue a decree to all the treasurers who are in the provinces beyond the River, that whatever Ezra the priest, the scribe of the law of the God of heaven, may require of you, it shall be done diligently”



I. God, Kings and Rulers

21:1 “The king's heart is *like* channels of water in the hand of the LORD; He turns it wherever He wishes.”

Caesar Augustus’ census which caused Mary and Joseph to move to Bethlehem where Jesus would be born fulfilling Micah’s prophecy in 5:2 “But as for you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, too little to be among the clans of Judah, from you One will go forth for Me to be ruler in Israel, His goings forth are from long ago, from the days of eternity.”

Daniel 2:21 "It is He (God) who changes the times and the epochs; He removes kings and establishes kings…”



II. The Character of Kings and Rulers

Proverbs 8:15,16 “By me kings reign, and rulers decree justice. By me princes rule, and nobles, all who judge rightly.”

16:10 “A divine decision is in the lips of the king; his mouth should not err in judgment.”

16:15 “In the light of a king's face is life, and his favor is like a cloud with the spring rain.”

16:12 “It is an abomination for kings to commit wickedness, For a throne is established on righteousness.”



II. The Character of Kings and Rulers

20:2 “The terror of a king is like the growling of a lion; he who provokes him to anger forfeits his own life.”

20:8 “A king who sits on the throne of justice disperses all evil with his eyes.”

20:28 “Loyalty and truth preserve the king, and he upholds his throne by righteousness.”

25:2 “It is the glory of God to conceal a matter, But the glory of kings is to search out a matter.” (Isa 55:9, Psa 145:3)



II. The Character of Kings and Rulers

25:3 “As the heavens for height and the earth for depth, so the heart of kings is unsearchable.”

25:4,5 “Take away the dross from the silver, and there comes out a vessel for the smith; take away the wicked from before the king, and his throne will be established in righteousness.”

28:16 “A leader who is a great oppressor lacks understanding, but he who hates unjust gain will prolong his days.”



II. The Character of Kings and Rulers

29:4 “The king gives stability to the land by justice, But a man who takes bribes overthrows it.”

29:12 “If a ruler pays attention to falsehood, All his ministers *become* wicked.”

29:14 “If a king judges the poor with truth, His throne will be established forever.”



II. The Character of Kings and Rulers

31:3-5 “Do not give your strength to women, or your ways to that which destroys kings. It is not for kings, O Lemuel, it is not for kings to drink wine, or for rulers to desire strong drink, lest they drink and forget what is decreed, and pervert the rights of all the afflicted.”



III. Kings, Rulers and their subjects

14:35 “The king's favor is toward a servant who acts wisely.
But his anger is toward him who acts shamefully.”

16:13 “Righteous lips are the delight of kings, and he who
speaks right is loved.”

16:14 “The wrath of a king is as messengers of death,
but a wise man will appease it.”



III. Kings, Rulers and their subjects

22:11 “He who loves purity of heart And whose speech is gracious, the king is his friend.”

22:29 “Do you see a man skilled in his work? He will stand before kings; He will not stand before obscure men.”

24:21 “My son, fear the LORD and the king; Do not associate with those who are given to change.”



III. Kings, Rulers and their subjects

25:6,7 “Do not claim honor in the presence of the king, and do not stand in the place of great men; for it is better that it be said to you, ‘Come up here,’ than that you should be put lower in the presence of the prince, Whom your eyes have seen.”

III. Kings, Rulers and their subjects

Luke 14:8-10 “When you are invited by someone to a wedding feast, do not take the place of honor, lest someone more distinguished than you may have been invited by him, and he who invited you both shall come and say to you, ‘Give place to this man,’ and then in disgrace you proceed to occupy the last place. But when you are invited, go and recline at the last place, so that when the one who has invited you comes, he may say to you, ‘Friend, move up higher’; then you will have honor in the sight of all who are at the table with you.”



III. Kings, Rulers and their subjects

25:15 “By forbearance a ruler may be persuaded, and a soft tongue breaks the bone.”

29:26 “Many seek the ruler's favor, but justice for man comes from the LORD.”

Psalm 118:8,9 “It is better to take refuge in the LORD than to trust in man. It is better to take refuge in the LORD than to trust in princes.”



IV. Kings, Rulers and Believers

1 Timothy 2:1,2 “First of all, then, I urge that entreaties and prayers, petitions and thanksgivings, be made on behalf of all men, for kings and all who are in authority, in order that we may lead a tranquil and quiet life in all godliness and dignity.”

IV. Kings, Rulers and Believers

Romans 13:1 “Let every person be in subjection to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those which exist are established by God.”

* When is it a challenge or difficult to submit to governing authorities?
* How is the establishment of any government related to God?
* Who was the Roman Emperor when Paul wrote this to the Christians in Rome?



