

Daniel 4**Nebuchadnezzar Eats Grass**

Salvation is not static or stationary, not a blind leap, but relational, evidential, a divine working of God in individual lives. Often mystical & supernatural as w/ Nebuchadnezzar

Ch 2 So far God has Nebu's attention w/ dream of successive Gentile world ruling powers until stone not cut human hand destroys sets up K of G.

Ch 3 Fiery furnace miracle w/ S,M,A—Christophany bring Nebu to bless God of S,M,A :28

Ch 4 God deals w/ Nebu in personal way in dream/interpretation relating to himself...a warning of future danger 'Pride goes before destruction and a haughty spirit before a fall'.....Actually a warning to all of us CS Lewis

W/ achievement, advancement, popularity, great intellect, good looks, charisma, wealth....all areas of human potential a person succeeds in that sets them apart from others comes w/ great temptation toward pride...Begin to think of yourself more highly than you ought.

Nebu temptation was much greater than most...'to whom much is given much is required'...Some have titled 'Pride and punishment then restoration....mine is Nebu eats grass. It's autobiographical....testimony written by a new convert & begins at the end of his testimony

Begins testimony by declaring the greatness of God

*Nebuchadnezzar the king to all the peoples, nations, and populations of all ^blanguages who live in all the earth: "May your ^cpeace be great! ²I am pleased to declare the signs and miracles that the Most High God has done for me.³ How great are His signs
And how mighty are His miracles!
His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom,
And His dominion is from generation to generation.*

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Sounds like words of a saved man. Next two verses are sound of man w/ I trouble 10x's he refers to himself. J Vernon MaGee I it is---all about me before salvation meism after salvation glory to God...blessed are meek in spirit....me-ek

⁴ “^dI, Nebuchadnezzar, was at ease in my house and happy in my palace. ⁵ I saw a dream and it startled me; and these appearances as I lay on my bed and the visions ⁶in my mind kept alarming me.

Magazines-World, Life, People, Family circle, Ladies home journal, Mens journal, She magazine, Gent, Self----what's next? ME

Sales people taught make friends by compliments, show interest, talk about them then make sale.....Talk about Lord...can I pray for you then talk product.

Notice Nebu not down and out, strung out on drugs, alcohol problem, ready to commit suicide, but opposite....at ease, flourishing...had it all together but lost, perishing....Why do I need God...because He created you & gave you what you've got & w/o Him you are a beast of a man.....George “You are doing something valuable, I'm like a trained animal that knows how to put the zeros on the bottom line’

Nebu goes in one night from ease to alarm...God has power to change fortunes, lives & circumstances.

So far God speaks to Nebu Ch 2,3 but He is not listening. Now gets his attention w/ a dream. God will do all it takes to get our attention & turn a person away from hell. Is 55:8,9“**For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways,**” declares the LORD. ⁹“**As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts.**

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⁶ So I gave orders to bring into my presence all the wise men of Babylon, so that they might make known to me the interpretation of the dream. ⁷ Then the soothsayer priests, the sorcerers, the ^[g]Chaldeans, and the diviners came in and I related the dream ^[g]to them, but they could not make its interpretation known to me. ⁸ But finally Daniel came in before me, whose name is Belteshazzar according to the name of my god, and in whom is ^[h]a spirit of the holy gods; and I related the dream ^[h]to him, saying, ⁹ 'Belteshazzar, chief of the soothsayer priests, since I know that a spirit of the holy gods is in you and no secret baffles you, tell me the visions of my dream which I have seen, along with its interpretation.

God's grace is poured out on Nebu...he abducted Jewish teens, destroyed temple, cruelty, fiery furnace gave 43 yr reign....605-562....now in middle of his reign.

Notice the pagan spiritual brain trust could do nothing....man's vain attempt to get God's attention. But in times of crisis, the Godly man or woman is sought out to pray and help---Reno Abillero

Often respect for man of God before coming into relationship w/ God of man

NY Herald journalist Henry Stanley to Africa to find David Livingstone—4 months w/ him---Spending time with Livingstone converted Stanley from a skeptical outsider into a passionate advocate for Christian missions and humanitarian work in Africa. After Livingstone died in Zambia in 1873, Stanley served as a pallbearer at Livingstone's funeral in Westminster Abbey and returned to Africa to continue Livingstones missionary work

¹⁰ 'Now these were the visions ^[i]in my mind as I lay on my bed: I was looking, and behold, there was a tree in the middle of the ^[j]earth and its height was great. ¹¹ The tree grew large and became strong And its height reached to the sky, And it was visible to the end of the whole earth. ¹² Its foliage was beautiful and its fruit abundant, And in it was food for all. The animals of the field ^[k]found shade under it, And the birds of the sky lived in its branches, And all ^[l]living creatures fed from it. ¹³ 'I was looking in the visions ^[m]in my mind as I lay on my bed, and behold, an angelic watcher, a holy one, descended from heaven.

