

Prayer:

Slide # 1

Theme: God is Sovereign over History

Outline:

- A. The personal history of the prophet Daniel – chapter 1
- B. The prophetic history of the Gentiles – chapters 2-7**
- C. The prophetic history of Israel – chapters 8-12

A major event in the history of Israel was being taken captive to Babylon for 70 years. Shortly after being taken to Babylon, it was discovered that Daniel was gifted by God to have understanding in visions and dreams (1:17). Early in the reign of Nebuchadnezzar, Daniel was able to tell the king his dream and the meaning of it. He was immediately promoted to being ruler over the whole province of Babylon (2:48).

After Nebuchadnezzar was well established in his kingdom, he had another dream many years later. What happened in relation to this dream proved to be life-changing for Nebuchadnezzar. Daniel 4 is Nebuchadnezzar’s personal testimony of conversion. It is a LORDSHIP testimony whereby he came to personally recognize God’s absolute sovereign authority over him.

After none of the wise men in his kingdom could interpret this dream – Daniel was called in. The king then shared the dream with Daniel and told him to interpret it, knowing that he was able to do so.

This is where we pick up the narrative – at Daniel 4:19.

19 Then Daniel, whose name was Belteshazzar, was astonished for a time, and his thoughts troubled him. So the king spoke, and said, “Belteshazzar, do not let the dream or its interpretation trouble you.” Belteshazzar answered and said, “My lord, may the dream concern those who hate you, and its interpretation concern your enemies!

This is an amazing interchange between Daniel and Nebuchadnezzar. As Daniel heard the dream, God immediately gave him understanding of it. He was astonished (or stunned) for a while at what it meant with his thoughts troubling him.

The NKJV says he was “astonished for a time.” The Aramaic text literally says, “He was stupefied for one hour.” However, essentially, everyone agrees that it was not a literal hour as we know it. It simply meant for a definite period of time or, as we might say, “for a while”.

As it unfolds, we see why his thoughts were troubled. Immediately, he understood what this meant for the king and how humbling it would be.

The king told Daniel not to let the dream trouble him and, in effect, to proceed in declaring what it meant.

Daniel then, with great respect, responded by saying, “***May the dream concern those who hate you, and its interpretation concern your enemies!***”

This is quite amazing. Daniel had worked closely with the king professionally for many years. We believe it was about 35 years into his reign, and for most of those years, Daniel had been the king’s right-hand man as ruler over the province of Babylon. They had evidently gotten close.

Daniel, in effect, wishes that what the dream portrayed applied to the king’s enemies instead of to him. He doesn’t want these bad things to happen to the king. Daniel’s loyalty to the king was shining through.

Again, this is quite amazing considering that it had been Nebuchadnezzar who destroyed his homeland, destroyed the city of Jerusalem, destroyed the temple, took captive all his people, and subjugated him to the status of being an eunuch. We might suspect with that background that Daniel would celebrate his fall, but that would be wrong! Instead, Daniel felt empathy for the king.

I think we see here Daniel’s theology coming through. He knew God was sovereign. He knew that they, as a people, were here under discipline. And very possibly, he knew what the prophet Jeremiah had said.

Slide # 2

Jeremiah 29:7 (NKJV)

7 And seek the peace of the city where I have caused you to be carried away captive, and pray to the LORD for it; for in its peace you will have peace.

But then, in accordance with the king’s wishes, Daniel spelled out the meaning of the dream.

20 “The tree that you saw, which grew and became strong, whose height reached to the heavens and which could be seen by all the earth,

21 whose leaves were lovely and its fruit abundant, in which was food for all, under which the beasts of the field dwelt, and in whose branches the birds of the heaven had their home—

22 it is you, O king, who have grown and become strong; for your greatness has grown and reaches to the heavens, and your dominion to the end of the earth.

The tree in the dream that became great represented King Nebuchadnezzar. In the OT trees were often symbolic of leaders (Judg. 9:7-15; Ezek. 31:2-14; Zech. 11:1-2).

When Daniel forthrightly said, “***it is you, O king,***” that is similar to when Nathan the prophet said to David, “***You are the man!***” (2 Sam. 12:7) Daniel flat out applies the dream to Nebuchadnezzar. Indeed, Nebuchadnezzar was at the height of his reign and had prospered in every way to where he had a worldwide imprint.

