

NEBUCHADNEZZAR'S TESTIMONY

TEXT: (Daniel 4:24-37, TLB)

²⁴ "Your Majesty, the Most High God has decreed—and it will surely happen— ²⁵ that your people will chase you from your palace, and you will live in the fields like an animal, eating grass like a cow, your back wet with dew from heaven. For seven years this will be your life, until you learn that the Most High God dominates the kingdoms of men and gives power to anyone he chooses. ²⁶ But the stump and the roots were left in the ground! This means that you will get your kingdom back again when you have learned that heaven rules.

²⁷ "O King Nebuchadnezzar, listen to me—stop sinning; do what you know is right; be merciful to the poor. Perhaps even yet God will spare you."

²⁸ But all these things happened to Nebuchadnezzar. ²⁹ Twelve months after this dream, he was strolling on the roof of the royal palace in Babylon, ³⁰ and saying, "I, by my own mighty power, have built this beautiful city as my royal residence and as the capital of my empire."

³¹ While he was still speaking these words, a voice called down from heaven, "O King Nebuchadnezzar, this message is for you: You are no longer ruler of this kingdom. ³² You will be forced out of the palace to live with the animals in the fields and to eat grass like the cows for seven years, until you finally realize that God parcels out the kingdoms of men and gives them to anyone he chooses."

³³ That very same hour this prophecy was fulfilled. Nebuchadnezzar was chased from his palace and ate grass like the cows, and his body was wet with dew; his hair grew as long as eagles' feathers, and his nails were like birds' claws.

³⁴ "At the end of seven years I, Nebuchadnezzar, looked up to heaven, and my sanity returned, and I praised and worshiped the Most High God and honored him who lives forever, whose rule is everlasting, his kingdom evermore. ³⁵ All the people of the earth are nothing when compared to him; he does whatever he thinks best among the angels of heaven, as well as here on earth. No one can stop him or challenge him, saying, 'What do you mean by doing these things?' ³⁶ When my mind returned to me, so did my honor and glory and kingdom. My counselors and officers came back to me, and I was reestablished as head of my kingdom, with even greater honor than before.

³⁷ "Now, I, Nebuchadnezzar, praise and glorify and honor the King of Heaven, the Judge of all, whose every act is right and good; for he is able to take those who walk proudly and push them into the dust!"

INTRODUCTION

A. Everyone Has a Testimony

1. "Now, I, Nebuchadnezzar, praise and glorify and honor the King of Heaven, the Judge of all, whose every act is right and good; for he is able to take those who walk proudly and push them into the dust!" (Daniel 4:37, TLB).
2. "Cain said to the LORD, 'My punishment is more than I can bear'" (Genesis 4:13, NIV).
3. "And he cried out and said, Father Abraham, have pity *and* mercy on me and send Lazarus to dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue, for I am in anguish in this flame" (Luke 16:24, AMPC).
4. "I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Now there is in store for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day—and not only to me, but also to all who have longed for his appearing" (II Timothy 4:7-8, NIV).

B. A Slow Learner

1. "The king said to Daniel, 'Surely your God is the God of gods and the Lord of kings and a revealer of mysteries, for you were able to reveal this mystery'" (Daniel 2:47, NIV).
2. "Then Nebuchadnezzar said, 'Praise be to the God of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, who has sent his angel and rescued his servants! They trusted in him and defied the king's command and were willing to give up their lives rather than serve or worship any god except their own God. Therefore I decree that the people of any nation or language who say anything against the God of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego be cut into pieces and their houses be turned into piles of rubble, for no other god can save in this way'" (Daniel 3:28-29, NIV).

I. THE GRACE OF GOD

A. Discipline—The Grace of God

1. "The LORD accepted Abel and his gift, but he did not accept Cain and his gift. This made Cain very angry, and he looked dejected" (Genesis 4:4-5 NLT).
2. "Why are you so angry?" the LORD asked Cain. "Why do you look so dejected? You will be accepted if you do what is right. But if you refuse to do what is right, then watch out! Sin is crouching at the door, eager to control you. But you must subdue it and be its master." (Genesis 4:6-7 NLT)
3. "Cain suggested to his brother, 'Let's go out into the fields.' And while they were in the field, Cain attacked his brother, Abel, and killed him'" (Genesis 4:8 NLT).

B. Grace Is Not Easily Discouraged

1. "Where *is* Abel thy brother? And he said, I know not: *Am* I my brother's keeper? And he said, What hast thou done? the voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto me from the ground" (Genesis 4:9-10 KJV).
2. "One of you which eateth with me shall betray me" (Mark 14:18 KJV).
3. "*It is* one of the Twelve" (Mark 14:20 KJV).
4. "One who dips bread into the bowl with me ... But woe to that man who betrays the Son of Man! It would be better for him if he had not been born'" (Mark 14:20-21, NIV).
5. "Judas threw the money into the temple and left. Then he went away and hanged himself" (Matthew 27:5, NIV).

