



CAPITOL COMMISSION[®]

A Proud Leader Transformed

JANUARY 18, 2024

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Daniel 4:34-37 And at the end of the time I, Nebuchadnezzar, lifted my eyes to heaven, and my understanding returned to me; and I blessed the Most High and praised and honored Him who lives forever: For His dominion is an everlasting dominion, and His kingdom is from generation to generation. 35) All the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing; He does according to His will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth. No one can restrain His hand or say to Him, "What have you done?" 36) At the same time my reason returned to me, and for the glory of my kingdom, my honor and splendor returned to me. My counselors and nobles resorted to me, I was restored to my kingdom, and excellent majesty was added to me. 37) now I, Nebuchadnezzar, praise and extol and honor the King of heaven, all of whose works are truth, and His ways justice. And those who walk in pride He is able to put down. (NKJV)

BE CLOTHED WITH HUMILITY, FOR GOD RESISTS THE PROUD, BUT GIVES GRACE TO THE HUMBLE.

1 PETER 5:5

What did Nebuchadnezzar focus on for the first time? Did God fulfill all of His promises to Nebuchadnezzar? What were the first words out of the Emperor's mouth when his reason was restored to him? Whose sovereignty does he continually honor and praise? Does he even refrain from questioning God regarding his seven years of eating grass? Is he no longer seeking his own glory? Was Nebuchadnezzar even given added grace? What was his singular focus and confession?

FOCUS ON FUTURE BIBLE STUDIES:

- JANUARY 25: DANIEL 5:1-9 *THE PRAISE OF FALSE GODS IS ANSWERED WITH THE FINGER OF GOD!*
- FEBRUARY 1: DANIEL 5:10-16 *DANIEL IS PROMISED GREAT GIFTS TO READ THE WRITING OF GOD*

Nebuchadnezzar was a mighty military strategist and a brilliant builder, so he was not in a hurry to embrace humility. Though Daniel and his friends were ten times better than their comrades, they were threatened with immediate execution if they did not provide both his dream and its interpretation. When Daniel and his friends prevailed through prayer and provided both for the king, though he initially fell on his face before Daniel, he rebelled against the truth of the dream. Thus he built a image like he had seen in the dream, but solid gold instead, to symbolize that his kingdom would be the only one, and then he demanded death for anyone would not worship his image. After persecuting Daniel's three friends by throwing them in the fiery furnace, he marveled that there had appeared in the furnace with them a fourth "like the Son of God." Then he marveled even more that not only "the fire had no power" on them, but they had escaped without a hair of their head singed or even the smell of smoke! Maybe, for the first time, he began to fear that he had offended their God, and so he promoted them and decreed that if anyone else were to speak "anything amiss against" their God, they would be "cut in pieces and their houses shall be made an ash heap." But he never repented and believed in their God, though he had seen the pre-incarnate Christ, like the persecutor Saul, who met Christ on the road to Damascus.

"AND SINCE I COULD NOT SEE FOR THE GLORY OF THAT LIGHT ... I CAME INTO DAMASCUS. THEN A CERTAIN ANANIAS ... CAME TO ME; AND ... SAID TO ME, 'BROTHER SAUL, RECEIVE YOUR SIGHT.' AND AT THAT SAME HOUR I LOOKED UP AT HIM." ACTS 22:11-13

BIBLE STUDIES

THURSDAY @ 6:30 AM –PRAYER MEETING – GAB 14TH FLOOR SPEAKER'S CONFERENCE ROOM

THURSDAY @ 7:00 AM –BIBLE STUDY – GAB 14TH FLOOR SPEAKER'S CONFERENCE ROOM

Virginia

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I. HUMBLE TOWARD GOD

DANIEL 4:34-35

Because of his lack of repentance, Nebuchadnezzar was made to eat grass for seven years until he knew that his abilities and authority had been given to him by God: “*until you know that the Most High rules in the kingdom of men, and gives it to whomever He chooses*” (4:31). Thus, at the end of seven years, notice his first act: “*I Nebuchadnezzar, lifted my eyes to heaven*” in dependence and faith, looking to God for His mercy. This act of faith & God’s forgiveness was first pictured in Numbers 21:8, “*When he looked at the bronze serpent, he lived.*” This same picture is used by Jesus in the New Testament, “*And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life*” (John 3:14-15). As soon as he looked in faith to God, the king was given mercy: “*my understanding returned to me.*” God immediately restored his reason and his brilliant mind suddenly grasped the significance of God’s grace upon him. In response, “*I blessed the Most High.*” This verb “*blessed*” also means “*to kneel,*” showing his submission to his new Sovereign. In contrast to his own person and kingdom, he praises and honors “*Him who lives forever: for His dominion is an everlasting dominion, and His kingdom is from generation to generation.*” Rather than questioning God, he goes on to glory in God’s sovereignty in contrast to his own: “*All the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing; He does according to His will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of earth. No one can restrain His hand or say to Him, What have you done?*” Now his singular goal is to glorify God.

UNTO YOU I LIFT UP MY EYES, O YOU WHO DWELL IN THE HEAVENS ... SO OUR EYES LOOK TO THE LORD OUR GOD, UNTIL HE HAS MERCY UPON US. PSALM 123:1-2

II. HUMBLE TOWARD MEN

DANIEL 4:36

As Nebuchadnezzar explains what happened in regard to those around him when his reason returned to him. He is

no longer seeking his own glory as he had in the past, but instead he reveals that he was passive and it came to him. He said literally, “*the glory of my kingdom, my majesty and my splendor was returned to me.*” Rather than seeking out his counselors and nobles to restore the kingdom to him, they sought him out and thus “*I was restored to my kingdom.*” He knows that God has even poured out such great grace upon him that his greatness excelled anytime prior, so he says, “*and excellent majesty was added to me.*” He now refuses to take any glory for all that God does for him. This is the result of a heart transformed by God.

HUMBLE YOURSELVES IN THE SIGHT OF THE LORD, AND HE WILL LIFT YOU UP.. JAMES 4:10

III. HUMBLE TOWARD HIMSELF

DANIEL 4:37

Though he begins with “*I Nebuchadnezzar,*” notice that his focus is no longer upon himself. He is making a final declaration or summation of all that he has learned during his seven years of eating grass. The word “*Now*” can be translated “*let it be known*” and it reveals the final purpose of his letter. He expressed it in three intensive active verbs: “*praise, extol, and honor the King of heaven.*” This three-fold intense glorifying of God not only reveals that he is grateful for all that has happened to him, but as a new loyal subject he gives a new name to God, “*King of heaven,*” nowhere else used in Scripture. As the world emperor, or king of the earth, he emphasizes the fact that he wants to bow the knee and continually glorify the greatest King. Though he seems to have doubted God’s warning dream and the words of Daniel previously, now he states that “*all of His works are truth.*” He admits that he got what he rightly deserved when he declares, “*and His ways justice.*” Most importantly, he confesses his greatest sin, which had kept him from knowing this greatest King all along, “*and those who walk in pride He is able to put down.*” This once proud king now confesses his sin and God’s power in merciful correction!

Questions to Ponder:

- 1) Are you humble enough to recognize that God has given you your abilities and authority?
- 2) Have you submitted to the Most High, Jesus Christ, and knelt before Him as your Lord and Savior?
- 3) Are your sins confessed to God so that in His grace He has transformed you through His mercy and forgiveness?