The Roman historian Tacitus described Nero's persecution of Christians: "Mockery of every sort was added to their deaths. Covered with the skins of beasts, they were torn by dogs and perished, or were nailed to crosses, or were doomed to the flames and burnt, to serve as a nightly illumination, when daylight had expired."



Wikipedia

IV. Kings, Rulers and Believers

Romans 13:2 “Therefore he who resists authority has opposed the ordinance of God; and they who have opposed will receive condemnation upon themselves.”

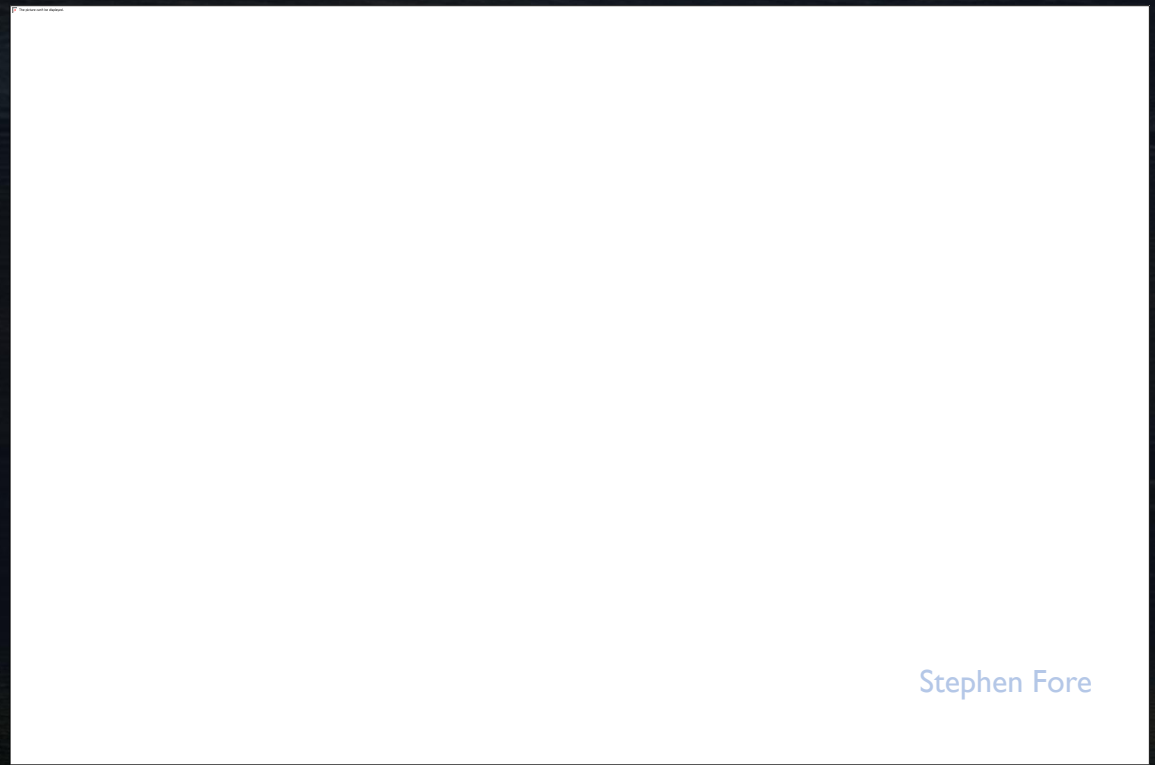
We are to obey the government except when doing so would be to disobey God.

Acts 5:28, 29 “We gave you strict orders not to continue teaching in this name, and behold, you have filled Jerusalem with your teaching, and intend to bring this man's blood upon us. But Peter and the apostles answered and said, ‘We must obey God rather than men.’”



IV. Kings, Rulers and Believers

Romans 13:3 “For rulers are not a cause of fear for good behavior, but for evil. Do you want to have no fear of authority? Do what is good, and you will have praise from the same.”



Stephen Fore



IV. Kings, Rulers and Believers

13:4 “for it is a minister of God to you for good. But if you do what is evil, be afraid; for it does not bear the sword for nothing; for it is a minister of God, an avenger who brings wrath upon the one who practices evil.”

13:5 “Wherefore it is necessary to be in subjection, not only because of wrath, but also for conscience' sake.”



IV. Kings, Rulers and Believers

13:6 “For because of this you also pay taxes, for rulers are servants of God, devoting themselves to this very thing.”

13:7 “Render to all what is due them: tax to whom tax is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honor to whom honor. “



Take aways:

- God is greater than the government. Rulers may think they are in control, but we can take comfort in the fact that God is the ultimate authority.

- Christians are to be subject to government authority, unless it contradicts Scripture. Then we must obey God rather than man.

- A ruler's character is important. Righteous, just and compassionate leaders usually outlast cruel tyrants. As the leadership goes, so goes the nation.

- Pray for our leaders, for wisdom in making decisions for the good of the nation.

- Pray for Christians in government, to be salt and light.

