

“The Beast Empire”

Part 7

Just to recap, in Hebrew the word for “Beast” is **חַיָּוָה** “*chêwāh*”. It is a noun and is the equivalent of the New Testament “Beast” or Greek word “*Therion*”. “*Chewah*” is the cognate of the Hebrew word “*chayyah*” (“animal”, “wild animal”). It occurs twenty **20X** times in the Bible, ALL in the book of Daniel. The contexts are in the course of his interpretation of Nebuchadnezzar’s dream –(Daniel 2), the vision of the great tree –(an allegory of Nebuchadnezzar, chapter 4), the ensuing account of the madness of Nebuchadnezzar –(chapter 5), and a description of the creatures he saw in his allegorical vision of the four “beasts” – (chapter 7). Like its Hebrew cognate, this noun refers to all classes of non-human animate life.

The fact that we only find this word in the book of Daniel helps to set apart our study of the mystery “beast(s)” from the rest of the Old Testament. It occurs in:

Daniel 2:38

Daniel 4:12, 14, 15, 16, 21, 23, 25, 32

Daniel 5:21

Daniel 7:3, 5, 6, 7 (2X), 11, 12, 17, 19, 23

We are going to be looking at Daniel 4 in this segment. The beginning of this chapter is a decree issued by King Nebuchadnezzar to all the people of his kingdom proclaiming the greatness of God towards him. God had shown Himself to Nebuchadnezzar earlier through Daniel who had both revealed and interpreted his dream, -(Daniel 2) and once again the delivery of Daniel's three companions in the fiery furnace.-(Daniel 3) However, in his pride and arrogance, the king continued to ignore God had placed him in his position as king. In his pride, he concluded it was his great ability that had placed him over Babylon. Yet, God was longsuffering, He was not finished with Nebuchadnezzar and was about to teach him a lesson in a most humbling and debilitating way. This chapter is the king's personal testimony of his experience in coming to the realization and acceptance of the greatness, wonder and power of Almighty God.

The reference to “Beasts” in chapter 4, draws no association with empires as does Daniel 2 and 7. Like its Hebrew cognate, this noun refers to all classes of non-human animal life.

“Nebuchadnezzar the king, unto all people, nations, and languages, that dwell in all the earth; Peace be multiplied unto you.” –(Daniel 4:1)

(4:1) - Although Nebuchadnezzar now knew that the God of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego had power to rescue them, he still did not understand what kind of God they served. Toward the end of his reign, God had to take him through a humbling experience in order to teach him that He was different. After learning his lesson, he wrote a letter to be circulated

over the known world of his day explaining his experience. (This verse is 3:31 in the Hebrew Bible. The Hebrew chapter 4 begins with the English at Daniel 4:4).

Nebuchadnezzar begins by stating he was secure at rest and was prosperous (flourishing) in his palace. However, this peaceful state was broken when in his sleep he had a troubling dream. His actions reveal that he had not learned the lessons of his first dream which God had caused him to have. Once again he makes the mistake of calling all his "wise men" to give him the meaning of the dream. It seems more reasonable that he would immediately call Daniel who had not only revealed his first dream he could not remember but also had given the interpretation to him. Clearly, the truth that God said he had placed Nebuchadnezzar on his throne did not set well with the king. So instead of going to God's servant, Nebuchadnezzar goes to his own "wise men" who he knows do not know God and will not give an interpretation that would degrade him.

Once again these phony "wise men" are called to the palace, all the magicians, the astrologers, the Chaldeans and the soothsayers. This time their task appears easier, so they are told the dream and asked to give the interpretation of it. Yet, they could not or would not venture an interpretation. It may be that they knew Daniel was available and could interpret the dream correctly and they feared if they gave a meaning to the dream Daniel could expose it as being phony. They were wise in not making an interpretation up that could prove their undoing.

"I thought it good to shew the signs and wonders that the high God hath wrought toward me." –(Daniel 4:2)

(4:2) - Nebuchadnezzar began his letter with a promise that he would tell of the miraculous signs that God performed for him. In Daniel 3:29, he recognizes that no other god has the power to rescue or deliver. But after this experience he called God the "High God."

"How great are his signs! and how mighty are his wonders! His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and his dominion is from generation to generation." –(Daniel 4:3)

(4:3) - He emphasized God's greatness using the intense language of poetry. The first two lines are a parallelism declaring the greatness of his signs and wonders. The last two lines are a parallelism declaring the eternal nature of his kingdom and rule. This could not be said about any of the Babylonian gods. Babylonian mythology spoke of gods being born and even dying. To understand the eternal greatness and rule of the Most High God was a tremendous step forward for Nebuchadnezzar.

