

(Daniel 3:28 NKJV) Nebuchadnezzar spoke, saying, "Blessed be the **God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego**, who sent His Angel and delivered His servants who trusted in Him, and they have frustrated the king's word, and yielded their bodies, that they should not serve nor worship any god except their own God! (29) Therefore I make a decree that any people, nation, or language which speaks anything amiss against **the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego** shall be cut in pieces, and their houses shall be made an ash heap; because there is no other God who can deliver like this."

We need to read these last 2 verses carefully to fully appreciate chapter 4 and the continued saga of Nebuchadnezzar.

When the King says "the God of..." he's being very specific. It's not God, or My God or Our God. He's referring to their God. He may be offering a blessing to Him and he declares that anyone worshipping this God will be killed, and He might be a mighty God who saved these men from the furnace...but He wasn't his God.

This is like the so-called believers in Jesus who profess Him, they might even praise Him they are like those described in Isaiah:

(Isaiah 29:13 NKJV) Therefore the Lord said: "Inasmuch as these people draw near with their mouths And honor Me with their lips, But have removed their hearts far from Me, And their fear toward Me is taught by the commandment of men,

And was Jesus just as clear:

Matthew 7:21-23 NKJV "Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven. (22) Many will say to Me in that day, 'Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?' (23) And then I will declare to them, '**I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!**'"

But there is always hope when one is willing to repent and humbly confess their sin. Let's examine what it took to get Nebuchadnezzar to come humbly to the Living God!

(Daniel 4:1 NKJV) Nebuchadnezzar the king, To all peoples, nations, and languages that dwell in all the earth: Peace be multiplied to you.

This phrase "peace be multiplied to you" is used twice in Daniel and interestingly twice by Peter in the salutation in his first and second letters. It is similar to "**Shalom** aleikhem, a greeting version in Hebrew, meaning "peace be upon you" (Pl.). The appropriate response is "aleikhem shalom", "upon you be peace"."

(Daniel 4:2 NKJV) I thought it good to declare the signs and wonders that the Most High God has worked for me.

Some translations say "has worked towards me"; The one I don't like is "has worked with

me" because it seems to imply that the King was a willing partner...

But, he does refer to God as the Most High God or the Supreme God...

(Daniel 4:3 NKJV) How great *are* His signs, And how mighty His wonders! His kingdom *is* an everlasting kingdom, And His dominion *is* from generation to generation.

He also declares that this God, the most High God, has a kingdom that is an everlasting kingdom and He is over it from generation to generation. God is the ruler of this Kingdom from age to age without end. But has the King come to a true "knowing" of God, or is he still at the point of knowing "about" Him?

(Daniel 4:4 NKJV) I, Nebuchadnezzar, was at rest in my house, and flourishing in my palace.

Flourishing = prosperous!

(Daniel 4:5 NKJV) I saw a dream which made me afraid, and the thoughts on my bed and the visions of my head troubled me.

The king had another dream and the images/pictures in his mind were terrifying.

(Daniel 4:6 NKJV) Therefore I issued a decree to bring in all the wise *men* of Babylon before me, that they might make known to me the interpretation of the dream. (7) Then the magicians, the astrologers, the Chaldeans, and the soothsayers came in, and I told them the dream; **but they did not make known to me its interpretation.**

Couldn't or Wouldn't...let see about the dream before answering...

(Daniel 4:8 NKJV) But at last Daniel came before me (his name *is* **Beltshazzar**, according to the **name of my god**; in him *is* the Spirit of the Holy God), and I told the dream before him, *saying*:

Well, the cat is out of the bag. He still refers to Bel as "my god". But he also recognizes that within Daniel is the Spirit of the Holy God. But is Daniel's God only the Most High God or is He the only true and living God...

(Daniel 4:9 NKJV) "Beltshazzar, chief of the magicians, because I know that the Spirit of the Holy God *is* in you, and no secret troubles you, explain to me the visions of my dream that I have seen, and its interpretation.

Daniel already referred to God as the revealer of secrets at the time of the first dream.

