

DANIEL 4

REVIEW...

- King Nebuchadnezzar built a statue 90' tall x 9' thick made out of gold...
 - Daniel had interpreted the dream of Nebby – calling him the head of Gold...
 - But this all gold idol of Nebby was his way of saying he was going to be the ONLY kingdom!
 - And he gave the proclamation - whenever music was played – bow or burn!
- Certain Chaldeans came forward to accuse Rack / Shack / and Benny of not worshipping the idol...
 - In RAGE and FURY Nebby demanded the Jewish boys be brought before him...
 - If they were willing to bow down when the music played all would be forgiven...
 - But if they did not – into the fire – and what god could they trust to save them!
 - The boys were quick to answer - if the Lord wanted to – He could save them from the fire...
 - But even if God did not – they would never bow to the Kings gods / or his Idol!
- The face of Nebby changed when he heard the boys BOLD words...
 - He became full of RAGE – and demanded the fire be heated up 7 times hotter!
 - The king commanded the Jewish boys be bound up head to toe and thrown into the fire...
 - But no sooner were they thrown in - then the boys were walking around unbound in the fire!
 - And there was a 4th man with them who looked like the Son of God!
- Nebby came as close as could to the inferno – and had to call the boys to come out...
 - And the king made a decree – if anyone spoke ill against the God of the Jews...
 - They would be cut into pieces – and their house turned into an ash heap!
 - Because no other God could do what the Lord did – saving the boys from the fire!

PRIDE COMES BEFORE THE FALL... (5 THINGS)

- **1st – THE LETTER OF NEBUCHADNEZZAR... vs. 1-3**
 - 1st – Testimony of a King... vs. 1
 - Nebby wrote a letter to tell the world about God...
 - He opens by addressing all people / nations / in all languages of the earth...
 - In other words he wrote the letter to literally everyone...
 - Because there is power in sharing your personal testimony with others!
 - **When people want proof that God is real – and that Jesus is the answer...**
 - **The best answer we can give others is our testimony of what He has done in us...**
 - **People can argue with our words – but they cannot argue with Jesus in our lives!**
 - **II Corinthians 3:3 – “Clearly, you are a letter from Christ prepared by us. It is written not with pen and ink, but with the Spirit of the living God...”**
 - 2nd – Purpose of the Letter... vs. 2-3
 - Purpose Nebby wrote the letter so that people might have peace (*shalom*) multiplied!
 - The greatest fear of all men is the fear of death - because it is an unknown...
 - But most of all men fear death because it means they will be judged...
 - They do not want talk / or even think about death – they have no peace!
 - **Because apart from God - we live in certain expectation of His wrath and judgment...**
 - **There is no peace apart from Christ - only the fear of death - and punishment...**
 - **Only with God can we have true peace - rest in the knowledge we are forgiven!**
 - The letter is the personal testimony of how God revealed himself to the King...
 - Through GREAT signs and MIGHTY wonders in the life of Nebby...
 - Note that these were personal miracles in the life of one man...

