

Daniel 4
SA230101

“Opening Eyes through Affliction”

1. We all have those people we believe can never be saved.
 - **I** can think of one right now.
 - **But** as Jesus said, with God ALL things are possible.
2. And there are numerous cases throughout history where God has saved people that everyone believed to be unsavable.
 - **And** I believe that one of them was Nebuchadnezzar.
3. Some would argue that this chapter does not necessarily show he got saved.
 - **But** I believe the fruit shows that he was.
4. So how does God break and change someone?
 - **There** are different ways depending on what is needed for that individual, but one of the main ways is to bring in “extreme hardship.”
5. It is often the person complaining that if there was a God of love why is this happening to them.
 - **When** that is the exact reason it is happening to them.

- **In other words**, it is God Himself causing the horrible things to happen in order to get their attention and break them.

6. Let me ask you a question.

- **Which** is better and which is true love?
 - a. To bless someone's life in their sin and see them spend eternity in hell.
 - b. Or to allow calamity in their life in order to bring them to repentance and see them forever in heaven?

7. We will see in chapter four that God's love was so great for Nebuchadnezzar, He brought calamity into his life in order to bring heaven into his future.

- **And** there may be someone in here today that is in the same position.

v.1 1. Worldwide public testimony!

- **I** sometimes have trouble with my neighbor!
- **But** this is what happens when God does great things in our lives.

2. Notice "Peace be multiplied!"

- **Not** a typical characteristic of Nebuchadnezzar!
- **This** is a changed man.

v.2 He had heard of the Lord and seen Him in Daniel, but now it's personal.

- **And** until it becomes personal, we have no hope of heaven.

v.3 1. Notice "His" kingdom is everlasting.

- Not long before this Nebuchadnezzar felt HIS kingdom was everlasting as represented in the statue of gold.

2. Yet brokenness brings humility and reality.

- **Both** of which Nebuchadnezzar now had.

v.5 1. If he was flourishing and at rest, why would God so radically disrupt his life?

- **As** we noted, that is what it often takes for people like Nebuchadnezzar.

2. The problem with the trouble-free life for the unbeliever is that they can be deceived into thinking this life is all that matters and judgment for sin is not in their future.

- **But** troubles disrupt all of that.

v.13 A "watcher" – We need to realize that everything we say and do is seen by the Lord.

- **Not** only is God watching but His angels are watching and reporting as well.

v.18 1. Nebuchadnezzar saw something different in Daniel as compared to his other “wise” men and that of course was the living God.

- **And** if you know the Lord, the people around you see something different as well.

2. Notice he says the others were unable to interpret the dream and that might be true.

- **But** with all that had happened to Nebuchadnezzar and Babylon, this particular dream is not that hard to figure out.

- **I** believe it’s very possible they knew what the dream meant and simply played dumb out of fear.

3. You see, the end result for Nebuchadnezzar in this dream is not good.

- **And** they all knew his propensity for rage and destruction.

4. But we are going to see that Daniel, though maybe fearful as well, will not shy away from telling the King the truth.

- **And** how we need people in our life like this, and how we need to BE people like this ourselves.

v.19 1. Notice the loving and caring response of Daniel toward this unsaved cruel leader.

- **It** was one of compassion and broken heartedness.

2. Why?

- **Because** Daniel realized that although he was evil and cruel, hell is forever.
- **And** if we can spare ANYONE from going there, we should make the effort.

3. Which meant even though it was hard, he had to speak the truth in love.

- **Proverbs** says that “open rebuke is better than love carefully concealed”, and “the wounds of a friend are faithful”.
- **Which** means although hard, it is ultimately the most loving and caring thing we can do.

4. And notice also that even though it was hard, he didn't water it down.

- **He** told the straightforward truth but did it in love.

v.25 In other words you're not the boss Nebuchadnezzar, the Lord is.

- **At** this point Nebuchadnezzar thought he was running the show.

v.26 1. Notice that God “chopped him down.”

- God knows how to humble us.
2. There is a mental condition known today as ‘Lycanthropy’ where one thinks he is an animal and acts like one.
- **This** is where we get the myths of werewolves.

v.27 1. The bottom line is that Daniel is telling Nebuchadnezzar that he needs to repent.

- **The** problem is he doesn’t listen, so now the consequences come.
 - **How** many consequences could be avoided if we would simply repent.
2. Daniel says there is hope if he repents.
- **But** Nebuchadnezzar was too caught up in personal pride and refused to listen.
 - **It** is important that if we ever have to confront, we offer hope.

v.29 1. Notice “at the end of 12 months!”

- **Look** how long gave him to repent!
- **What** a gracious God!

v.32 1. My question is: did it take 7 years of this misery before Nebuchadnezzar would finally break...

- **Or** was this simply the time God chose as an appropriate consequence?

2. If we want to live like an animal, God will let us.
- **But** how many consequences will we have to face before we repent?

v.30 1. Notice all the I's and My's in this verse.

- **Very** clearly Nebuchadnezzar was not yet "getting it."
- **He** was still walking around his palace thinking about how great he was.

2. And as we noted in earlier studies Babylon was indeed an amazing city.

- **Babylon** was an awesome place.
- **It** had one of the 7 wonders of the world at this time, the "Hanging gardens of Babylon" **where** a mountain of trees and flowers rose some 400 ft. into the air. It was said to be visible hundreds of miles away.

v.34 1. When Nebuchadnezzar was finally humble notice he looked up to the Lord.

- **And** this is a true sign of humility.

2. And notice of true humility.

- **He** finally "understands" it is all about God and not about him.
- **Which** then leads to praise!

v. 36 1. Notice also how wonderful and gracious God is that he didn't permanently remove Nebuchadnezzar for his pride. After he repented, God actually restored him to his former position!

- **And** even added honor!
- **The** Bible says that if we humble ourselves, God will exalt us.

2. Here's the point.

- **Don't** ever think that God will never use you again just because you've blown it big time.

3. God is very gracious in how He deals with us.

- **And** if you have messed up, no matter how bad, if you humble yourself and ask forgiveness, God will restore you.

v.37 1. He ends this proclamation by reasserting that now instead of glorifying himself, he is now glorifying the Lord.

- **If** you have family or friends that are so prideful you don't think they can ever be reached, think again.
- **God** IS able to humble those with the greatest of pride and gracious enough to forgive them.

2. Is God showing you that you are like Nebuchadnezzar and need to humble yourself before Him?

- If so, I encourage you to respond to His Spirit.
3. Because as we saw today God is more than able to humble even the most prideful of people.
- **And** it's much better to respond and humble ourselves than wait until God has to intervene.