

Daniel 4:1-37

“Tell It To The World”

The text before us today is completely unique. Daniel Ch 4 is the only section of scripture in your entire bible that contains the conversion testimony of a Gentile king. We get to hear *in his own words* what God did *to* him, what God did *for* him & of the change God made *in* him. This is a Ch containing Nebuchadnezzar’s witness to the world of the things he’s seen, the things he’s experienced & how God used those things to humble him, that he might *see* God for who He is & *establish* Him in His rightful place in his heart/life.

@ The end of Ch 3 we found his decree. Here in Ch 4 (though we don’t know how many years have passed since Ch 3) we find his decision. Let’s turn our attention to the text.

Vs 1-3

Sound like the words of a saved man, don’t they? Now in all fairness there are those who debate whether or not he was truly saved, but to me it seems clear enough. In the 1st few Vs & in the last few Vs we find what was going on in his mind in the present. But what he’s getting ready to share w/us is what happened in the past. Or said simply, he’s sharing w/us his story.

& I love this because it’s something everyone can do. Nebuchadnezzar becomes for you & me a great example of a “witness”. After all, what is a “witness”? It’s simply someone who shares the things they’ve seen & experienced, right? There you are, you’re in a court of law & you’ve been called upon to take your place upon the “witness stand”. & It’s there that you will recount your eyewitness testimony of all that you have seen, all that you have experienced to the very best of your ability under penalty of perjury if you’re discovered to share anything but objective truth/the straight facts.

Listen, Nebuchadnezzar didn’t know the scriptures (though perhaps Daniel recited some for him). But he was definitely not the biblical scholar type, he couldn’t cite Ch & Vs for you. But *he knew his story*. He *knew* what God had done *in* him, *for* him & on behalf of him & he had it in his heart to share it openly, objectively, publicly.

He says, “I thought it good to declare the signs & wonders that the Most High God has worked (notice) *for me*.” It’s his personal testimony. Would to God that this was the attitude of every individual that God has saved! Too many count it a drudge, a dread to share their story, to declare the things that the Most has God has done for them rather than a delight. Nebuchadnezzar was delighted to share the greatness of His signs... the might of His wonders & knowledge of the everlasting dominion of His kingdom.

I suppose we should observe a couple other things here as well. #1 Not knowing the word didn't stop him from sharing his story. How many people I've heard put forth the excuse, "Well, I don't know the word well enough. People might ask me questions that I don't have the answers for." Hey, who cares!? Tell them, "You know what? There's plenty I don't know, but I want to share w/you what I *do* know."

The 2nd thing I want to mention is that though sharing our story is good, that doesn't *excuse* us from studying the word. ☺ We're to study the word, to read & do what we can to know & understand the scripture. Peter said, "*But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and always be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you,*"¹ We should seek to set God's word in our heart. Paul said that like this, "*Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.*"² We want to know God accurately & make Him known truthfully. We want to know His word that we might have a word in due season that brings hope to the hurting or strength to the hands that hang down...

*But family, that's a life long journey to which none of us will fully attain. It's a day by day discipline, but let's not allow what we *don't* know to sterilize our witness. Rather let's share what we *do* know & what we *do* know is what God has done in our lives.*

Write it down & read it later, Jn 9. You discover a man blind from birth whom Jesus healed, then he's interrogated by the religious leaders looking to find some fault w/the Lord who'd brought wholeness to his life. They're all, "We know that Jesus is a sinner, give glory to God!" He says, "Look, whether or not He's a sinner I don't know... (he didn't even know *that* much) what I do know is that though I was blind, now I see! & He's the One who's opened my eyes." He didn't allow what he *didn't* know prevent him from sharing what he *did* know. He shared his story.

Read the book of Acts, Paul was always sharing his story. Who he was, how he met Jesus & his life was changed. Family, it's good to share the things that the Most High God has worked for you. It's real, it resonates. Satan would have you stay silent about what God has done for you. Jesus wants you to declare His work in your life... Remember when He delivered the demoniac who was possessed w/legion (some 2,000 demons or so)? When he was in his right mind, he *begged* Jesus to let him follow Him, to learn of Him...