- You might ask – why does God not do great and mighty things in my life...
- I am convinced it is not God who is not acting – we just do not pay attention...
- When the bills miraculously manage to get paid / when the sickness goes away...
- We tend to be quick to explain away how it happened – not giving glory to God...
- Yet God often does GREAT and MIGHTY things in our lives – if we pay attention!
- Whose Kingdom is an everlasting Kingdom – from generation to generation...
 - Nebby thought he could set up his very own everlasting kingdom...
 - But the king came to understand a VERY powerful truth...
 - There are many people today who would try to tell you the Bible is not relevant...
 - It was written 2000 years ago – and has nothing to offer to us today...
 - But in spite of all our knowledge – we still have not come up with an answer to death...
 - And no matter what we believe – we will all still have to stand before God one day!
 - Only God does not change – His Word is just as relevant today as ever – **Hebrews 13:8**
- **2ND – TROUBLED BY A DREAM... vs. 4-9**
 - o 1st – Resting in the palace... vs. 4
 - Nebby was at rest in his palace – he had conquered all of his enemies...
 - His victories had no doubt made him very cocky – overconfident...
 - We often get into the most trouble in life when we have been the most successful...
 - It tends to make us overly confident in ourselves – our abilities – rather than in God...
 - That is when satan can sneak in - because we are most vulnerable...
 - We are depending on our strength - we are not clinging to Jesus!
 - **I Corinthians 10:12 - “Let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall.”**
 - o 2nd – Looking for answers... vs. 5-7
 - Nebby had another dream that scared and was deeply troubling to him...
 - So he called for all the magicians / astrologers / Chaldeans / and the soothsayers...
 - He told them the dream – but they could not tell him the interpretation...
 - Odd that the king would go to the same men who had failed him before!
 - The definition of insanity – is doing the same thing but expecting different results!
 - Yet so often that is how we face the scary / troubling trials that come into our lives...
 - We run to the bank for help – only to be told again there is no more money / credit...
 - We run to our friend / go-fund-me / Facebook – though they only ignore us again...
 - We do the same thing – expecting different results – rather than run to the Lord...
 - As if prayer – seeking Jesus – is a last-ditch effort to solve our problem!
 - o 3rd – Finally the King called Daniel in to interpret the dream... vs. 8-9
 - Nebby knew Daniel could interpret the dream because he had the spirit of ‘elahn’ (*Allah*)...
 - Obviously the confidence of the King was not in Jesus – uses Aramaic word for a god...
 - His confidence was in Daniel – because he had seen him do the impossible before!
 - It was his experience with Daniel – that gave him confidence in Daniel!
 - I believe God can heal – and that for Him nothing is impossible...
 - Yet although I could believe God could cure a cold – how about raise the dead...
 - I believe - but I doubt - my problem is have never seen Him do it personally
 - Where do we find the confidence that God can do the impossible...
 - If I told you it was possible to pick up 1 million pounds – what would you say...
 - If I went on to say it could fly 10,000 miles going 600mph at over 30k feet...
 - With over 500 people comfortably seated inside – what would you say...
 - You would believe me – but only because you have seen an airplane!
 - If you had never seen one before – you would say it was impossible!

- Confidence does not come from what we do - but who we spend time with...
- Our faith grows as we spend time with the Word – Jesus - **Romans 10:17**
- We get to see Him provide – see Him heal – see Him do the impossible!
- Then we have the confidence when trials come – that nothing is impossible for Him!

● **3RD – THE DREAM AND INTERPRETATION... vs. 10-27**

o **1st – The dream of Nebby... vs. 10-18**

- There was a very high tree standing in the middle of the earth – reaching up to heaven...
 - It could be seen from every corner of the planet – with lovely leaves / abundant fruit...
 - The birds of heavens dwelt in its braches – all flesh was fed by its fruit!
 - Interesting that birds in the Bible are often a illustration of satan - **Matthew 13:19**
 - Giving a picture that the governments of men are place where satan comes to dwell!
 - Striving to reach up to heaven – challenged the authority of God here on earth...
 - And the fruits of the government feed the FLESH (*sinful nature*) of men!
 - **A good reminder that while we are to obey the government – Romans 13:1**
 - **We most certainly are not to put our faith in the government – we trust in Jesus!**
- Then a watcher (*angel*) came down from heaven...
 - Crying out – chop down the tree / strip its branches / scatter its fruit...
 - But leave the stump – bound with iron and brass – let him graze with the beasts...
 - Change his heart from a man to a beast – till 7 times have passed over him...
 - To show everyone the Most High rules over the Kingdom of men - sets the lowest over it!
 - God was going to use Nebby as an example for the whole world of His power / choice!
 - **And God does not pick many wise - mighty - or noble – I Corinthians 1:26**
 - **There is a common misconception that God only uses the ELITE...**
 - **In order to be used by God you have to have a PhD in theology...**
 - **That is the wisdom of men - a worldly idea that has crept into the church...**
 - **You do not see any Bible colleges or seminaries in the Bible - you just see sinners!**