(Daniel 4:10 NKJV) These *were* the visions of my head *while* on my bed: I was looking, and behold, **A tree in the midst of the earth, And its height was great. (11)** The tree grew and became strong; **Its height reached to the heavens, And it could be seen to the ends of all the earth. (12)** Its leaves *were* lovely, Its fruit abundant, And in it *was* food for all. The beasts of the field found shade under it, The birds of the heavens dwelt in its branches, And all flesh was fed from it. (13) "I saw in the visions of my head *while* on my bed, and there was a **watcher, a holy one, coming down from heaven. (14)** He cried aloud and said thus: 'Chop down the tree and cut off its branches, Strip off its leaves and scatter its fruit. Let the beasts get out from under it, And the birds from its branches. (15) Nevertheless leave the stump and roots

in the earth, **Bound with a band of iron and bronze, In the tender grass of the field.** Let it be wet with the dew of heaven, And *let him* graze with the beasts On the grass of the earth. (16) Let **his** heart be **changed from *that of a man*, Let him be given the heart of a beast,** And let seven times pass over him. (17) 'This decision *is* by the decree of the watchers, And the sentence by the word of the holy ones, In order that the living may know That the Most High rules in the kingdom of men, Gives it to whomever He will, And sets over it the lowest of men.'

Unlike the first dream that was about the kingdoms of the world, this one is personal. But either in denial or ignorance the king isn't getting it.

(Daniel 4:18 NKJV) "This dream I, King Nebuchadnezzar, have seen. **Now you, Belteshazzar, declare its interpretation,** since all the wise *men* of my kingdom are not able to make known to me the interpretation; but you *are* able, for the Spirit of the Holy God *is* in you."

(Daniel 4:19 NKJV) **Then Daniel, whose name was Belteshazzar,** was astonished for a time, and his thoughts troubled him. *So* the king spoke, and said, "Belteshazzar, do not let the dream or its interpretation trouble you." **Belteshazzar answered and said, "My lord, *may* the dream concern those who hate you, and its interpretation concern your enemies!**

Daniel knows the meaning but perhaps he's wishing it was about the king's enemies. He has some very bad news to hand the king.

(Daniel 4:20 NKJV) "The tree that you saw, which grew and became strong, whose height reached to the heavens and which *could be seen* by all the earth, (21) whose leaves *were* lovely and its fruit abundant, in which *was* food for all, under which the beasts of the field dwelt, and in whose branches the birds of the heaven had their home—

(Daniel 4:22 NKJV) **it is you, O king, who have grown and become strong; for your greatness has grown and reaches to the heavens, and your dominion to the end of the earth.**

Daniel finally gets to the point. The dream is about the strong and great king and his dominion across the known earth. The description is positive but there's more to it than Nebuchadnezzar realizes.

(Daniel 4:23 NKJV) "And inasmuch as the king saw a **watcher**, a holy one, coming down from heaven and saying, 'Chop down the tree and destroy it, but leave its stump and roots in the earth, *bound* with a band of iron and bronze in the tender grass of the field; let it be wet with the dew of heaven, and let him graze with the beasts of the field, till seven times pass over him';

(Daniel 4:24 NKJV) this is the interpretation, O king, **and this is the decree of the Most High, which has come upon my lord the king:**

Make sure that we understand that this watcher or watchers are not making the decree, but are delivering the decree from God! It is only the Sovereign LORD that can and does make these judgments.

(Daniel 4:25 NKJV) **They** shall drive you from men, your dwelling shall be with the beasts of the field, and they shall make you eat grass like oxen. They shall wet you with the dew of heaven, and seven times shall pass over you, till you know that the Most High rules in the kingdom of

men, and gives it to whomever He chooses. (26) "And inasmuch as they gave the command to leave the stump *and* roots of the tree, your kingdom shall be assured to you, after you come to know that Heaven rules.

For 7 years the King will live like a beast. There are a couple of terms used to describe this psychosis.

Zoanthropy = a person who believes and acts like an animal.

Boanthropy = same as above but person believes and acts like a cow or other bovine, like an ox.

I read that a person who has this condition is unchanged in his/her inner consciousness, but the outward behavior is quite insane.

The word from the watcher is: you'll be a beast until you know that the Most High God is the true ruler of all men and allows people to rule according to His sovereign choice.

(Daniel 4:27 NKJV) Therefore, O king, let my advice be acceptable to you; break off your sins by *being* righteous, and your iniquities by showing mercy to *the* poor. Perhaps there may be a lengthening of your prosperity."

God mercy and grace are extended to the king. He only needs to repent of his sins, act righteously and show sincere righteousness to the poor. The LORD God may even allow you to prosper.

(Daniel 4:28 NKJV) All *this* came upon King Nebuchadnezzar.

But not right away.

(Daniel 4:29 NKJV) At the end of the twelve months he was walking about the royal palace of Babylon.

