

Corresponds to Programs 87, 88

Unless otherwise noted, all Scripture quotations are from the NKJV and KJV.

Daniel 4 – Parts 1 & 2 STUDY GUIDE

DANIEL 4 – PART 1

Daniel 4:1-5

Often it is when we are caught up in a false security that God allows our lives to be troubled. This was the case with King Nebuchadnezzar, who was about to share how God worked to bring him a genuine salvation experience.

Even his greeting, “peace be multiplied unto you,” indicates that things had changed for the once proud king. This almost sounds like a salutation from the Apostle Paul rather than a proud despot, but we should consider that Paul and Nebuchadnezzar had some things in common: they both persecuted God’s people, they both saw the Son of God, and as we are about to read, they both had radical conversions (Acts 9:1-16).

Another key to this chapter is that it shows us that there is a place for everyone to work and testify for God. Nebuchadnezzar wrote Daniel chapter 4, not Daniel. It is the king’s personal testimony, something that every person who accepts Christ as their personal Savior will have. Our personal testimony of what Christ has done for us is unique, one of a kind.

Daniel 4:6-8

The basic testimony of every converted soul is that all the wisdom of the world cannot really satisfy what troubles us. Nebuchadnezzar has another dream and he shares it with his wise men, this time without a death threat. The king gives the men of this world another opportunity. They don’t have to come up with what the king dreamed, they just have to interpret it,

yet even here they fail. Then Nebuchadnezzar turns to God by calling on Daniel. From this we learn that when the world fails us, we can turn to God. Only God can help with what really troubles us. And when we seek Him earnestly with our whole heart, He will be there for us.

Daniel 4:9-18



“...Is not this great Babylon, that I have built for a royal dwelling by my mighty power and for the honor of my majesty?” **DANIEL 4:30**

“Leave the stump... with a band of iron and brass” (Daniel 4:15). Even in loss and affliction, God’s heart is seeking to redeem and save.

Our lives may be falling apart, “nevertheless.”

Our failures and weaknesses may overwhelm us, “nevertheless.”

Our hopes and dreams may be like ropes of sand, “nevertheless.”

Throughout the judgments that fall upon Nebuchadnezzar, the years of humility and suffering, God says, “nevertheless.” And that is what God longs to say in all our affliction, pain, and loss when we place our faith in Him.

“Nevertheless,” I have a plan for you, a future, a hope (Jeremiah 29:11).

“Nevertheless,” your kingdom, the one that is predicated on your accepting Me as your Lord and Savior, is sure; your eternal life, certain.

Daniel 4:19

Daniel reveals a sanctified reluctance when Nebuchadnezzar asks him to explain the dream. Daniel is so reluctant that he tells the king that this dream (which God gave the king) is for his enemies. Despite his godly reluctance, Daniel is faithful to

KEY SCRIPTURES

Dan. 4:4 I WAS FLOURISHING IN MY PALACE

Gen. 1:26 LET US MAKE MAN IN OUR IMAGE

Dan. 4:23 CHOP DOWN THE TREE AND DESTROY IT

Mat. 13:31 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN IS LIKE A MUSTARD SEED

God and the king, and makes the dream known. While some of us don't have a reluctant bone in our body, others of us are so reluctant to share God's truth that we don't say anything lest we offend anyone.

These are two extremes:

1. Not a godly reluctance, so we blast people, turning them away from God.
2. Not a godly love, so we neglect to tell people the truth.

Daniel reveals a perfect, grace-led balance. We don't need to be confrontational and obnoxious: we can learn from Daniel and be filled with grace, yet seasoned with salt (Colossians 4:6). Daniel was reluctant but not negligent. Each of us can find that same balance through the grace of Christ.

Daniel 4:20-28

Daniel's faithfulness and balance made all the difference for Nebuchadnezzar. This is how God works through His people. He calls them to be faithful to share a message that is balanced. This balanced message, faithfully shared, brings people to God.