23 “And inasmuch as the king saw a watcher, a holy one, coming down from heaven and saying, ‘Chop down the tree and destroy it, but leave its stump and roots in the earth, bound with a band of iron and bronze in the tender grass of the field; let it be wet with the dew of heaven, and let him graze with the beasts of the field, till seven times pass over him’;

The “watcher” is also called “a holy one,” which we believe to have been a holy angel doing God’s bidding. The message is clearly from heaven.

The holy watcher said, “Chop down the tree...but leave its stump and roots.” This plainly indicated that Nebuchadnezzar was coming DOWN with a major THUD! Yet, the stump and roots would remain in place, indicating an eventual comeback.

The stump and roots bound with a band of iron and bronze are thought to signify protection. Even though he would FALL, in a dormant state, his throne would be preserved.

This is what C.S. Lewis referred to as “Severe Mercy”. It was severe in that he would be inflicted with “insanity,” but there was also mercy in that the stump and roots would be preserved.

In his FALL, Nebuchadnezzar would experience a form of insanity, living out in the field like an animal. He would graze with the beasts of the field. And he would persist in this condition **“till seven times pass over him,”** which most believe refers to seven years (cf. Dan. 7:25).

24 this is the interpretation, O king, and this is the decree of the Most High, which has come upon my lord the king:

Daniel was loyal to the king, but he did not water down the message. This was the decree of the Most High, directed to the king. Although angels were involved in the process, the decree was from God Himself (cf. v. 17).

25 They shall drive you from men, your dwelling shall be with the beasts of the field, and they shall make you eat grass like oxen. They shall wet you with the dew of heaven, and seven times shall pass over you, till you know that the Most High rules in the kingdom of men, and gives it to whomever He chooses.

Nebuchadnezzar was about to be driven out of the palace and out the sight of society in general – out to the field where he would subsist like an animal. He was about to live on a sub-human level – like a grass grazing animal. And he would remain in that condition until seven times passed over him, and till he knows “that the Most High rules in the kingdom of men, and gives it to whomever He chooses.”

God was about to turn Nebuchadnezzar into a MAJOR object lesson. Pride is a really stubborn thing. You would think after a few hours, he would be ready to look up to heaven and say, “UNCLE”. But no, it would take him seven years of grass eating to get there.

Sometimes, we wonder – how can people be so stubborn? But then we might ask: “Why did I wait so long?” Depravity is a stubborn thing, and sometimes it takes a lot to humble great pride. And often, people harden themselves to the point of no return! Don’t go there!

In being “chopped down,” Nebuchadnezzar would temporarily lose his mind, his dignity, and his throne. It was going to be a great exercise in being humbled.

Note that the great issue in view is God’s sovereignty – which is to say, His LORDSHIP! Nebuchadnezzar would not be restored UNTIL he recognized God’s sovereign rule in the kingdom of men and that He gives it to whomever He chooses. In other words, he would not be restored until he recognized the LORDSHIP of God! That was the great issue!

He would not be restored until he recognized that there are no self-made men. Rather, people are in leadership because of God's sovereign appointment (Rom. 13:1). Nebuchadnezzar had previously recognized the sovereignty of God in terms of Him being greater than all other gods, in terms of Him being omniscient and in terms of Him being all-powerful (cf. Dan. 2:47; 3:29).

But one thing was lacking: Nebuchadnezzar had not yet recognized God's sovereign authority over him personally. He still thought he was a self-made man. He had not yet personally bowed before the truth of God's sovereign authority!

Moses was enrolled in God's "desert university" for 40 years and he emerged as the most humble man in the world.

Slide # 3

Numbers 12:3 (NKJV)

3 (Now the man Moses was very humble, more than all men who were on the face of the earth.)

Nebuchadnezzar was about to be enrolled in God's "seven-year pasture" program, which would serve to humble him. Whether it is the desert or the pasture - God has a way of humbling people.

The message needing to be learned was that HEAVEN RULES over those who rule on earth. God is sovereign over all. People naturally have a problem with God's sovereignty, but it is shown to be the main issue here in Daniel 4.

26 "And inasmuch as they gave the command to leave the stump and roots of the tree, your kingdom shall be assured to you, after you come to know that Heaven rules.