"I Nebuchadnezzar was at rest in mine house, and flourishing in my palace: I saw a dream which made me afraid, and the thoughts upon my bed and the visions of my head troubled me." –(Daniel 4:4-5)

(4:4-5) - The latter part of Nebuchadnezzar's reign was prosperous. He flourished and was able to enjoy the prosperity that marked everything in his palace. Then, one night a frightening dream filled his head with fantasies that terrified him.

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

(4:6-7) - Because the dream had such a terrifying affect on him, Nebuchadnezzar immediately made a decree commanding all the wise men of Babylon to come before him, hoping they would be able to interpret the dream for him. Apparently, in his upset, fear-filled state he had forgotten how the wise men had failed him years before (see chapter 2).

When the magicians, conjurers, Chaldean astrologers and fortune tellers came in, the king told the dream, but they were not able to make the interpretation known to him. Daniel did not come with them at first. He must have wanted the king to know that their occult powers were not able to deal with something that came from the true God.

"But at the last Daniel came in before me, whose name was Belteshazzar, according to the name of my god, and in whom is the spirit of the holy gods: and before him I told the dream, saying," -(Daniel 4:8)

(4:8) - At last, after all the others, Daniel arrived. Nebuchadnezzar recognized him by his Babylonian name, "Belteshazzar," which the king connected with his god Bel. Nebuchadnezzar still had not learned that Daniel's God, Yahweh, is the One True God. By saying that the spirit of the holy gods was in Daniel, he was acknowledging through hindsight that Daniel was different from the other wise men. Though Nebuchadnezzar was still far from understanding that the Holy Spirit of the one real God was in Daniel, he did show definite progress in his appreciation of the power and glory of Daniel's God.

Verse 8 says that at the last, after the Babylonian wise men had failed in giving the interpretation, Daniel comes before the king. Daniel's name given to him by Nebuchadnezzar was Belteshazzar which was an Aramaic or Chaldee name. The name "Beltis" means "protect the king" or Belteshazzar "protect Nebuchadnezzar." Nebuchadnezzar refers to Daniel as not serving "THE" God, but as being a servant of one of the polytheistic heathen gods. He did use the term "holy" would only apply to Jehovah; meant being separated and unlike the heathen gods of Babylon.

Daniel is addressed as the "master of magicians" which degraded him as God's servant and placed him in the same class as the heathen wise men. As Nebuchadnezzar addresses Daniel he is careful not to recognize the uniqueness of Almighty God, by saying the spirit of the "gods" (plural) was in him. Nebuchadnezzar is still refusing to accept that Jehovah is the "only" God by placing Him among his pagan gods. Among the gods of the Babylonians, none held the

distinction of being the supreme God. By adopting this degraded opinion offered leverage to use the term “gods” allowing the king to think of himself in similar terms being godlike himself.

He asks Daniel for the interpretation of his second dream and explains what he saw in the vision. Nebuchadnezzar saw a high tree standing in the midst of the earth. The tree great and strong and reached high into the sky and everyone on earth could see it. It was pleasant to look at and every kind of creature ate of its fruit. Then Nebuchadnezzar said he saw a "watcher" a holy one that came from heaven who loudly cried to cut the tree down and strip it of its leaves, branches, and fruit and let the animals get from under it. However, the watcher says to leave the stump and roots in the earth. The stump then was to be bound with a band of iron and brass in the tender grass of the field and it would be wet with the dew of heaven and have its portion or food with the beasts who grazed in the grass.

“O Belteshazzar, master of the magicians, because I know that the spirit of the holy gods is in thee, and no secret troubleth thee, tell me the visions of my dream that I have seen, and the interpretation thereof.” –(Daniel 4:9)

(4:9) - Again, the king addressed Daniel by his Babylonian name and title as chief of the magicians, that is, chief of the learned scribes who wrote and understood the most ancient cuneiform and hieroglyphics. The king also spoke of the spirit of the holy gods. These were supernatural gods in contrast to kings who considered themselves gods. To polytheists, the word “holy” simply meant to be separate from humankind. The term did not imply moral purity to them. The king also remembered that no secret could distress Daniel or put undue pressure on him. So he asked him to interpret the “vision” of his dream. By calling it a “vision” he recognized that it was supernatural.

“Thus were the visions of mine head in my bed; I saw, and behold a tree in the midst of the earth, and the height thereof was great. The tree grew, and was strong, and the height thereof reached unto heaven, and the sight thereof to the end of all the earth:” –(Daniel 4:10-11)

(4:10-11) - Nebuchadnezzar’s dream was of a great, tall tree in a central place on earth. He saw it growing to an extraordinary height that reached into the heavens so it was seen everywhere in all the earth.