Daniel 4:28-33

We are looking at the longest timeout in the Bible: seven years. There is another timeout in the New Testament: Zacharias was put on a nine-month timeout for not believing the testimony of Gabriel (Luke 1:20). Rebuke-chasten-discipline is a love language used by God to bring us unto salvation (Hebrews 12:6; Revelation 3:19). God uses different methods and encourages us to follow His lead.

Genesis 1:26

God made man in His image and gave him dominion over the beasts of the sea, the earth, and of the air. When mankind sinned, they lost the image of God and they began to reveal the image of the animal nature that we were supposed to have dominion over. God uses beasts in Daniel and Revelation to reveal that the kingdoms of this world have become animalistic. God allows Nebuchadnezzar to behave like a literal beast in order for him to decide if this is what he really wants.

Like Nebuchadnezzar, fallen man has become beastly in nature. Consequently, we naturally align with the three end-time powers likened unto the beast from the sea, the beast from the earth, and the beast of the air, unless we are transformed by the grace of God (Revelation 16:13). God is speaking to Nebuchadnezzar, "you are acting like a beast, do you really want to be like a beast?" Like Nebuchadnezzar, if we are acting like a beast, we are preparing to receive the mark of the beast.

Matthew 13:31, 32

Jesus' words here connect to Daniel 4 and bring much needed clarity. God's kingdom is symbolized by a tree, just like

Nebuchadnezzar's kingdom was likened to a tree, yet God's kingdom tree will not be cut down or given to others. It will last forever. God wants Nebuchadnezzar to realize that all he is and has, has come from God. If we acknowledge this, we will be part of the tree that represents God's eternal kingdom.

Daniel 4:34-37

This is clear and present evidence that Nebuchadnezzar is finally a fully converted man. He has just come through what could be described as one of the greatest trials in all the Bible, and the first thing this wild man, who was once the king of the world, does, is praise God. Thank You and praise You, God, for taking everything away from me and making me into a wild man who could only dwell with the beasts of the field. You are an awesome God! This is what genuine conversion looks like in fallen, prideful human beings!

God's goodness is seen again and again in our trials. God chastens. God restores. God chastens in order to restore. God longs to bring us to our best self, our "image of God" self, the self that is dead to sin and sold out for God.

God does anything and everything He can to save people, even if He has to make them like beasts for seven years. You can ask God what He is doing, but it is a rhetorical question in a sense. God is doing whatever it takes to save people from sin and pride. And now Nebuchadnezzar understands this from his own personal experience. We may not understand exactly why God is doing what He is doing, but we can always know what motivates God. God is doing everything He can to restore us to His everlasting kingdom.

God restores Nebuchadnezzar's reason. Since the fall of mankind, we have lost our reason and God wants to restore that to us. God restores Nebuchadnezzar's honor and brightness. Since the fall, we have lost the honor and brightness of God's image and He wants to restore that to us. Nebuchadnezzar was restored to his earthly kingdom with a crown, a robe, a throne, and his counselors. Everything Nebuchadnezzar received back, God has promised to restore unto those who place their trust in Him (Revelation 4:4; 5:9, 10).

Just like Nebuchadnezzar's kingdom was restored to him following seven wild years, just so mankind will be fully restored to the original dominion after seven thousand years. Mankind's restoration will be more fully realized at the end of the millennium (2 Peter 3:8).

Summary

God is doing everything possible to rescue us from a false security, even if that means allowing us to go through some difficult trials. This is because false security often leads us to pride and self-sufficiency. Ultimately, God wants to save us from our fallen animal natures and restore us to His everlasting kingdom. This means we cease to act like brute beasts, rising above our sinful natures. This may seem like an im-

possible task for some, but God knows what it takes and He is able. If God can save and transform Nebuchadnezzar, God can save and transform anybody. Please ask God to trans-

form your heart today. Just ask Him to come into your heart, forgive your sins, make you a new creation, and pray in Jesus name. Amen. ★