There is a double command here: one to chop down the tree, and another to preserve the stump and the roots of the tree. This was an assurance that the kingdom of Nebuchadnezzar would be restored – but that would only happen AFTER he came to "know that Heaven rules."

Until he was humbled, he would not be restored! Until he recognized God's sovereignty, he would not be restored! There is a personal application to every life. Until one comes to submit to the truth of God's sovereignty on a personal level, one lives in the realm of spiritual insanity.

27 Therefore, O king, let my advice be acceptable to you; break off your sins by being righteous, and your iniquities by showing mercy to the poor. Perhaps there may be a lengthening of your prosperity.”

Daniel here shared the truth in love in the sense of doing the work of an evangelist (cf. 2 Cor. 5:20). Very graciously, he entreated the king to heed his advice.

And his counsel was to break off his sins and his iniquities. This was a call to repentance, which is demonstrated in a change of behavior. Repentance is a change of mind about sin that demonstrates itself in a change of behavior (cf. Acts 20:21).

Sins (Heb. charity) refers to moral failings or violations of God's commandments. It emphasizes the idea of missing the mark or falling short of God's standards.

Iniquities refers to moral perversion or that which is morally bent or crooked.

Daniel was calling on Nebuchadnezzar to repent and align with God's moral standards of righteousness, which would demonstrate itself in how he treated people. Daniel said if he did so, then perhaps there would be a lengthening of his prosperity.

Again, we see that Daniel doesn't want this severe JUDGMENT to fall upon Nebuchadnezzar. He was well aware of Nebuchadnezzar's cruelty. He mercilessly had the sons of King Zedekiah murdered in front of him and then had his eyes cut out, so this was the last thing he ever saw (2 Kg. 25:5-8). He thought nothing of having people thrown into the burning fiery furnace for not obeying his command (Dan. 3). He could be exceedingly ruthless! Yet, Daniel pleaded for him to repent, saying that if he did, perhaps judgment could be put off.

This whole chapter is very strong on emphasizing the SOVEREIGNTY of God, but in balance, note that Daniel here in verse 27 also emphasized human RESPONSIBILITY and holds out the possibility of judgment being averted – at least for a while if repentance takes place.

How should we understand Daniel's statement of “ Perhaps....”?

Slide # 4

Numbers 23:19 (NKJV)

19 “God is not a man, that He should lie, Nor a son of man, that He should repent. **Has He said, and will He not do? Or has He spoken, and will He not make it good?**

Here the emphasis is that God does not change His mind.

Slide # 5**Jeremiah 18:7–8 (NKJV)**

7 The instant I speak concerning a nation and concerning a kingdom, to pluck up, to pull down, and to destroy it,

8 **if that nation against whom I have spoken turns from its evil, I will relent of the disaster that I thought to bring upon it.**

Here, God says what He will do, but there is the condition of repentance. If they repent, then God says, in this case, He will not carry through on the pronounced judgment.

In 2 Samuel 12, as a result of David’s sin, the prophet Nathan announced that the child would die (2 Sam. 12:14). David then prayed that the child would not die, but it did die.

Slide # 6**2 Samuel 12:22 (NKJV)**

22 And he said, “While the child was alive, I fasted and wept; for I said, ‘**Who can tell** whether the LORD will be gracious to me, that the child may live?’

Even though Nathan said the child would die, David thought that God still might be gracious and allow the child to live, and so he prayed accordingly. How should we think about this?

To arrive at a solution, it is important to look first at how divine promises and warnings work. When God announces His intention to reward or punish, the announcement may be unconditional or conditional. On the one hand, God sometimes issues a decree or commits Himself by oath to a particular course of action (Gen. 22:16-18; Ps. 89:3-4; 33-37). Such statements are unconditional. God announces what He will do, and He will not deviate from His announced intention. The oath gives the statement a binding quality.

On the other hand, God's promises and warnings are often conditional. He may not follow through on a warning or promise depending on how the recipient of the message responds. ... Sometimes, God's promises and warnings are not clearly marked as unconditional or conditional. This explains why the recipient of a divine warning sometimes does what is appropriate and then says, "**Who knows?** He may turn and have pity".... Joel 2:14; see also Jonah 3:9... One must wait and see how God responds in order to know if the divine announcement is conditional or unconditional."
 – **Robert Chisholm Jr.** (emphasis mine)

That is a great summary statement. Hence, Daniel said here, "Perhaps..." Daniel was thinking maybe there was a provision or conditional element involved here, but he wasn't sure.