o **2nd – The interpretation of the dream... vs. 19-26**

- The dream troubled the heart of Daniel...
 - He was astonished by what it meant – he knew it was a prophecy against the King...
 - The interpretation so upset his heart – he was quiet for a time...
 - But Nebby encouraged him to not be troubled – and share the interpretation!
 - **It is hard to confront people with their sin – especially those who we care about...**
 - **We might think it is kinder not to confront someone who is sinning...**
 - **But the truth is leaving someone in their sin - is condemning them to hell...**
 - **So we are called to confront them in spite of how we fear it might hurt them...**
 - **Not that we can make people turn back to Jesus - but we can warn them - Hebrews 3:13**
 - **And our motive needs to be love - we want to see them clean / forgiven - Ephesians 4:15**
 - **We want them to repent – see them restored to their relationship to Jesus!**
- The tree in the dream was Nebby – who had grown into a powerful King...
 - His greatness had reached up to heaven – and his power over all the earth...
 - But because of his pride – the Most High decreed he was to be driven from men...
 - He would live in the wild – eat grass like an ox – sleep in the open fields (*dew of heaven*)...
 - Till 7 years (*times*) passed – and Nebby learned the Most High rules the Kingdom of men!
 - But the stump would remain – Nebby would not loose his Kingdom...
 - Once he had learned his lesson – God would restore him to the throne!
- The Grace of God does not mean we get away with sin...

- The first mission trip I led from CCBF was to 'check up' on a missionary in Nepal...
- He was from U-Turn – and it turned out he had fallen back into old habits – marijuana...
- When I arrived he fled the country – rather than face the truth about his actions...
- When I got back I was heavy hearted – it was not an easy trip...
- But a good friend shared with me – sometimes Grace has to have teeth!
- **God resists the proud – but he pours out His grace upon the humble – James 4:6**
- **Therefore it is the Grace of God that allows our sin to be revealed – bring consequences...**
- **In an effort to humble us – SO THAT God can pour his Grace out on us...**
- **Because then God can restore to our lives everything that our sin and pride took from us!**

o 3rd – The counsel of Daniel... vs. 27

- Daniel encouraged the King to stop sinning – live righteously...
 - Evidently the King had a bit of a reputation – lots of slaves / not kind to the needy...
 - So the way the king would prove his repentance – was by showing mercy to the poor...
 - As a result perhaps the Lord would lengthen the prosperity of the King...
 - Not that Nebby would be saved by his works – but his works would show he was saved!
- It is easy to say we have 'faith' and 'believe' in Jesus – but the proof is in our actions...
 - **James 2:17-18** – "I cannot see your faith if you do not have good deeds, but I will show you my faith through my good deeds."
 - **If we say we are Christians – but still live like the world – do we really have faith...**
 - **We can call ourselves Christians – but if are continuing to living in sin – are we really...**
 - **The only way to know for sure – is to see the fruit of salvation coming from our lives!**

● **4th – THE HUMBLING OF A KING... vs. 28-33**

o 1st – The fall of a mighty King... vs. 28-29

- After 12 months – the king was walking around the royal palace in Babylon...
- I imagine Nebby might have been treading carefully for several months after his dream...
- But he did not have a changed heart – he did not desire to live for God...
- His caution was not true repentance – it was just a fear of the consequences!
- **No one like consequences - no one wants to face the results of their sin...**
- **If we are just afraid of being caught – if we just want to avoid consequence...**
- **Then there is no real change of heart – we still want to sin – our desire is not to love God...**
- **So that fear of consequence ultimately leads to death - because we are not trusting in Jesus!**
- **II Corinthians 7:10** – "Sorrow without repentance... results in death."

