

Andrew Cuomo: “God Didn’t Do That”

He actually said the unthinkable. At least in my youth no one would have said it. Yet, on April 13, 2020, Andrew Cuomo, Governor of New York, said it:

“God did not do that.” (1)

Governor Cuomo made his comment during a press conference on the COVID-19 virus problems in New York. Remarking on the progress of the virus and its apparent decline, Cuomo emphatically stated,

“...we brought the number down. God did not do that.” (2)

In the midst of a glowing report, Cuomo praised the efforts of mankind and denied any praise to God for their improvement. It is puzzling that as a devout, professing Catholic Christian he would make this statement.

No doubt, others made the same assumptions, even among professing Christian's. I often hear so called believers state that God does not get involved in these kinds of matters. They portray Him as a helpless person wringing His hands in heaven and saying, *“Oh dear.”*

Others call God a disinterested observer Who does not intervene in the affairs of mankind.

Increasingly humanity shows no fear of God in their anti-God expletives against Him. In so doing, they fail to credit His mercy and longsuffering by defaming Him. Further, they heap all glory to themselves for the apparent successes of their efforts, refusing to grant God any role in their achievements and rejecting any honor to Him.

The Bible records historical events when people acted in this manner. False prophets in Israel frequently honored themselves while rejecting God. Many Kings of Israel brought great evil upon their peoples in defiance of God.

Pride and Arrogance in Babylon

No Biblical narratives of mankind’s celebration of their successes at the expense of God's glory surpass the events described in Daniel.

Nebuchadnezzar King of Babylon ruled over the Babylonian Empire that stretched from the Persian Gulf to the Mediterranean Sea. (3) In the fall of 605 BC, his warriors entered Jerusalem and destroyed it. In their victory, they took many captives including 4 young men, Daniel and his 3 friends, and brought them back to Babylon.

The King took Daniel and his friends into his palace to retrain them in the wisdom of Babylon. While serving in the palace, God used Daniel to interpret a dream that Nebuchadnezzar and his advisors failed to understand. (See Daniel 2.1-45.)

Daniel 4 records a second dream of Nebuchadnezzar that troubled him. When his counselors failed to interpret it, he called for Daniel. God gave Daniel the interpretation. The dream foretold God's judgment upon the King for his pride:

“This is the interpretation, O king, and this is the decree of the most High, which is come upon my lord the king: that they shall drive thee from men, and thy dwelling shall be with the beasts of the field, and they shall make thee to eat grass as oxen, and they shall wet thee with the dew of heaven, and seven times shall pass over thee, till though know that the most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever He will.” (Daniel 4.24-25)

Nebuchadnezzar grew proud of his successes, attributing them to his great leadership and power. He

basked in his abilities and those of his people. He failed to honor God as ruler over all mankind. Twelve months after this dream, he walked into his palace and said,

“Is not this great Babylon, that I have built for the house of the kingdom by the might of my power and for the honor of my majesty?” (Daniel 4.30)

As soon as he spoke, God pronounced judgment upon the King as prophesied in the King’s dream. The King’s men drove him from the palace into the fields where he became like an ox, as foretold. After many days, King Nebuchadnezzar recognized God as the King of heaven Who can abase all who walk in pride. (Daniel 4.37)

Daniel 5 describes when Nebuchadnezzar’s son, Belshazzar (who became King after his father) boasted in his accomplishments and failed to honor God. He gave a great party for a thousand of his lords. During the party, Belshazzar commanded his men to bring into the revelry the golden vessels taken from the Temple in Jerusalem. He proceeded to mock God by drinking wine from these holy vessels.

In that same hour, a hand appeared, and the fingers of the hand wrote a message on the wall of the palace. Belshazzar’s appearance changed and his legs knocked together. He cried to his counselors to interpret the message, and they failed.

Hearing the tumult, the Queen entered the banquet house. She reminded the King of Daniel and told the King to call for Daniel to come and interpret the message.

Daniel gave more than the interpretation of the message. He retold the King of his father’s pride and God’s judgment upon him. Daniel also reminded Belshazzar of these events, which Belshazzar knew, and told the King that he had not glorified God Who held his very breath in His hands. (Daniel 5.17-23)

Then, Daniel interpreted the dream. It said that

“...God hath numbered thy kingdom and finished it...thou art weighed in the balances, and art found wanting...thy kingdom is divided and given to the Medes and Persians.” (Daniel 5.25-28)

That night Belshazzar was slain. Darius the Median took the kingdom of Babylon. (Daniel 5.30-31) His successor, Cyrus, liberated the captive Israelites from Babylon and enabled them to return to their land as prophesied. (Isaiah 44.28)

Purpose of God

One cannot miss God’s purposes in these narratives. God judged Nebuchadnezzar and his son Belshazzar for their pride, arrogance, and failure to honor God as King and Ruler over the kingdoms of mankind. He rules as Sovereign over all things, great and small. He holds the breaths of humans in His hands and dispenses their breaths as He wills.