One thing is for sure: Without repentance, judgment is certain. With repentance, "perhaps" it could be averted if a conditional sense is in view.

Ultimately, when God warns of impending judgment in the Scripture – the sense is you better REPENT. Who knows whether it is already too late, but you better repent in hopes that perhaps God's mercy will grant a stay of execution (cf. Gen. 6:3).

Now, God always knows what He is ultimately going to do and what is going to happen – but we don't – and that is the point. However, when God does make it emphatically clear then we do know because He has told us.

"God's dominion is total: ... God's rational creatures, angelic and human, have free agency, that is, the power of personal decision as to what they will do. We would not be moral beings, answerable to God the Judge, if it were not so. ... Yet the fact of free agency confronts us with mystery. God's control over our free actions chosen by ourselves, is as complete as it is over anything else; but how this can be we do not know." - **Geneva Study Bible**

God, under His SOVEREINTY, promotes some things, permits some things, and prevents some things, but it is all under His sovereign control.

Daniel's advice: Turn from your sins – turn from our **cruel and oppressive** ways. In other words, REPENT and bring forth the fruits of repentance. This is not a work for salvation statement but rather a call to biblical repentance with the fruit in the life to prove it (cf. Joel 2:13; Mt. 19:16-23).

If the king would turn from his ruthless ways and show mercy to the poor, that would indicate a change of heart that we call REPENTANCE (cf. Lk. 11:41). In short, Daniel was calling on the king to repent.

Slide # 7

Isaiah 55:6–7 (NKJV)

6 Seek the LORD while He may be found, Call upon Him while He is near.

7 Let the wicked forsake his way, And the unrighteous man his thoughts; Let him return to the LORD, And He will have mercy on him; And to our God, For He will abundantly pardon.

28 All this came upon King Nebuchadnezzar.

29 At the end of the twelve months he was walking about the royal palace of Babylon.

God is patient. There were 12 months of “grace period,” and nothing happened. Here is the thing about God giving space to repent – people, in their hardness of heart, think nothing is ever going to happen. They don’t see the urgency of responding, and so they don’t. And in the process they lose their fear of God. God’s pattern is to give space to repent, but eventually, the “grace period” runs out.

Slide # 8 [Woman at Thyatira]

Revelation 2:21 (NKJV)

21 And I gave her time to repent of her sexual immorality, and she did not repent.

Right now, we live in an entire age of GRACE. This entire period is one long “grace period” called the Church Age. The call is going out: “Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.” (2 Cor. 6:2). And the plea is “not to receive the grace of God in vain.” (2 Cor. 6:1).

The door of GRACE is still open – the invitation is still being extended. But there is an urgency all the way through the NT. One day, the age of grace will slam shut, and God’s judgment will fall, just like when God shut the door on Noah’s ark (Gen. 7:16).

Many surmise that the Nebuchadnezzar was walking around on the flat roof of his palace, where he had a good view of the city. And as he looked out he was impressed...

30 The king spoke, saying, “Is not this great Babylon, that I have built for a royal dwelling by my mighty power and for the honor of my majesty?”

There is a lot of “I” and “my” in this verse. Nebuchadnezzar was full of himself. His ego was soaring. It was all about him. He thought that he, within himself, had accomplished all this.

Nebuchadnezzar was not the original founder or builder of the city of Babylon (cf. Gen. 10:10; 11:1-9), but he greatly built it up to where it was the greatest city in the world at that time.

It’s hard to be humble when you have overwhelming success. He had prospered in every way imaginable in terms of territory conquered, in terms of gold and finances, in terms of building projects, and in terms of beautification of the city of Babylon. What wasn’t like? There was so much to be PROUD of – or so he thought.

As he looked out over the city, these are the sorts of things he may have seen.

1. A system of great double walls surrounding the city – each wall being 24 feet thick and surrounding the entire city. On the wall were a total of 360 towers – 160 feet apart.
2. Through the center of the city was a 70-foot-wide stone graded procession street having walls decorated with enameled bricks showing 120 lions and 575 dragons and bulls all arranged in alternate rows.
3. There was the famous Ishtar Gate – 35 feet high and decorated with 557 animals in bright colors. It is still in existence today, stored in the Berlin Museum.

