

*Daniel 4:1-17 - Nebuchadnezzar's Conversion**Testimony?pt 1*

Intro – Our trek through Daniel has featured some main characters. Daniel and 3 friends... Others have played important but not leading roles (Ashpenaz, Arioch, wisemen). Nebuchadnezzar has been a vital supporting actor in this recording of history but in chapter 4 he takes on the leading role. Daniel 4 is King Neb's testimony. Neb wrote the script, and he is relaying the events. The events in this chapter dramatically changed Neb's life (maybe even his eternal destiny). In N.T., Saul had an experience on the road to Damascus that changed/alterd his course of his life and Daniel 4 is Neb's Damascus Road experience. Neb could not keep this life changing experience to himself...he had to share it with the world. *Proclamation Consternation Observation*

PROCLAMATION

1. The events recorded in chap. 4 happened about 20+ years after chapter 3 (fiery furnace)
 - a. Neb reigned for 43 years
 - i. Chapter 3 - approx. 10 years into his reign (Daniel in mid 20's)
 - ii. Chapter 4 - last 10 years of his reign (Daniel in late 40's)
 - b. 4:4 - Neb was at ease and flourishing (wars ended)
 - i. 4:30 - He had already built Babylon (admiring fruit of his labor)
2. Neb issues a world-wide proclamation - 4:1
 - a. The content is about what God had done in his life - 4:2 (his testimony)
 - i. It is a grace to be aware of God's hand....and to tell others of God's work
 - ii. "To God be the glory great thing HE hath done..."
 - b. Neb. begins his testimony where he will end it. - (the first principles of the oracles of God)
 - i. 4:3
 - ii. *The 4 Spiritual Laws* (M. Balthrop) 1] There is a God 2] you are not Him 3] people get 1 & 2 confused sometimes 4] Jesus fixes #3)
 - c. Neb is declaring and proclaiming that God is God and Neb is not - (delusion of ch. 3)
 - i. God is actively working and ruling His world
 - ii. God is Almighty & Eternal & His Kingdom is the same-(2:44 - dream in 2nd year)
 - iii. God's sovereignty is sure and will endure. (Neb's will not)
 - d. Neb's testimony is basic theology and spot on truth (it took 40 years for it to sink in. U too?)
 - i. Neb wants the world to know this truth. (us too?)
3. Matthew 10:32
 - a. The most holy faith is a most public faith. No private converts in Christianity
 - b. Neb is publicizing his faith worldwide (all without a Great Commission!)
 - c. Mark 8:38
4. Neb's testimony is not flattering to Nebuchadnezzar.
 - a. Decades of stubborn pride and refusal to repent. God broke him...humbled him
 - b. Saul/Paul's testimony is similar Acts 26:14
 - c. Neb's testimony is how God brought him low to so he could see the Most High God.

5. God often uses “goads” (hard times) to get our attention.
 - a. Do not despise the difficult days of your life - they can be very beneficial
 - b. Psalm 119:67, 71, 75
 - c. We rarely know the “*why’s*” of life....but we can know The *Who* of life
 - d. Our afflictions can give us a clearer vision of The *Who* of life.
 - i. That is what happened to Neb, and he wants the world to know.

CONSTERNATION

- Neb relays that he had a dream that really disturbed him - 4:4-5
 - Job 33:14-18
 - He orders the wisemen to tell him what it means.....they were no help - 4:6-7
 - Daniel in brought in to get the job done - 4:8-9
 - Is there a recurring pattern here for Neb (wrong counselors/ wrong god)? Ps. 1:1-3
- The dream was of a tree. 4:10
 - The tree was large and beautiful with a worldwide influence - 4:11
 - It supplied all creatures with its shade and fruit - 4:12
- Watchers/ Angels came down from heaven with a disturbing decree.
 - 4:13
 - The angels from heaven declare that this tree on earth is to be cut down to size.
- This *Tree* has a disturbing change of pronouns.
 - The *tree* is an “*it*” in 4:14-15a
 - But the *tree* is a “*him*” in 4:15b-16 The tree is a man
 - I think Neb has an uneasy suspicion that he was *that man*.
- Men do not like being brought low
 - The only way to enter the narrow gate is to be made small - Luke 13:24
 - Like a helpless dependent child - small/weak/in need Matt. 18:3
 - Are you big & self-sufficient or small & totally dependent?

OBSERVATION

- Nebuchadnezzar is being observed and watched.
 - Angels are called “watchers” - 4:13, 17 (1 Cor. 11:10)
 - “*every breath you take, every move you make...every step you take, I’ll be watching you*”
 - Our cognizance of angel’s eyes might keep us from evil.
- Angels are observing and actively working in our world.
 - Heb. 1:14 Matt. 18:10
 - Here they make a decision to cut down a proud king - 4:17a (Acts 12:22-23)
- Their purpose in this act is to get some basic points across.
 - *In order that the living may know....* 4:17
 - God is actively ruling in the affairs of men.
 - God places all people in the stations of life where He wants them
 - God is sets over men the lowest of men (politicians picked from basest of men)
 - The first principles of the oracles of God is that God is sovereign...we are not
 - The 4 spiritual laws are part of Neb’s testimony...and probably ours