Watcher – constantly alert to do God's will...only here...for the just, righteous, honest & godly.....give comfort & relief but also discomfort to immoral, dishonest, prideful sinners.

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¹⁴ He shouted out and spoke as follows:
*“Chop down the tree and cut off its branches,
 Shake off its foliage and scatter its fruit;
 Let the animals flee from under it
 And the birds from its branches.*

¹⁵ Yet leave the stump ^[o]with its roots in the ground,
*But with a band of iron and bronze around it
 In the new grass of the field;
 And let him be drenched with the dew of heaven,
 And let ^[e]him share with the animals in the grass of the earth.*

¹⁶ Let his ^[q]mind change from that of a human
*And let an animal's ^[v]mind be given to him,
 And let seven ^[s]periods of time pass over him.*

¹⁷ This sentence is by the decree of the angelic watchers,
*And the decision is a command of the holy ones,
 In order that the living may know
 That the Most High is ruler over the realm of mankind,
 And He grants it to whomever He wishes
 And sets over it the lowliest of people.”*

¹⁸ This is the dream that I, King Nebuchadnezzar, have seen. Now you, Belteshazzar, tell me its interpretation, since none of the wise men of my kingdom is able to make known to me the interpretation; but you are able, because a spirit of the holy gods is in you.’ ¹⁹ “Then Daniel, whose name is Belteshazzar, was appalled for a while as his thoughts alarmed him. The king responded and said, ‘Belteshazzar, do not let the dream or its interpretation alarm you.’ Belteshazzar replied, ‘My lord, if only the dream applied to those who hate you, and its interpretation to your adversaries!’

Daniel's concern & compassion for Nebu seems more supernatural than a natural affection. Nebu respected Dan but rejected his God & preferred pagan gods of Babylon....still Daniel had great concern and affection for the man....likely seeing the work God was doing in him....an emotional bond place there by God....

Matt 5:44 44“But I say to you, love your enemies, and pray for those who persecute you 45in order that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven; for He causes His sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous. 46“For if you love those who love you, what reward have you? Do not even the tax-gatherers do the same? 47“And if you greet your brothers only, what do you do more than others? Do not even the Gentiles do the same? 48“Therefore you are to be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect.

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²⁰ *The tree that you saw, which became large and grew strong, whose height reached to the sky and was visible to all the earth, ²¹ and whose foliage was beautiful and its fruit abundant, and in which was food for all, under which the animals of the field lived and in whose branches the birds of the sky settled— ²² it is you, O king; for you have become great and grown strong, and your ^[u]majesty has become great and reached to the sky, and your dominion to the end of the earth. ²³ And in that the king saw an angelic watcher, a holy one, descending from heaven and saying, “Chop down the tree and destroy it; yet leave the stump ^[u]with its roots in the ground, but with a band of iron and bronze around it in the new grass of the field, let him be drenched with the dew of heaven, and let ^[u]him share with the animals of the field until seven ^[u]periods of time pass over him,” ²⁴ this is the interpretation, O king, and this is the decree of the Most High, which has come upon my lord the king: ²⁵ that you be driven away from mankind and your dwelling place be with the animals of the field, and you be given grass to eat like cattle and be drenched with the dew of heaven; and seven ^[u]periods of time will pass over you, until you recognize that the Most High is ruler over the realm of mankind and bestows it on whomever He wishes.*

Theme of the book....God is sovereign over affairs of the government of man...rulers, nations, appointments. Christian Monk early Roman Empire “Lord why allow such a wicked man to rule’ Because I could not find anyone worse’ Spurgeon. Whoever is voted into office God will use for His glory or chastisement of his people or judgment of a nation.