Slide # 9



4. There was a 7-story step pyramid known as the Tower of Babylon. Nearly 60 million fired bricks were used to construct this huge tower, and on the top of it was the Temple of Marduk, containing a golden statue of Marduk, which weighed 52,000 pounds.
5. Then, there was Nebuchadnezzar’s palace. His throne room was 171 by 56 feet which was decorated with elaborate fixtures.

6. There were the world-famous hanging gardens, which were one of the seven wonders of the ancient world that Nebuchadnezzar had built for his wife.

Slide # 10



This was considered the most beautiful city in the ancient world, located on the banks of the mighty Euphrates rivers.

Indeed, it was impressive – and it was easy to **savor** these accomplishments in a **PRIDEFUL** way as he strutted around on the flat roof of his royal palace.

“Is not this great Babylon that I have built....” was the last sane thing Nebuchadnezzar said for the next seven years!

31 While the word was still in the king’s mouth, a voice fell from heaven: “King Nebuchadnezzar, to you it is spoken: the kingdom has departed from you!”

This was precision timing! While the word was still in his mouth. He wasn’t even done with his little self-promoting speech – and suddenly a **VOICE** from heaven: ***“King Nebuchadnezzar...the kingdom has departed from you!”***

TIMBER.....!

The tree fell with amazing speed!
His little world came crashing down in a breath of time.
In his pride, he didn’t even see it coming!

32 And they shall drive you from men, and your dwelling shall be with the beasts of the field. They shall make you eat grass like oxen; and seven times shall pass over you, until you know that the Most High rules in the kingdom of men, and gives it to whomever He chooses.”

They shall ***drive you*** is the sense that his senior advisors would usher him out of sight from polite society because he was now certifiably crazy. Suddenly, he wasn’t fit to stay in the palace as he took on the behavior of an animal. He was driven out – there was no choice in the matter. He had to go.

Many think that the king may have been turned out into a nearby park or the palace gardens, or something of that nature where he could be supervised and yet left alone. This may be suggested in the language of the stump and roots being protected by a band of iron and bronze. But he assumed the nature of an outdoor animal – not even an indoor pet. And so they drove him out.

Since Daniel was the highest advisor and over the whole province of Babylon, many think it very possible that Daniel was the one who kept the government in check during the king's insane absence. Very possible, but we are not given the details. Certainly, Daniel was an advocate for the king. Certainly, he had the highest of positions under the king, and certainly, he knew, according to his interpretation, that this was temporary.

Although given no care, he was protected, and in his absence, his counselors, possibly led by Daniel himself, continued to operate the kingdom efficiently. – ***John Walvoord***

This, too, shows the amazing sovereignty of God because, in those days, at any sign of weakness, rulers were commonly murdered or taken over by force. But that didn't happen here in perfect accord with the prophetic dream.

Nebuchadnezzar was **not as essential as he thought** in relation to this kingdom. In reality, God was sovereignly behind it all. People tend to think they are much more important than they are.

“Everybody is replaceable!”

Again, we note Nebuchadnezzar would remain in this condition UNTIL he acknowledged that the Most High rules in the kingdom of men and gives it to whomever he chooses.” This point is repeated **FOUR** times in the chapter (v. 17, 25, 26, 32) When God repeats something twice it is a great emphasis, when it is repeated three times that is emphatic, but four times is superlative – the strongest way of saying something!

33 That very hour the word was fulfilled concerning Nebuchadnezzar; he was driven from men and ate grass like oxen; his body was wet with the dew of heaven till his hair had grown like eagles' feathers and his nails like birds' claws.

What a humiliating turn of events!

He was a MESS! Living with wild animals. Out in the elements through the various seasons of the year. In Babylon (modern day Iraq) temperatures can range from below freezing in the winter to 120 degrees in the summer. His hair became long, matted, and coarse – like eagle feathers. His toe and fingernails grew long like claws. He even started to look like a wild animal. This was a sub-human existence.

God was making an object lesson out of him for all time!