God permitted Babylon to conquer Israel as punishment for their wickedness brought upon them. Israel’s Kings ruled in pride and their failure to honor God, the King of Heaven. Babylon’s captives, the Israelites, beheld all of these events. God wanted to teach His chosen people the importance of worshiping and honoring Him. No other option existed.

God proved Himself faithful to His promise regarding Cyrus, the successor to Darius, who would release the captive Israelites to return to their land.

Correlation To You And Me

Governor Andrew Cuomo’s comment, *“God did not do that,”* reveals his attitude toward himself and God. I will enumerate some things that God did not do under Cuomo’s leadership (although He permitted it):

- the expanded abortion measures he signed into law; and
- the legalization of same sex marriage in New York.

Here, Governor Cuomo could have said this about his actions, *“God did not do that”* and spoken correctly. Neither of these things did God do. God rejects both of these practices which go against His will.

But I can relate some things that God has done on behalf of Governor Cuomo.

- God did not strike him dead for blasphemy.
- God continues to give him breath.
- God gives him food to eat.
- God elevated him to Governor of New York.

God grants grace and mercy to those whom He chooses, even sometimes to those who revile Him. He causes the sun to shine on the evil and the good and the rain to fall on the just and the unjust. (Matthew 5.45) Further, God reminds us,

“I have made the earth, the man and the beast that are upon the ground, by my great power and by my outstretched arm, and have given it unto whom it seemed meet unto me.” (Jeremiah 27.5)

“For promotion cometh neither from the east, nor from the west, nor from the south. But God is the judge: He putteth down one, and setteth up another.” (Psalm 75.6-7)

God elevates people into places of leadership as He pleases, raising up one and putting down another. God placed Andrew Cuomo into his governorship of New York. It did not happen because of any particular gifts or abilities Andrew possessed, nor help from others, nor favorable circumstances. God worked through the efforts and abilities of mankind and placed Cuomo in his position.

Has Governor Cuomo ever acknowledged that fact and given God the credit He alone deserves?

Implications To You And Me

Lest you think Governor Cuomo stands alone guilty of these offenses. He does not. He echoes the attitude of many in our day. In our pride, we take all the credit for our successes and fail to honor God for His role in them.

God's warning applies both to those who govern and the governed:

“For my name's sake will I defer mine anger, and for my praise will I refrain for thee, that I cut thee not off. Behold, I have refined thee, but not with silver; I have chosen thee in the furnace of affliction. For mine own sake, even for mine own sake, will I do it: for how should my name be polluted? and I will not give my glory unto another.” (Isaiah 48.9-11)

God does not give to another that glory that belongs to Him alone. We must repent of our shameful sins.

Where have you taken proud credit for your accomplishments without any thought of God? All such glory belongs to Him exclusively. God granted His abundant grace and mercy in your life. He gives you life and breath, and every other good thing that you enjoy. (James 1.17)

At conception, we inherit Adam and Eve's sinful natures. We are conceived in sin and go forth from birth speaking lies. We are all together sinful, helpless before a holy and sovereign God with a chasm between us and Him.

We can do nothing to bridge the gap. But God in His grace provided a Serpent-slaying, Substitutionary sacrificial Savior, His Son, Jesus Christ. To all who come to God through faith in Christ and His death and resurrection, He gives the right to become children of God. (John 1.12; 3.16)

Perhaps you trust in Christ as your Lord and Savior as I do. We know the joy and peace that we enjoy as God's children.

However, maybe you have never trusted in Christ, in fact you may fit the description of Nebuchadnezzar and Belshazzar. Today you can experience God's gift of grace and change your life.

I pray that God's Holy Spirit will come to you today and give you the new birth from above, a new heart to replace your sinful, wicked heart.

I pray that the Holy Spirit will give you the faith to turn from your proud, self-reliance to trust in Christ as your Lord and Savior.

He will begin a new life in you and change you from your helplessness to full, exuberant trust upon Christ.

I pray that He give this new life to you today.

References

1. Transcript (see @39.17): <https://www.rev.com/blog/transcripts/governor-andrew-cuomo-new-york-coronavirus-briefing-transcript-april-13>
2. Ibid.
3. History: https://www.history.com/topics/ancient-middle-east/babylonia#section_2
4. <https://www.nationalreview.com/corner/beware-governor-declaring-god-did-not-do-this-help-us-in-our-pandemic-pain-we-need-all-the-divine-help-we-can-get>

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