The LORD gave him a year to repent. But, evidently, he soon forgot about the dream and its meaning! Month after month there was change in the king as foretold by the dream...

(Daniel 4:30 NKJV) The king spoke, saying, "Is not this great Babylon, that I have built for a royal dwelling by my mighty power and for the honor of my majesty?"

The king's true nature is revealed: I am great, I am powerful, and I have created a royal dwelling for his own honor!

(Daniel 4:31 NKJV) While the word *was still* in the king's mouth, **a voice fell from heaven:** "King Nebuchadnezzar, to you it is spoken: the kingdom has departed from you! (Daniel 4:32 NKJV) And they shall drive you from men, and your dwelling *shall be* with the beasts of the field. They shall make you eat grass like oxen; and seven times shall pass over you, until you know that the Most High rules in the kingdom of men, and gives it to whomever He chooses."

The voice reiterates the meaning of the dream and the consequences of not repenting in sincere repentance!

(Daniel 4:33 NKJV) That very hour the word was fulfilled concerning Nebuchadnezzar; he was driven from men and ate grass like oxen; his body was wet with the dew of heaven till his hair had grown like eagles' *feathers* and his nails like birds' *claws*.

(Daniel 4:34 NKJV) 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.**

In an act of submission and surrender, the king-beast finally looks up! He looks up to the Most High and begins to bless, praise and honor him; He understands that "**His dominion *is* an everlasting dominion, And His kingdom *is* from generation to generation.**".

(Daniel 4:35 NKJV) 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?"**

He confesses that the LORD God and true King has dominion over all He has created. And! Therefore, what complaint shall we raise up to Him?

This reminded me of Job who, after a long line of questions from God Almighty, said to Job:

Job 40:1-5 NKJV Moreover the LORD answered Job, and said: (2) "Shall the one who contends with the Almighty correct *Him*? He who rebukes God, let him answer it." (3) Then Job answered the LORD and said: (4) "Behold, I am vile; What shall I answer You? I lay my hand over my mouth. (5) Once I have spoken, but I will not answer; Yes, twice, but I will proceed no further."

(Daniel 4:36 NKJV) **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.

As promised, the LORD restored Nebuchadnezzar after 7 years of being "true to himself" – that is, the king was a beast and no more. It took the entire 7 years to convince him to "look up" and see from where his salvation came.

(Daniel 4:37 NKJV) **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.**

A wonderful ending: He praises, he exalts, he honors the true King. He declares that all He does is Truth and He executes righteous judgement on the earth. And, finally, he remembers his pride and warns others of the consequences....and he knows quite well that God is able to do all He says.

So, what do you think? Was Nebuchadnezzar saved? Will we meet this man in heaven?

Now, another question: How would you feel if I told you that we were all like this man before grace saved us? Have you ever considered that before Christ, you lived like a beast because you were a beast? Do you think this is true or just an exaggeration?

Ok, how about Jonah?

Jonah 4:1-11 NKJV But it displeased Jonah exceedingly, and he became angry. (2) So he prayed to the LORD, and said, "Ah, LORD, was not this what I said when I was still in my country? Therefore I fled previously to Tarshish; for I know that You *are* a gracious and merciful God, slow to anger and abundant in lovingkindness, One who relents from doing harm. (3) Therefore now, O LORD, please take my life from me, for *it is* better for me to die than to live!" (4) Then the LORD said, "***Is it right for you to be angry?***" (5) So Jonah went out of the city and sat on the east side of the city. There he made himself a shelter and sat under it in the shade, till he might see what would become of the city. (6) **And the LORD God prepared a plant and made it come up over Jonah**, that it might be shade for his head to deliver him from his misery. So Jonah was very grateful for the plant. (7) But as morning dawned the next day God prepared a worm, and it *so* damaged the plant that it withered. (8) And it happened, when the sun arose, that God prepared a vehement east wind; and the sun beat on Jonah's head, so that he grew faint. Then he wished death for himself, and said, "*It is* better for me to die than to live." (9) **Then God said to Jonah, "*Is it right for you to be angry about the plant?*" And he said, "*It is* right for me to be angry, even to death!" (10) But the LORD said, "You have had pity on the plant for which you have not labored, nor made it grow, which came up in a night and perished in a night. (11) And should I not pity Nineveh, that great city, in which are more than one hundred and twenty thousand persons who cannot discern between their right hand and their left—and much livestock?"**