

The Salvation of Nebuchadnezzar

Daniel 4

Part 2

Introduction: Last week in our study of Daniel we started into Daniel 4. In this chapter we discovered the testimony of king Nebuchadnezzar as he tells his story of how his life was changed. Last week I mentioned that some see this chapter as a Gospel tract because this chapter tells the story of how the king was saved. As we enter into this chapter we find in the first three verses the king's testimony.

Notice Daniel 4:1-3

The king wanted the world to know about the relationship that he had come into with God and he wanted them to know of the greatness of God. It is very interesting in these verses how the king praises God for His mighty wonders and signs especially in light of what the king went through. For 7 years the king will go into a state of insanity, but the end result would be a changed heart.

Daniel 4:30

³⁰ *The king spake, 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 honour of my majesty?*

Daniel 4:30 reflects the heart of the king before the 7-year period. He was all about building his own kingdom through the might of his power. He was all about his own glory. But after 7 years of insanity, he was different as we see in Daniel 4:1-3. So, looking back, the king sees the time of suffering he went through was a blessing for it is that which turned his life around and he was saved.

Genesis 3:17-19

¹⁷ *And unto Adam he said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life;*

¹⁸ *Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field;*

¹⁹ *In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return.*

- The Dream
- Part 2

Notice Daniel 4:4-7

The king was sitting in his palace feeling like he was in complete control of life and then God stepped in. As we considered last week, God would take the king from the palace of comfort with the greatest tool in His toolbox. The tool is suffering and many lives have been changed and turned to God through the use of this tool. We do not like this method which God uses but it is always for our good. It may be to chastise us to get us back in fellowship, it may be to train us for a future ministry, or it may have been to bring us to the end of ourselves so that we would get saved.

God would get the attention of the king through a dream for the second time. The dream troubled the king and so he called upon his wise men to make the dream known. These men had proved to be worthless with the first dream, and it was no different with the second dream. Why did the king call on these men when they had failed with the first dream? Let us understand that since the first dream many believe 20 years have passed. Possibly these were different men. Maybe he called upon the wise men because the dream made him afraid and he wanted someone to give him an interpretation that would make him feel better. Remember that in the first dream he was told that he was the head of gold, but his kingdom would one day fall.

Application:

The sin nature will always desire to seek advice or direction that corresponds with what we want to hear. What we need to hear is the Truth because it is the Truth that sets a person free.

Notice Daniel 4:8

Possibly Daniel allowed the wise men to go in before him just to show they were spiritually empty.

Daniel 2:48

⁴⁸ *Then the king made Daniel a great man, and gave him many great gifts, and made him ruler over the whole province of Babylon, and chief of the governors over all the wise men of Babylon.*

Daniel was over the wise men so this may have been part of the plan of Daniel as he desired to see the king saved. In Daniel 4:8 the king makes it very clear that Daniel was different than all the other wise men. Nebuchadnezzar did not know about the Spirit of God in Daniel for he believed it was the spirit of the holy gods.

Application:

This is the way in which the world is to see us as believers. We are to be different in the sense that we are to be people who are upright and honest.

Philippians 2:14-15

¹⁴ Do all things without murmurings and disputings:

¹⁵ That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world;

Notice Daniel 4:9-11

In the dream the king saw a tree. The tree was visible to the entire world. As the king watched the tree grow until it was very great in size. This tree represents king Nebuchadnezzar and his kingdom. In the Bible trees are often used to picture man.

Psalms 1:1-3

Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful.

² But his delight is in the law of the LORD; and in his law doth he meditate day and night.

³ And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper.

Psalms 92:12

¹² The righteous shall flourish like the palm tree: he shall grow like a cedar in Lebanon.

Getting back to our verses we can better understand now the size of the kingdom of Nebuchadnezzar. It was known throughout the entire world.

Notice Daniel 4:12

This tree also provided for people and creatures. There were many who benefitted from the kingdom of Babylon. This kingdom touched many different lives.

Notice Daniel 4:13

As the king watched and admired the tree there was a watcher who came down from heaven. This was an angel and he came to announce the will of God. I want to stop here for a few thoughts on angels.

Angels play major rolls in the plan of God. They are ministering spirits that minister to us who are heirs of salvation.

Hebrews 1:13-14

¹³ But to which of the angels said he at any time, Sit on my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool?

¹⁴ Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?

They will be present when we die to transport us into the presence of the Lord.

Luke 16:22

²² And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom: the rich man also died, and was buried;

They will be used by God to bring about the judgments of the Tribulation:

Revelation 16:1-3

And I heard a great voice out of the temple saying to the seven angels, Go your ways, and pour out the vials of the wrath of God upon the earth.

² And the first went, and poured out his vial upon the earth; and there fell a noisome and grievous sore upon the men which had the mark of the beast, and upon them which worshipped his image.

³ And the second angel poured out his vial upon the sea; and it became as the blood of a dead man: and every living soul died in the sea.

There will be an angel that will proclaim the Gospel during the Tribulation.

Revelation 14:6

⁶ And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people,

It will be an angel who will announce the rapture.

1 Thessalonians 4:16-17

¹⁶ For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first:

¹⁷ Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.

Notice Daniel 4:14-15

The command was to cut the tree down but let the stump and the roots remain. This would be the judgment of God upon Nebuchadnezzar, but it did not come without a warning. Also, when the judgment did fall upon the king it would not destroy him. The stump and the roots would remain because the judgment was temporary and the king would eventually come back to power.

Application:

There are several points of application here.

- 1. God always gives a warning before His judgment falls.**

Let us consider the flood.

Genesis 6:1-3

And it came to pass, when men began to multiply on the face of the earth, and daughters were born unto them,

² That the sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair; and they took them wives of all which they chose.

³ And the LORD said, My spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh: yet his days shall be an hundred and twenty years.

2 Peter 2:5

⁵ And spared not the old world, but saved Noah the eighth person, a preacher of righteousness, bringing in the flood upon the world of the ungodly;

Noah worked on the ark for 120 years and preached of the coming judgment as he worked.

Another example is the Babylonian captivity.

Jeremiah 1:14-19

¹⁴ Then the LORD said unto me, Out of the north an evil shall break forth upon all the inhabitants of the land.

¹⁵ For, lo, I will call all the families of the kingdoms of the north, saith the LORD; and they shall come, and they shall set every one his throne at the entering of the gates of Jerusalem, and against all the walls thereof round about, and against all the cities of Judah.

¹⁶ And I will utter my judgments against them touching all their wickedness, who have forsaken me, and have burned incense unto other gods, and worshipped the works of their own hands.

¹⁷ Thou therefore gird up thy loins, and arise, and speak unto them all that I command thee: be not dismayed at their faces, lest I confound thee before them.

¹⁸ For, behold, I have made thee this day a defenced city, and an iron pillar, and brasen walls against the whole land, against the kings of Judah, against the princes thereof, against the priests thereof, and against the people of the land.

¹⁹ And they shall fight against thee; but they shall not prevail against thee; for I am with thee, saith the LORD, to deliver thee.

God also has given warnings of the coming Tribulation. He uses preachers, events in our world that are setting the stage for the fulfillment of prophecy, and all that is recorded in His Word.

Conclusion:

2. God is a God of justice and grace.

Nebuchadnezzar would not perish but through the judgment he would be saved. The iron and brass band on the stump was for preservation. I am reminded that in the midst of the judgment of the Tribulation there will be an innumerable number of people saved. In the judgment of the flood Noah and his family were saved and through them the promise of Genesis 3:15 was preserved.