

“FAITH UNDER PRESSURE”
STUDIES IN THE BOOK OF DANIEL
Daniel 4:1-37
“Deliverance Through Brokenness”

Introduction: Sometimes God will break you to fix you. King Nebuchadnezzar is an example of the dangers of being consumed by pride and arrogance.

SECTION I: LIVING THE BABYLONIAN DREAM (Daniel 4:1-17).

- A. The literary structure of Daniel 4 is like an epistle or letter to the nations. Nebuchadnezzar makes an international declaration, a proclamation to all the nations of the earth. This is a hint of God’s evangelistic mission to all the nations of the earth. Outreach efforts need to be intercultural and intergenerational.
- B. Nebuchadnezzar was living the dream. Amid his worldly success and comfort Nebuchadnezzar has another troubling dream. He seeks the spiritual counsel of the wise men and yet again they fail to interpret the dream. Daniel is an example of a Spirit filled believer. Are you in tune with the Spirit of God to provide godly counsel to unbelievers?
- C. Nebuchadnezzar describes his dream. He saw a very tall tree in the middle of the earth. The tree grew and became strong. The leaves are nice looking with abundant fruit. Animals take shelter under the tree and on the tree. A watcher/holy one (angel) comes down from heaven and speaks. The tree is described as a person who will be given the mind of an animal. This judgement is limited to 7 years. The purpose of the judgement is to teach that God rules in the kingdom of humanity and gives it to whoever He wills and sets the lowest of men over it.

SECTION II: A HEAVENLY HELPING OF HUMBLE PIE (Daniel 4:18-33)

- A. Nebuchadnezzar insisted on learning the interpretation. Daniel wisely and sincerely answered in a way that indicated he did not rejoice over the judgement coming upon the king. The tree in the dream represents Nebuchadnezzar (Ezekiel 31:3-14; Matthew 13:31-32). The fruit alludes to a source of provision and the shelter it provides alludes to a source of protection. The strength and prosperity of the Babylonian kingdom was directly connected to Nebuchadnezzar. Nebuchadnezzar would live among the animals of the field for 7 years.
- B. Daniel urges Nebuchadnezzar to repent. One year later Nebuchadnezzar makes a prideful statement. He was suffering from arrogance. God’s warning of the consequence of disobedience mentions some of the same language in Nebuchadnezzar’s dream (Leviticus 26:18-20). Other passages related to pride include Proverbs 8:13; Proverbs 11:2; Proverbs 16:5; Proverbs 16:18; Proverbs 18:12; Proverbs 29:23.
- C. Immediately Nebuchadnezzar hears the pronouncement of the foretold judgement. He is given the mind of an animal. He ate grass like an ox, he was wet with dew, his hair grew long, and his nails grew long due to a lack of grooming for several years. His mental condition seems like clinical lycanthropy (boanthropy) which is a rare mental condition that causes a person to think they are an animal or act like an animal.

SECTION III: HEAD KNOWLEDGE TO HEART KNOWLEDGE (Daniel 4:34-37).

- A.** God who is rich in mercy by His amazing grace restored Nebuchadnezzar's mind after the set time. Now he knew God is greater than all, sovereign, and all powerful. God knows how to break down pride. Nebuchadnezzar received heart knowledge. When the heart is transformed conversion takes place.
- B.** God restored Nebuchadnezzar to his position as king with the upgrade of excellent majesty. God delivered Nebuchadnezzar from pride. He was transformed from a prideful pagan to a praising preacher. When God transforms your life, you can't keep it to yourself. Nebuchadnezzar shared his testimony with all the nations. Now his testimony is documented in Holy Scripture for all the nations of the earth to read.
- C.** God does not want people operating in prideful narcissistic leadership. God wants us to exemplify humble servant leadership (Matthew 23:12; Romans 12:3; 1 Peter 5:6; Matthew 20:25-27). Christ is our example of humble servant leadership (Philippians 2:5-8).

DO YOU HAVE HEAD KNOWLEDGE AND HEART KNOWLEDGE OF THE LORD CHRIST JESUS? UNLESS YOU ARE BORN AGAIN YOU WILL NOT SEE THE KINGDOM OF GOD. REFUSING TO SURRENDER YOUR LIFE TO GOD IS SINFUL PRIDE. REPENT FROM YOUR PRIDE AND TRUST IN THE LORD JESUS FOR SALVATION. IF YOU CONFESS WITH YOUR MOUTH JESUS IS LORD AND BELIEVE IN YOUR HEART GOD RAISED HIM FROM THE DEAD YOU WILL BE SAVED. WILL YOU MOVE FROM HEAD KNOWLEDGE TO HEART KNOWLEDGE TODAY?

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