¹ *The New King James Version*. (1982). [1 Pe 3:15]. Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

² *The New King James Version*. (1982). [2 Ti 2:15]. Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

But do you remember what Jesus said to him? He said, *"Go home to your friends, and tell them what great things the Lord has done for you, and how He has had compassion on you."*³

To all peoples, nations, & languages that dwell in all the earth. Nebuchadnezzar had a platform & he was gonna use it for the glory of God, to get the word out about what God has done for his life. You have a platform... Question. Do you use it for the glory of God, as a springboard to get the word out about what God has done in your life?

Notice in Vs 3 Nebuchadnezzar recognizes the everlasting nature of God's kingdom. We'll discover that the main problem Nebuchadnezzar had was pride, he was full of self-adoration for how great *his* kingdom was. What he came to discover is that *God's* kingdom is the one worth bragging about, not his own. Only God's kingdom is an everlasting kingdom. Only His dominion is from generation to generation.

Vs 4-9

Now, a lot of things have transpired in his life, right? He's already had 1 dream that Daniel interpreted for him. He's seen w/his eyes the 3 Hebrew young men be saved through the fire. But he's testifying of what we're reading of now because this was the turning point for him. If you were ask Nebuchadnezzar why he surrendered his life to God, no doubt those other things made an impression, but this is what turned the tide.

He says, "I was at rest in my house, & flourishing in my palace." Translation? He was doing well in life. From a natural perspective he had it all, fame, fortune, power, everyone was subject to him & he was subject to nobody. As far as he was concerned he had need of nothing. He felt like many feel today. "I've got enough money to get by, I'm in good health, roof over my head, food in my belly, Netflix on my smart phone/T.V., I don't *need* God." He felt as though he was at peace... But it was the false peace of the ungodly. A peace that comes from a temporary perspective, that doesn't consider the poverty of spirit or the eternal perspective. The attitude of, "He who dies w/the most toys, wins."

People like to believe, "I'm ok, you're ok, everything's ok." But what will you do in the end? & It takes different things to shake people out of that false sense of security. For Nebuchadnezzar, it began w/a dream.

Again, this isn't the same dream as in Daniel Ch 2 (as we'll see). Nebuchadnezzar wouldn't tell anyone that dream. He told *everyone* this dream.

³ [The New King James Version](#). (1982). [Mk 5:19]. Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

But they “did not make known... its interpretation.” I’m just going to tell you that it wasn’t too difficult to interpret. So I’m of the persuasion that it wasn’t that they *couldn’t*, it’s that they *wouldn’t*, probably pleading ignorance but in reality afraid of how he might respond.

But at last Daniel came before him. Why wasn’t Daniel called 1st? Possibly a few reasons. #1 As mentioned, at this point Nebuchadnezzar isn’t saved. It doesn’t look good if you’re always turning to someone else’s god & never giving your own guys a go at it. #2 It’s possible that Daniel (as 2nd only to the king) wasn’t running w/those boys anymore & was in a different office altogether, therefore they only sought him when no one else could help. & #3 Because Nebuchadnezzar was a lot like you are & I am (w/the exception that he has an excuse being an unbeliever). He turns to God only when everything & everyone else failed him. If we would look to God 1st it would save us a lot of unnecessary headache & heartbreak. But most only turn to God when nothing else works, then they pray or open their bible or seek godly counsel... Prior to that they’re trying anything & everything else.

Vs 10-17

Again, there might be a few hazy details but I feel you don’t need to be a super spiritual individual to get the gist of this dream. My suspicion is that Nebuchadnezzar *probably* knew what it meant but he wanted someone else to tell him otherwise.

There he was in his dream, & as he looked a tree was in the midst of the earth. It was noted for its size, it’s strength, prominence, beauty, fruit & shelter. It provided food & shelter for everything that lived in or under it.

Suddenly a watcher, a holy one from heaven (presumably an angel) cried aloud & gave the command, “Chop down the tree, cut off its branches, strip its leaves & scatter its fruit. Let the beasts & the birds flee from it... but leave the stump & roots in the earth w/a band of iron & bronze... it shall be wet w/the dew of heaven & his heart shall be changed from a man & he shall be given the heart of a beast until 7 yrs pass over him...” We learn that the tree represented a great man, prominent & powerful who would be “cut down to size” but not destroyed altogether & he would be given the heart of a beast for 7 yrs, he would be wet w/the dew of heaven & graze on the grass of the earth...” Why? To learn that he’s not the one who reigns over the earth, but the Most High rules in the kingdom of men & He gives it to whomever He will & sets over it the lowest of men... (Something that it seems history has borne witness to).