34 And at the end of the time I, Nebuchadnezzar, lifted my eyes to heaven, and my understanding returned to me; and I blessed the Most High and praised and honored Him who lives forever: For His dominion is an everlasting dominion, And His kingdom is from generation to generation.

Before, the king's eyes had been on himself and on Babylon, but now he is looking HIGHER. Now he looked to heaven, which is to say he humbly looked to God! In looking to heaven he recognized his dependence upon God.

“Raising his eyes to heaven” implies that Nebuchadnezzar finally came to the end of himself-and sought divine help from Yahweh.

– **Thomas Constable**

This was the look of acknowledgment – the acknowledgment of God’s sovereignty over him and the whole world. He got so far down that he finally looked to heaven – and when he did, instantly, his sanity was restored.

This is similar to the LOOK and LIVE emphasis in Numbers 21 (cf. Num. 21:8-9).

Slide # 11

Isaiah 45:22 (NKJV)

22 “Look to Me, and be saved, All you ends of the earth! For I am God, and there is no other.

This is a strong Lordship passage. Nebuchadnezzar previously saw himself as his own lord, but now, being humbled, he saw the God of heaven as Sovereign. That was a HUGE change – a life-changing reality! This represents true conversion. Note his new view of God...

Slide # 12

Most High
Lives Forever
Everlasting Dominion
Kingdom from Generation to Generation

This is recognizing God for being God – for WHO He is. There is nothing about SELF here. Now it's all about God for Nebuchadnezzar to the point he was unashamedly telling the whole world!

Most kings would try to conceal any weakness or anything embarrassing, but Nebuchadnezzar put it in his official records to be spread about throughout his vast empire, and then God had it included in the inspired Word of God. An entire chapter of Daniel is given over to his testimony!

And he continued...

35 All the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing; He does according to His will in the army of heaven And among the inhabitants of the earth. No one can restrain His hand Or say to Him, “What have You done?”

This is one of the strongest statements in all the Word of God on the absolute sovereignty of God! Nebuchadnezzar was putting the whole world on notice that in all the universe and on earth there are no “big shots”. God and God alone is God!

All the inhabitants of the earth are as NOTHING. Nebuchadnezzar now says we are all a bunch of NOTHINGS before God. It kind of sounds like Paul, who said God has chosen the foolish, weak, base, despised, nothings of this world so that no flesh will glory in His sight (1 Cor. 1:26-29).

Nebuchadnezzar, in verse 30, was boasting, “***I am somebody***” – but now he realized before God that he was just **a 10 with the 1 rubbed out** - just a big nothing before God. You talk about being humbled.

Slide # 13

Isaiah 40:17 (NKJV)

17 All nations before Him are as **nothing**, And they are counted by Him **less than nothing** and worthless.

God does according to His will among all the powers of heaven. The army of heaven lines up behind Him.

No one can force God's hand or hold Him accountable! No one can challenge God. He is answerable to no one (cf. Job 33:12-13; Isa. 29:16; 45:9; Rom. 9:19-20).

If God wants to make you go eat grass with the wild donkeys for 7 years, what are you going to do about it? (cf. Dan. 5:21).

Slide # 14

Psalm 115:3 (NKJV)

3 But our God is in heaven; He does whatever He pleases.

Exactly! Nebuchadnezzar agrees and leads the praise team on this score!

Being God, He can do whatever He wants, and no one can stop Him. He is absolutely sovereign – meaning He reigns supreme over all!

I have heard people say, “When I get to heaven, I am going to ask this or that – I am going to demand an answer.” Oh, yeah, and what if God doesn't feel like answering?

Even the godly Job had to learn that you cannot challenge God in that fashion– you can only bow before His sovereignty and submit to Him, and in the end, all will be in this position (Phil. 2:9-11). Job in the end said...

Job 42:2 (NKJV)

2 “I know that You can do everything, And that no purpose of Yours can be withheld from You.

Slide # 15



36 At the same time my reason returned to me, and for the glory of my kingdom, my honor and splendor returned to me. My counselors and nobles resorted to me, I was restored to my kingdom, and excellent majesty was added to me.

Just as God had prophetically said, AFTER Nebuchadnezzar recognized that God rules in the kingdom of men, immediately his reason returned (v. 25, 26, and 32), and his glory, honor, and splendor were restored. Immediately, his counselors and nobles returned to him. His kingdom was restored, and in fact, even more greatness was added to him.

