



## **“Heaven Rules”**

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*Scriptures: Daniel 4 & 5*

Idea: Leadership is a stewardship: It is temporary. We are accountable.

### **Introduction**

1. For the past several months, we’ve sat in front of our televisions talking to the candidates. Some of us mute the speeches in order to share our sterling insights with the rest of our uninformed family. My brother-in-law and I watched Barack, Hillary, and John the night Barack clinched the nomination. We had so much commentary that my sister finally told us to be quiet because she would really like to hear what the candidates had to say more than what we had to say. John and I were baffled.
2. None of us are short on opinions. We don’t have all the facts, but, by golly, we have all the answers. And it is clear to us what they should do, isn’t it? If they would just (fill in the blank), the nation would be a better place. From my living room, it is so simple.
3. And when your candidate speaks . . . it’s awesome. When the other guy speaks, “He’s lying.” And how well do we know these guys personally? Zero. But we are sure nonetheless. And a few minutes with us . . .
4. One of the predominant, but often overlooked, themes of Scripture is the advice given to national leadership by prophets and advisors. Some of it was good. Some of it was not so good. In fact, the nation of Israel split into two kingdoms because Solomon’s son Rehoboam (1 Kings 12) refused to listen to wise counsel and instead listened to those who told him what he wanted to hear.
5. So, in this election year, I thought it would be interesting to look at three of these narratives and ask the question, “What might three of these advisors say to our new President?” What principles can be mined from their contexts and transferred to ours?

*So our journeys back in time begin in 580 BC with an extraordinary military/political leader that confused progress with greatness and was then brought to his senses. He was the most powerful man in the world. His name was Nebuchadnezzar. He ruled Babylon, which is modern-day Iraq. His story begins in Daniel 4.*

### **I. Context**

- A. In 50 BC, Israel is in captivity.
- B. Implication: The God of Israel is out of business. When temple activity stops for Israel, Judaism goes on hold. Can’t be practiced. Nebuchadnezzar and his gods are clearly more powerful than the Hebrew God. He has a lot to be proud of.
- C. One night, he has a very disturbing dream.

*Go to Text. [See Scripture Notes at the end of this outline.]*