No wonder his guys didn't want to interpret this... He's thrown men in the fire, had them torn in pieces & their house made an ash heap for much less! 2 things quickly. Doesn't it kind of blow your mind to think that there are angels that "watch" your life? Even when you think you're alone, you're never alone. There are "watchers" all around us & they keep track of the details.

2^{ndly} What's up w/the band of iron & bronze around the stump? It seems it was either to *confine* the stump (no longer would it be free & great or able to grow). Or it could've been for the *protection* of the stump, so that while it was being humbled it couldn't be uprooted & done away with. It was to be restored (possibly a bit of both).

Vs 18

You see, he was impressed w/God, but not yet saved *by* God. & He knew he could get an honest answer out of Daniel (even if it wasn't what he wanted to hear) & so he compels him to interpret the dream.

Vs 19-26

Notice that Daniel dreaded telling this to the king... & I don't think it was because he was afraid of the king (we've come to know too much about Daniel to believe that). But this is more like a Dr. having to deliver terminal news to a patient. Over the yrs he's become the king's friend & he didn't want this to befall him. He had compassion for people but he was faithful to deliver the message of God's judgment. In other words, Daniel was a man who would speak the truth in love...

In Ch 2 Daniel had no reservations about interpreting the 1st dream. But now he's reluctant to interpret the 2nd. The 1st dream exalted the king (he was the head of gold), this 2nd dream debased him... When the king saw Daniel's reluctance, he encouraged him not to worry about what it meant, but to share the meaning w/him.

Daniel said, "I wish this applied to your enemies king, but it's for you." He didn't reach for a general point saying, "It means we could all use a little more humility", he applied it directly to the king, (Vs 22) "It...is...you." It's reminiscent of Nathan coming to king David in the midst of *his* sin saying, "You are the man!" This message it's general, it's personal, *you* have sinned & God is going to deal w/*you* personally.

Family there are times when God will "Trim our tree." He will prune us back, what's the point in trimming a tree? It humbles the tree initially, but ultimately it serves the tree in bringing forth more fruit.

As the scriptures say, *“Now no chastening seems to be joyful for the present, but painful; nevertheless, afterward it yields the peaceable fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it.”*⁴

“Nebuchadnezzar, you are going to be cut down to size. God is going to make sure that you understand your place before Him. Not only will you not reign *over* men, you’ll be driven *from* men for 7 yrs until you *know* (accept in your heart) that God rules the earth & gives it whomever *He* chooses.”

God had given Nebuchadnezzar the most powerful platform on the planet, & to whom much is given, much is required. God had made Himself real through Daniel’s 1st interpretation, Shadrach, Meshach & Abed Nego. & Nebuchadnezzar had been impressed. But God wasn’t seeking to impress him, Nebuchadnezzar needed to *confess* Him & acknowledge Him in His proper place (Ruler over all the earth).

Family, God *hates* pride. It turned an angel into the devil & poisons the hearts of men.

Vs 27

Wait; is Daniel saying that if a man humbly repents of his sin (breaks off his sins) he can avoid the judgment of God? That’s exactly what he’s saying (ask the people of Nineveh, Jonah wasn’t a fan of that).

But listen, here’s the important part. You can’t “ease off” of sin, or “ease out” of sin. You have to go break it off instantly, completely. Repenting of our sin doesn’t mean we slow-down in the direction we’re going. It’s a determination to move in a totally different direction altogether... “I used to be drunk every day, now only a couple times a week.” Listen, you can ease *into* sin, but you can’t ease *out* of sin, you must (the words are) “break off your sins.”

& What’s the fruit of repentance? Not just no longer doing wrong; but doing what is right! “Be righteous, show mercy”. Don’t just *stop sinning, start practicing* righteousness.

Now; let’s suppose for a minute you’re the one & Daniel is standing before you. What are the things God is having him point out in you? Stubbornness? Conceit? Self-centeredness? Anger? Lying? Envy? Addiction?

Daniel gives Nebuchadnezzar the inconvenient truth that he’s a prideful man & needs to learn what it means to submit to God’s authority.