This was truly an amazing turn of events – essentially unprecedented in world history. Who goes mad for 7 years and then is fully restored to their kingdom in an even greater capacity? Only the person whom God does that for. And Nebuchadnezzar now recognized that reality. This was a total God-thing!

Slide # 16

Daniel 2:21 (NKJV)

21 And He changes the times and the seasons; **He removes kings and raises up kings**; He gives wisdom to the wise And knowledge to those who have understanding.

But what was so amazing is that in the case of Nebuchadnezzar, God did both with the same person (removed and raised up) – and it all happened in fulfillment of a prophetic dream!

37 Now I, Nebuchadnezzar, praise and extol and honor the King of heaven, all of whose works are truth, and His ways justice. And those who walk in pride He is able to put down.

“Now” denotes a definite change. Now Nebuchadnezzar praises, exalts, and honors the King of heaven. And note we might expect him to be bitter after being reduced to a grass grazer for 7 years, but no, he says all God’s works “are truth, and His ways justice.”

This is the language of conversion. The word “truth” (Heb. gashat) means right – all God’s works are RIGHT. They are not wrong. The word “justice” means just in the sense of administering the right verdict. God’s ways in dealing with people are right. He always makes the right judgment call.

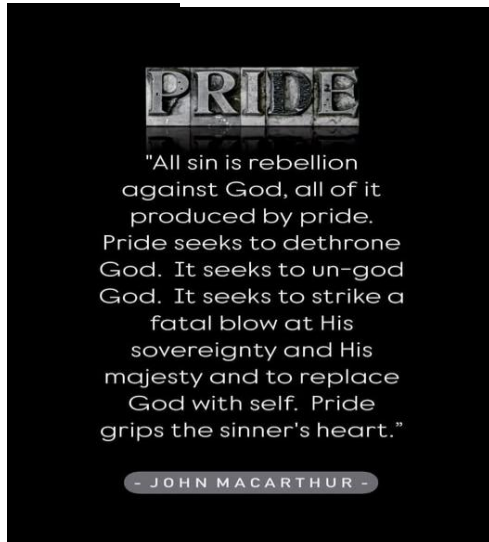
This is not the language of a rebel, but rather of a humbled convert who now praises God for how He works.

And then the last line of the chapter makes the key point of his testimony: ***“Those who walk in pride He is able to put down.”***

This is what happened to Nebuchadnezzar. God humbled him! No longer was it about himself – now he sang God’s praises alone. He exalted God above and over all. He now PERSONALLY recognized the LORDSHIP of God!

Pride is the besetting sin of mankind. In the middle of the word SIN is “I.” In the middle of the word, PRIDE is “I.” Pride is thinking and acting independently of God. In effect, it makes “self” to be lord. Self is at the center of pride, while GOD is at the center of humility.

Slide # 17



Pride and faith do not go together. In true faith, there is a humbling of SELF before God.

Slide # 18

Habakkuk 2:4 (NKJV)

4 “Behold the proud, His soul is not upright in him; But the just shall live by his faith.”

God resists the proud, but He gives grace to the humble (cf. Jer. 9:23-24; Prov. 3:34; James 4:10; 1 Pet. 5:5-6).

Some question whether or not Nebuchadnezzar was truly saved, but most agree the evidence is overwhelming that he was.

He started out his testimony by saying how “the Most High God has worked for me” and he concludes with “those who walk in pride He is able to put down.” He wanted to tell everyone how God had humbled him, and he put it into the official records of the kingdom (Dan. 4:1). Notice what he says about God.

Slide # 19***Nebuchadnezzar's Testimony!***

- v. 2 I thought it good to declare...
- v. 2 ..the Most High has worked for me.
- v. 3 How great are His signs..
- v. 3 How mighty His wonders!
- v. 3 His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom.
- v. 3 His dominion is from generation to generation.
- v. 34 I blessed the Most High
- v. 34 Praised
- v. 34 Honored
- v. 34 Him Who lives forever.
- v. 34 His dominion is everlasting...
- v. 34 His kingdom from generation to generation.

