

CALVARY BIBLE CHURCH

“Lessons from the Book of Daniel - #7”

Date: May 31, 2009

Text: Daniel 4:18-37

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THE JUDGMENT DREAM

INTRODUCTION: The concluding verses of chapter four show us some important facets of the great God we love and serve. Yahweh's sovereignty is the issue, and Daniel, through Nebuchadnezzar's experience and testimony, shows the world that man is the willing or unwilling servant of this Most High God. The dramatic ending of this chapter attests to the fact that man's freedom is a result of God's sovereignty, and yielding ourselves to it always brings our greatest and eternal blessings. Thus we see ...

I. DANIEL'S SERIOUS CONCERN - (4:19-27)

- A) His Alarm
- B) His Assessment
- C) His Advice

II. GOD'S SURE CONDEMNATION - (4:28-33)

- A) God's Delay
- B) The King's Dementia

III. THE KING'S SUCCESSFUL CONVERSION - (4:34-37)

- A) A Melted Heart
- B) A Magnificent Homage

CONCLUSION: Not everyone agrees that Nebuchadnezzar was truly converted to faith in Daniel's God of Israel. However, I feel it's beyond question, due to the fact that God restored the king and blessed his rule and reign in the latter years of his life. God's mercy and grace are evident here, but also the seriousness of God's warning of judgments to come, unless one repents and surrenders to God's absolute and rightful rule. The truth is there can be no real blessings, no inner joy and satisfaction until sinners come to God, claim His forgiveness of the cross, and embrace God's Son as their Savior and Lord. Have you?

BIBLE TEXT FOR MESSAGE

The New International Version

Dan 4:19-37 (NIV) Then Daniel (also called Belteshazzar) was greatly perplexed for a time, and his thoughts terrified him. So the king said, "Belteshazzar, do not let the dream or its meaning alarm you." Belteshazzar answered, "My lord, if only the dream applied to your enemies and its meaning to your adversaries! 20 The tree you saw, which grew large and strong, with its top touching the sky, visible to the whole earth, 21 with beautiful leaves and abundant fruit, providing food for all, giving shelter to the beasts of the field, and having nesting places in its branches for the birds of the air-- 22 you, O king, are that tree! You have become great and strong; your greatness has grown until it reaches the sky, and your dominion extends to distant parts of the earth. 23 "You, O king, saw a messenger, a holy one, coming down from heaven and saying, 'Cut down the tree and destroy it, but leave the stump, bound with iron and bronze, in the grass of the field, while its roots remain in the ground. Let him be drenched with the dew of heaven; let him live like the wild animals, until seven times pass by for him.' 24 "This is the interpretation, O king, and this is the decree the Most High has issued against my lord the king: 25 You will be driven away from people and will live with the wild animals; you will eat grass like cattle and be drenched with the dew of heaven. Seven times will pass by for you until you acknowledge that the Most High is sovereign over the kingdoms of men and gives them to anyone he wishes. 26 The command to leave the stump of the tree with its roots means that your kingdom will be restored to you when you acknowledge that Heaven rules. 27 Therefore, O king, be pleased to accept my advice: Renounce your sins by doing what is right, and your wickedness by being kind to the oppressed. It may be that then your prosperity will continue."

28 All this happened to King Nebuchadnezzar. 29 Twelve months later, as the king was walking on the roof of the royal palace of Babylon, 30 he said, "Is not this the great Babylon I have built as the royal residence, by my mighty power and for the glory of my majesty?" 31 The words were still on his lips when a voice came from heaven, "This is what is decreed for you, King Nebuchadnezzar: Your royal authority has been taken from you. 32 You will be driven away from people and will live with the wild animals; you will eat grass like cattle. Seven times will pass by for you until you acknowledge that the Most High is sovereign over the kingdoms of men and gives them to anyone he wishes." 33 Immediately what had been said about Nebuchadnezzar was fulfilled. He was driven away from people and ate grass like cattle. His body was drenched with the dew of heaven until his hair grew like the feathers of an eagle and his nails like the claws of a bird.

34 At the end of that time, I, Nebuchadnezzar, raised my eyes toward heaven, and my sanity was restored. Then I praised the Most High; I honored and glorified him who lives forever. His dominion is an eternal dominion; his kingdom endures from generation to generation. 35 All the peoples of the earth are regarded as nothing. He does as he pleases with the powers of heaven and the peoples of the earth. No one can hold back his hand or say to him: "What have you done?" 36 At the same time that my sanity was restored, my honor and splendor were returned to me for the glory of my kingdom. My advisers and nobles sought me out, and I was restored to my throne and became even greater than before. 37 Now I, Nebuchadnezzar, praise and exalt and glorify the King of heaven, because everything he does is right and all his ways are just. And those who walk in pride he is able to humble.