Note that in the description of the tree in verses 10-12, the tree is referred to as "it", but in verses 14-16 the pronoun is changed to "his." This is significant because this great tree that is cut down in this dream is symbolic of Nebuchadnezzar and his kingdom. Verse 16 says let "his" heart be changed from one of a man's to that of a beast for a period of seven years. This was troubling to Nebuchadnezzar who surely understood the dream was about him with the symbolism of the tree being cut down and the stump becoming an animal was alarming.

He begs Daniel for the interpretation, but all the while refusing to accept that the vision and the interpretation would come from "The" God. He recognizes the power of God, but still uses the

plural of "holy ones" and beckons Daniel to give him the interpretation by the spirit of the "holy gods" which was in Daniel. But this gross unwillingness to recognize Jehovah's sovereignty while adopting a rebellious stance against Almighty God was soon to be changed.

"The leaves thereof were fair, and the fruit thereof much, and in it was meat for all: the beasts of the field had shadow under it, and the fowls of the heaven dwelt in the boughs thereof, and all flesh was fed of it." -(Daniel 4:12)

(4:12) - The tree's leaves were beautiful and it was loaded with fruit. Wild animals made their nests or lairs in its shade. All kinds of birds were in its branches, and "all flesh" (all human beings) fed on its fruit.

"I saw in the visions of my head upon my bed, and, behold, a watcher and an holy one came down from heaven;" -(Daniel 4:13)

(4:13) - As the king continued to recall his dream, he saw a vigilant watcher come down from heaven—most likely implying an angel. He was a messenger of the Most High God (see also vv. 17, 24).

"He cried aloud, and said thus, Hew down the tree, and cut off his branches, shake off his leaves, and scatter his fruit: let the beasts get away from under it, and the fowls from his branches:" -(Daniel 4:14)

(4:14) - With a loud cry, the angel commanded that the tree be cut down, its branches chopped off, its leaves shaken off and its fruit scattered. But the animals and birds would not be harmed. They would be allowed to get away.

"Nevertheless leave the stump of his roots in the earth, even with a band of iron and brass, in the tender grass of the field; and let it be wet with the dew of heaven, and let his portion be with the beasts in the grass of the earth:" -(Daniel 4:15)

(4:15) - The destruction of the tree was not to be total. The stump and its roots (or tap root) would be left in the earth. Fetters of iron and bronze put around the stump would protect it from anyone who might want to destroy it. The dew of heaven would keep it from drying out and dying. Then the angel personified the stump, saying, "Let his portion be with beasts in the grass of the earth."

"Let his heart be changed from man's, and let a beast's heart be given unto him; and let seven times pass over him." -(Daniel 4:16)

(4:16) - It becomes clear in this verse that the tree represents a man. His heart (including his mind and attitudes) would be changed from that of a man to that of an animal,

and he would remain in this condition for seven times, that is, for seven seasons. Babylon had two seasons in a year, wet and dry, so the seven times would be three and one-half years.

“This matter is by the decree of the watchers, and the demand by the word of the holy ones: to the intent that the living may know that the most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will, and setteth up over it the basest of men.” –(Daniel 4:17)

(4:17) - The purpose of this decree brought by the watcher and confirmed by the holy ones (angels) is that the people living may come to know that the Most High (God) is mighty (is Lord and Master) over the kingdom or realm of humankind. He is in control, so He gives it to whomever He wills. He does not always pick the ones we might expect. Rather, He sets up the lowliest people as rulers.

“This dream I king Nebuchadnezzar have seen. Now thou, O Belteshazzar, declare the interpretation thereof, forasmuch as all the wise men of my kingdom are not able to make known unto me the interpretation: but thou art able; for the spirit of the holy gods is in thee.” –(Daniel 4:18)

(4:18) - Again addressing Daniel as Belteshazzar, the king reminded Daniel that all the other wise men of his kingdom could not give the interpretation. But the king had confidence that Daniel could give the interpretation because he believed the spirit of the holy gods was in him.

“Then Daniel, whose name was Belteshazzar, was astonished (archaic term for stunned; dazed) for one hour, and his thoughts troubled him. The king spake, and said, Belteshazzar, let not the dream, or the interpretation thereof, trouble thee. Belteshazzar answered and said, My lord, the dream be to them that hate thee, and the interpretation thereof to thine enemies.” - (Daniel 4:19)

(4:19) - Daniel hesitated to answer. The interpretation God gave him caused him to stiffen with fright. The Bible draws attention to his Babylonian name, “Belteshazzar,” again because he stood before the king as subject to the king. His thoughts terrified him because he knew he was going to give an interpretation that pronounced God’s judgment on the king. Such an interpretation could easily anger the king and result in a swift death.

The king saw how frightened Daniel was, and addressing him as Belteshazzar, his subject, he encouraged him not to let the dream or its interpretation frighten him. So Daniel, as Belteshazzar, the king’s officer and subject, answered sympathetically with a wish that the terrible dream applied to the king’s enemies and its interpretation to his adversaries.