Slide # 20

- v. 35 He does according to His will in heaven and on earth
- v. 35 No one can restrain His hand...
- v. 35 He is answerable to no one.
- v. 37 Praise
- v. 37 Extol
- v. 37 Honor
- v. 37 The King of heaven
- v. 37 All whose works are truth
- v. 37 His ways justice.
- v. 37 He is able to humble those who walk in pride.

[The] verbs [used here] indicate continued action, suggesting that Nebuchadnezzar did these things habitually. These verbs embody the ideas of reverence, respect, honor, admiration, and worship.

– *The Bible Knowledge Commentary*

This is the testimony of a changed man who now PERSONALLY recognized the sovereignty of God over him and everything. It is a Lordship testimony!

Bob Deffinbaugh is a graduate of Dallas Seminary and a well-respected pastor and Bible teacher. He summarizes the thrust of Daniel 4 well.

Nebuchadnezzar appears to have come to a personal faith in God in our text, and that the sovereignty of God seems to be the crucial issue.

Up to this point, Nebuchadnezzar had been willing and able to acknowledge that God knows all and that He is all-powerful. Here, he confesses that He is Lord. In chapter 4, Nebuchadnezzar himself becomes a worshipper of God. He moves from a kind of intellectual awareness of God's character and attributes to a personal response to them, that of worship and of witness. No heathen could say the things which Nebuchadnezzar has said of God.

[The Daniel 4] passage teaches the importance of the lordship (sovereignty) of God to the doctrine of salvation. The doctrine of God's sovereignty was king Nebuchadnezzar's principle obstacle. Is the sovereignty of God something of such minor import that it can be put off until a later time, after the unbeliever has come to faith? I think not. The fall of man occurred because men failed to acknowledge and abide by the authority of God. The crucial issue which divided Jesus and the Jewish religious leaders was His authority. One cannot knowingly reject the sovereignty of God and come to Him for salvation. To come to Jesus for salvation is to come to Him as Lord.

In terms of extended testimonials in the Bible, there are TWO stand-out examples in the Bible. In the OT, there is that of Nebuchadnezzar, as laid out in Daniel 4. In the NT, there is that of the apostle Paul, whose testimony is shared in Acts 9, 22, 26, and Philipians 3.

Nebuchadnezzar comes from a total pagan background, while Paul came from an elite religious and moral background. But what they share in common is that they are both LORDSHIP conversions.

When Jesus appeared to Saul, who became known as Paul, the very first thing he said was: "Who are You, Lord?" And then immediately, "What shall I do Lord?" (Acts 22:8, 10). In Philipians 3, Paul said that he counted all things lost in view of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord and said he suffered the loss of all things that he might gain Christ (Phil. 3:8). That is a LORDSHIP testimony! And in 1 Timothy 1:15-16, he said that he is an example of all those who believe in Jesus for everlasting life.

W.E. Henley wrote a braggart poem titled "Invictus" (Unconquered)

Invictus

Out of the night that covers me, black as the pit from pole to pole,
I thank whatever gods may be for my unconquerable soul.

In the fell clutch of circumstance, I have not winced or cried aloud,
Under the bludgeoning of chance – My head is bloody, but unbowed.

Beyond this place of wrath and tears looms but the horror of the
shade;
And yet the menace of the years – Finds, and shall find me, unafraid.
It matters not how strait the gate, how charged with punishment the
scroll,
I am the master of my fate; I am the captain of my soul.

In contrast to that is the poem of Dorothea Day titled “My Captain”

My Captain

Out of the light that dazzles me, Bright as the sun from pole to pole,
I thank the God I know to be For Christ – the Conqueror of my soul.
Since His the sway of circumstance I would not wince, nor cry aloud.
Under that rule which men call chance, my head, with joy, is humbly
bowed.

Beyond this place of sin and tears, that life with Him! And His the aid
That, spite the menace of the years, keeps, and will keep, me
unafraid.
I have no fear though strait the gate; He cleared from punishment the
scroll.
Christ is the Master of my fate; Christ is the captain of my soul!

Which poem defines you? Are you an “unconquerable soul,” or has Christ
conquered your soul? Are you the supposed “master of your fate”, or is
Christ your Master?

Romans 10:13 (NKJV)

13 For “whoever calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved.”

Have you called on Jesus as Lord to save you? That is the ultimate issue in
life.

Acts 16:31 (NKJV)

31 So they said, “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be
saved, you and your household.”