C. Nebuchadnezzar's Testimony of Grace

1. "This is the proclamation of Nebuchadnezzar the king, which he sent to people of every language in every nation of the world:
Greetings:
I want you all to know about the strange thing that the Most High God did to me. It was incredible—a mighty miracle! And now I know for sure that his kingdom is everlasting; he reigns forever and ever" (Daniel 4:1-3, TLB).

II. NEBUCHADNEZZAR'S DREAM

A. Given Fair Warning

1. "I, Nebuchadnezzar, was at home in my palace, contented and prosperous. I had a dream that made me afraid. As I was lying in bed, the images and visions that passed through my mind terrified me" (Daniel 4:4-5, NIV).

2. "Then as I lay there dreaming, I saw one of God's angels coming down from heaven" (Daniel 4:13, TLB).
3. "Let the dew of heaven drench him and let him eat grass with the wild animals! For seven years let him have the mind of an animal instead of a man" (Daniel 4:15-16, TLB).

B. The Truth Told

1. "Then Daniel sat there stunned and silent for an hour, aghast at the meaning of the dream. Finally the king said to him: 'Beltshazzar, don't be afraid to tell me what it means'" (Daniel 4:19, TLB).
2. "Your Majesty, the Most High God has decreed—and it will surely happen—that your people will chase you from your palace, and you will live in the fields like an animal, eating grass like a cow, your back wet with dew from heaven. For seven years this will be your life, until you learn that the Most High God dominates the kingdoms of men and gives power to anyone he chooses. But the stump and the roots were left in the ground! This means that you will get your kingdom back again when you have learned that heaven rules" (Daniel 4:24-26, TLB).

C. The Word Was Fulfilled

1. "All these things happened to Nebuchadnezzar" (Daniel 4:28, TLB).
2. "Twelve months after this dream, he was strolling on the roof of the royal palace in Babylon, and saying, 'I, by my own mighty power, have built this beautiful city as my royal residence and as the capital of my empire.'
While he was still speaking these words, a voice called down from heaven, 'O King Nebuchadnezzar, this message is for you: You are no longer ruler of this kingdom. You will be forced out of the palace to live with the animals in the fields and to eat grass like the cows for seven years, until you finally realize that God parcels out the kingdoms of men and gives them to anyone he chooses'" (Daniel 4:29-32, TLB).
3. "When a crime is not punished quickly, people feel it is safe to do wrong" (Ecclesiastes 8:11, NLT).

III. A CHANGE OF HEART

A. Paul's Testimony

1. "I am a Jew, born in Tarsus of Cilicia, but brought up in this city. I studied under Gamaliel and was thoroughly trained in the law of our ancestors. I was just as zealous for God as any of you are today. I persecuted the followers of this Way to their death, arresting both men and women and throwing them into prison, as the high priest and all the Council can themselves testify. I even obtained letters from them to their associates in Damascus, and went there to bring these people as prisoners to Jerusalem to be punished.
"About noon as I came near Damascus, suddenly a bright light from heaven flashed around me. I fell to the ground and heard a voice say to me, 'Saul! Saul! Why do you persecute me?'
" 'Who are you, Lord?' I asked.
" 'I am Jesus of Nazareth, whom you are persecuting,' he replied" (Acts 22:3-8, NIV).

2. " 'What shall I do, Lord?' I asked.
 " 'Get up,' the Lord said, 'and go into Damascus. There you will be told all that you have been assigned to do.' My companions led me by the hand into Damascus, because the brilliance of the light had blinded me.
 "A man named Ananias came to see me. He was a devout observer of the law and highly respected by all the Jews living there. He stood beside me and said, 'Brother Saul, receive your sight!' And at that very moment I was able to see him.
 "Then he said: 'The God of our ancestors has chosen you to know his will and to see the Righteous One and to hear words from his mouth. You will be his witness to all people of what you have seen and heard. And now what are you waiting for? Get up, be baptized and wash your sins away, calling on his name'" (Acts 22:10-16, NIV).
3. "I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Now there is in store for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day—and not only to me, but also to all who have longed for his appearing" (II Timothy 4:7-8, NIV).

B. Nebuchadnezzar's Testimony

1. "O King Nebuchadnezzar, listen to me—stop sinning; do what you know is right; be merciful to the poor. Perhaps even yet God will spare you" (Daniel 4:27, TLB).
2. "Twelve months after this dream, he was strolling on the roof of the royal palace in Babylon, and saying, 'I, by my own mighty power, have built this beautiful city as my royal residence and as the capital of my empire.'...
 That very same hour this prophecy was fulfilled. Nebuchadnezzar was chased from his palace and ate grass like the cows, and his body was wet with dew; his hair grew as long as eagles' feathers, and his nails were like birds' claws" (Daniel 4:29-30, 33, TLB).
3. "At the end of seven years I, Nebuchadnezzar, looked up to heaven, and my sanity returned, and I praised and worshiped the Most High God and honored him who lives forever, whose rule is everlasting, his kingdom evermore" (Daniel 4:34, TLB).

CONCLUSION

A. What Will Your Testimony Be?

1. "Listen to me—stop sinning; do what you know is right.... Perhaps even yet God will spare you" (Daniel 4:27, TLB).