²⁶ *And in that it was commanded to leave the stump ^[u]with the roots of the tree, your kingdom will ^[u]remain as yours after you recognize that it is Heaven that rules. ²⁷ Therefore, O king, may my advice be pleasing to you: wipe away your sin by doing righteousness, and your wrongdoings by showing mercy to the poor, in case there may be a prolonging of your prosperity.’*

Monarchs fascination w/ mighty cedar tree to build w/...tall, strong, costly in value...now boasting in cutting it down w/ own hands...Dan has courage to confront Nebu w/ this news....

Ez 33 watchman on wall 1And the word of the LORD came to me saying, 2“Son of man, speak to the sons of your people, and say to them, ‘If I bring a sword upon a land, and the people of the land take one man from among them and make him their watchman; 3and he sees the sword coming upon the land, and he blows on the trumpet and warns the people, 4then he who hears the sound of the trumpet and does not take warning, and a sword comes and takes him away, his blood will be on his own head. 5’He heard the sound of the trumpet, but did not take

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warning; his blood will be on himself. But had he taken warning, he would have delivered his life. **6**‘But if the watchman sees the sword coming and does not blow the trumpet, and the people are not warned, and a sword comes and takes a person from them, he is taken away in his iniquity; but his blood I will require from the watchman’s hand.’ **7**“Now as for you, son of man, I have appointed you a watchman for the house of Israel; so you will hear a message from My mouth, and give them warning from Me. **8**“When I say to the wicked, ‘O wicked man, you shall surely die,’ and you do not speak to warn the wicked from his way, that wicked man shall die in his iniquity, but his blood I will require from your hand. **9**“But if you on your part warn a wicked man to turn from his way, and he does not turn from his way, he will die in his iniquity; but you have delivered your life., **10**“Now as for you, son of man, say to the house of Israel, ‘Thus you have spoken, saying, “Surely our transgressions and our sins are upon us, and we are rotting away in them; how then can we survive?”’ **11**“Say to them, ‘As I live!’ declares the Lord GOD, ‘I take no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but rather that the wicked turn from his way and live. Turn back, turn back from your evil ways! Why then will you die, O house of Israel?’

²⁸ “All of this happened to Nebuchadnezzar the king. ²⁹ Twelve months later he was walking on the roof of the royal palace of Babylon. ³⁰ The king began speaking and was saying, ‘Is this not Babylon the great, which I myself have built as a royal ^[aa]residence by the might of my power and for the honor of my majesty?’ ³¹ While the word was still in the king’s mouth, a voice ^[ab]came from heaven, saying, ‘King Nebuchadnezzar, to you it is declared: ^[ac]sovereignty has been removed from you, ³² and you will be driven away from mankind, and your dwelling place will be with the animals of the field. You will be given grass to eat like cattle, and seven ^[ad]periods of time will pass over you until you recognize that the Most High is ruler over the realm of mankind and bestows it on whomever He wishes.’ ³³ Immediately the word concerning Nebuchadnezzar was fulfilled; and he was driven away from mankind and began eating grass like cattle, and his body was drenched with the dew of heaven until his hair had grown like eagles’ feathers and his nails like birds’ claws.

A description Ps 49:12 ‘A man in his pomp will not endure, he will be like a beast that perishes.....’ A warning to the proud of heart.

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³⁴ *“But at the end of ^[ae]that period, I, Nebuchadnezzar, raised my eyes toward heaven and my ^[af]reason 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 endures from generation to generation.³⁵ All the inhabitants of the earth are of no account, But He does according to His will among the army of heaven And among the inhabitants of earth; And no one can ^[ag]fend off His hand Or say to Him, ‘What have You done?’ ³⁶ At that time my ^[ah]reason returned to me. And my majesty and splendor were ^[aj]restored to me for the honor of my kingdom, and my state counselors and my nobles began seeking me out; so I was reestablished in my ^[aj]sovereignty, and surpassing greatness was added to me. ³⁷ Now I, Nebuchadnezzar, praise, exalt, and honor the King of heaven, for all His works are ^[ak]true and His ways ^[aj]just; and He is able to humble those who walk in pride.”*

Nebu 1—looked up, 2—Sanity came, 3---Blessed the Lord for who God was not what Nebu did.

All that we have; possessions, position, potential is of the Lord. Not for us to build our little empire but build up and love people...this is the heart of God.

Ps 49:11 *Their inner thought is, that their houses are forever, And their dwelling places to all generations; They have called their lands after their own names. **12** But man in his pomp will not endure; He is like the beasts that perish.*