o 2nd – The patience of God... vs. 30

- Nebby was surrounded by the most beautiful city the world had ever seen...
- Bolstered by an almost unlimited budget / and a slave workforce at his bidding...
- He had built some of the most impressive wonders of the ancient world...
- The hanging gardens of Babylon – a palace called the 'Marvel of mankind'...
- Looking at it – Nebby commented how great Babylon was...
- That HE had built as a royal dwelling for HIS power / honor / and majesty!
- Mistakenly thinking the patience of God - meant that he was safe from the judgment of God...
- **Just because God has not judged yet – does not mean God will not judge...**
- **God is patient – longsuffering – giving time to repent and turn back to Him...**
- **God waits to punish sin only because He loves the sinner – II Peter 3:9**
- **God is patient – longsuffering – to give time to repent and turn back to Him...**
- **But if we harden our hearts / not to repent - our sin will not remain hidden!**

o 3rd – The judgement of God. vs. 31-33

- While the words were still in his mouth – a voice fell from heaven...
- The kingdom has departed from you – you will be driven to live like an animal for 7 years...
- Till you learn that the Most High rules the Kingdom of men – and gives it to whom he wills!
- That hour Nebby went mad – and lived out in the wild – eating grass...
- His hair grew long like the feathers of an eagle / his nails like the claw of a bird...
- It was an extreme judgment for his pride – one that Nebby would never forget!
- If the consequence for stealing a million dollars – was you had to say you were sorry...
- A lot of people would become a thief – that is why the consequence is years in prison!
- If sin did not have any lasting consequence – we might be tempted to sin again...
- But like the child who only has to touch a hot flame once...
- Severe consequences teach us a lesson that we will never forget!

● **5TH – THE SALVATION OF A HUMBLER MAN... vs. 34-37**

- o 1st – At the end of 7 years – Nebby looked up to heaven... vs. 34-35
 - When he did his understanding returned to him...
 - Nebby blessed the Most High – praising and honoring Him...
 - Finally coming to understand the only Lord had an everlasting Kingdom...
 - And the will and plans of the inhabitants of earth mean nothing...
 - God does what He wants – in heaven – as well as on the earth...
 - No one can stop him – restrain his hand – or even question what He does!
 - It was also when God changed his heart...
 - **Daniel 7:4** – Daniel had a vision of a beast with eagles wings – being given a new heart...
 - The interpretation of the dream is believed to be the salvation of Nebby...
 - When he finally looked up – after 7 years of being a wild animal – he was given a new heart!
 - Apart from Jesus – like Nebby – we lived like wild animals...
 - In other words before we knew Jesus we had no direction - no purpose...
 - Before Jesus we did not think about sin - we just did what we wanted...
 - Only living to please ourselves - destined to face the wrath of God!
 - But when we looked up – when we came to Jesus – we got a new heart...
 - Jesus came to restore us to God – He died in our place to pay for our sin...
 - He then gave us a new heart – so we no longer want to continue in sin!
 - **II Corinthians 5:17** – “Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.”
- o 2nd – God restored the kingdom to Nebby... vs. 36-37
 - Not only did Nebby get his mind back – and his Spirit reborn...
 - But God also restored all of the glory of his Kingdom to him – he became King again...
 - In fact God even added more excellence and majesty to him...
 - Because Nebby realized God had judged him so that he would understand truth...
 - So he not only got his Kingdom back – he became part of the Kingdom of God!
 - Many of us can reflect back on many years wasted - not living for the Lord...
 - We can often regret those ‘lost years’ wishing we could have them back...
 - **Joel 2:25** - “I will restore to you the years that [sin] has eaten...”
 - God can restore the years - as if we had never lost anything to the foolishness of sin!
 - Only the Lord can take our poor choices – and turn them into blessings!
 - Not only giving us back the things that we lost to foolish prideful choices...
 - But giving us something far more precious – citizenship in heaven!