⁴ [The New King James Version](#). (1982). (Heb 12:11). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

Some of you, like Nebuchadnezzar, need to hear an inconvenient truth today. Some of you, like Daniel, need to take heart & give that truth to someone else (tactfully, humbly, compassionately, in love). “God loves you, I love you, but there’s sin in your life that’s destroying you & impacting everyone around you. Break off your sins & submit your life to God.”

Vs 28-33

Listen, don’t confuse God’s patience, for God’s approval. Time went by, the interpretation was forgotten, the exhortation was ignored. God gave him a year to repent even after issuing the warning. He may’ve put it out of his mind, God didn’t. People think that because God doesn’t immediately judge them that He’s ok w/their sin, or doesn’t notice their sin. Not true. He gives them time to repent... Write down 2nd Pet 3, read it later.

Nebuchadnezzar was suffering from a major case of “I”dolatry. Go back & read this sometime & see how many times personal pronouns are used, “I, me, my”.

Babylon was one of the spectacular sites of the ancient world. Even housing 1 of the 7 wonders of the ancient world (the hanging gardens of Babylon). Nebuchadnezzar was responsible for all that. & He relished in it, breathed it in... (Vs 30) “I have built, my mighty power, my majesty.” The colossal walls, beautiful ceramics, the 1,000 yrd processional, 10,000 seat arena, 53 temples & more...

& While the words were still in his mouth, a voice fell from heaven... Everything he’d been told was coming upon him right then, right there. & That very hour his sanity left him & he was driven from the palace to the pasture for the next 7 yrs... It’s medical condition is called “boanthropy” it’s a delusion that you’re an ox or a cow. You can look it up, it’s legit.

Some want to dismiss this because there’s no secular historical record of it happening. But empires were notorious for recording accomplishments & erasing embarrassments... It’s also interesting that there are no historical records of his accomplishments or governmental activity between 582 B.C. & 575 B.C. Which is a deafening silence seeing (again) as how Near Eastern leaders egotistically trumpet their achievements & as I mentioned, hide their embarrassments.

Question; when you look at the house you built, the business you’ve established, the clientele you’ve built up, the wonderful children you’ve raised... who’s praise do you sing? Do you sing praises to yourself, or to God? It’s been said that Christ sends none away empty but those who are full of themselves.

The voice broke in from heaven. Ladies & Gentlemen, you never know when God is going to break in to your life. No one knows when their hour is coming, but it will come & when it comes it will not delay.

Nebuchadnezzar was given the opportunity to humble himself, and he refused. Now God humble him. How much better would it have been to humble himself? He could've avoided the judgment of God altogether.

Vs 34-37

God fulfilled His word to him. He couldn't break free from his madness until the appointed time & then he was given another opportunity & he *took it*. He *blessed* the Most High & *praised & honored* Him who lives forever.

Notice, a return of reason & a rightness of mind results in worship. One who is *reasonable* will worship. I mentioned Rom 12:1-2 last week, I'll read it this week, *"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God."*⁵ A right mind will result in worship. It's reasonable (the word service is more literally "worship"). Concerning who He *is* & we *are* it's reasonable that we worship Him.

Nebuchadnezzar learned a # of things didn't he? In Vs 35 he confessed that man answers to God, not God to man. No one can stop Him & none have the right to question Him. (Isa. 29:16; 45:9)

This is his story... *Now* (Vs 37) I praise, extol & honor the King of heaven. The verbs indicate a habitual action (this is who he is & what he does now), he's a saved man, I anticipate we'll meet him in heaven. What's your story? How did God confront you? What was the situation that humbled you? How was it that the Lord changed your heart?

Nebuchadnezzar learned that God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble. What have you learned?

Nebuchadnezzar shared his testimony to give God glory! Too many will share their faith as a painful duty; it should be for God's praise & His glory. You may not know God's word (study), but you know the God of the word. Share *your* story & give Him glory...

⁵ *The New King James Version*. (1982). (Ro 12:1-2). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

Prayer Points:

God; now *we* praise You & exalt You & worship You. All Your works are truth & Your ways are just. Your dominion is an everlasting dominion & Your kingdom is from generation to generation & You rule in the kingdom of men. We humble ourselves before You & thank You for Your great love & mercy, truly You are good.

It's amazing but true, God loves us. He loves *you* & sent J.C. to lay down His life on the cross for you. Don't back off your sins, break off your sins, trust in Jesus today & be saved.