Daniel 4

Review...

- King Nebuchadnezzar built a statue 90' tall x 9' thick made out of gold...
 - o Daniel had interpreted the dream of Nebby calling him the head of Gold...
 - o But this all gold idol of Nebby was his way of saying he was going to be the ONLY kingdom!
 - o And he gave the proclamation whenever music was played bow or burn!
- Certain Chaldeans came forward to accuse Rack / Shack / and Benny of not worshiping the idol...
 - o In RAGE and FURY Nebby demanded the Jewish boys be brought before him...
 - o If the were willing to bowed down when the music played all would be forgiven...
 - o But if they did not into the fire and what god could they trust to save them!
 - o The boys were quick to answer if the Lord wanted to He could save them from the fire...
 - o 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...
 - o He became full of RAGE and demanded the fire be heated up 7 times hotter!
 - o The king commanded the Jewish boys be bound up head to toe and thrown into the fire...
 - o But no sooner were they thrown in then the boys were walking around unbound in the fire!
 - o 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…
 - o And the king made a decree if anyone spoke ill against the God of the Jews...
 - o They would be cut into pieces and their house turned into an ash heap!
 - o 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
 - o 1^{st} 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..."
 - o 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 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 'elahh' (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!
- 3^{RD} 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 2^{nd} 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 hold 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!

• 4^{TH} - 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 2^{nd} 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 3^{rd} 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!
- 5^{th} The salvation of a humbled 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!