Daniel apparently immediately understood what the dream meant and for one hour in amazement pondered over giving Nebuchadnezzar the interpretation. Nebuchadnezzar sensed that Daniel was struggling with how he would tell the king the awful news about what was

going to happen shortly. The king then assured Daniel that he should not be troubled but without reservation give the interpretation. It would seem that Nebuchadnezzar already suspected that the meaning of the dream would not be good for him, thus he was eager to have the matter revealed.

Daniel's response was clearly that of a diplomat. Even though he was reluctant to reveal God's pending judgment on the king, he proceeds to address the king as "My lord." His beginning statement is that he would prefer that what he was about to reveal would fall on Nebuchadnezzar's enemies rather than on the king himself. Concluding that diplomatic statement Daniel proceeds to interpret the dream.

He explains to Nebuchadnezzar that the great tree which he saw in the dream was himself who had grown great and strong, and whose kingdom now had expanded to the ends of the earth. Daniel then restates the declaration of the "watcher" which apparently was a messenger angel sent from God to reveal the vision to Nebuchadnezzar. The vision was from Almighty God, the most High and was His decree.

God reveals that He would cause this great haughty rebellious king to be humbled before Him and that Nebuchadnezzar would be driven from men and would dwell seven years as a beast of the field eating grass like an ox being openly exposed to the elements and the dew of heaven. God states the purpose of this humbling of the king was to teach him first hand who was truly the God of heaven who ruled the world and who sets up kings as it pleases Him. The stated time would be seven years until Nebuchadnezzar knew this truth without question and who would submit himself to Almighty God.

Daniel continues and explains that the stump that was not destroyed meant that Nebuchadnezzar's kingdom would remain in tack and that he would once again rule, but from then on accepting fully that Jehovah God rules, and Nebuchadnezzar was His servant.

Daniel then appeals to Nebuchadnezzar to abandon his sinful and evil ways and show mercy to the poor so his state of tranquility lengthened. 2 Peter 3:9 states the truth that God is longsuffering, ***"The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance."*** Certainly God was longsuffering to Nebuchadnezzar in giving him the time to repent from his rebellion against God who had created him and set him on the throne of Babylon.

"The tree that thou sawest, which grew, and was strong, whose height reached unto the heaven, and the sight thereof to all the earth; Whose leaves were fair, and the fruit thereof much, and in it was meat for all; under which the beasts of the field dwelt, and upon whose branches the fowls of the heaven had their habitation: It is thou, O king, that art grown and become strong: for thy greatness is grown, and reacheth unto heaven, and thy dominion to the end of the earth." -(Daniel 4:20-22)

(4:20-22) - After repeating the description of the tree (see verses. 10ff), Daniel announced that Nebuchadnezzar himself was the tree. He had grown strong with a greatness grown into the heavens and had a far flung dominion that reached to the end of the earth as they knew it.

“And whereas the king saw a watcher and an holy one coming down from heaven, and saying, Hew the tree down, and destroy it; yet leave the stump of the roots thereof in the earth, even with a band of iron and brass, in the tender grass of the field; and let it be wet with the dew of heaven, and let his portion be with the beasts of the field, till seven times pass over him; That they shall drive thee from men, and thy dwelling shall be with the beasts of the field, and they shall make thee to eat grass as oxen, and they shall wet thee with the dew of heaven, and seven times shall pass over thee, till thou know that the most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will.” -(Daniel 4:23-25)

(4:23-25) - Daniel emphasized that the interpretation of the rest of the dream was a decree from the Most High and would definitely come upon the king. He would be driven into a quarantined situation, separated from his people, and would eat grass living outside. In the practically rainless area, the dew would wet him until the seven seasons passed. The purpose was to make Nebuchadnezzar realize that the Most High is the true Ruler in the realm of humankind and that men do not gain kingdoms because of themselves or their power.

“And whereas they commanded to leave the stump of the tree roots; thy kingdom shall be sure unto thee, after that thou shalt have known that the heavens do rule.” -(Daniel 4:26)

(4:26) - The command to leave the stump and its roots meant that that no one would take Nebuchadnezzar’s kingdom away from him and that he would be restored to his rulership after he came to understand that the real rule is from the heavens.

Wherefore, O king, let my counsel be acceptable unto thee, and break off thy sins by righteousness, and thine iniquities by shewing mercy to the poor; if it may be a lengthening of thy tranquility. -(Daniel 4:27)

(4:27) - On the basis of the dream, Daniel counseled the king to tear his sins off as one would break a yoke to enable him to do deeds of righteousness. This shows that the fulfillment of the dream was conditional. The parallel thought shows that the deeds of righteousness must include showing mercy to the poor. This would lengthen a quiet, prosperous time before God’s judgment would come on him and could even prevent the judgment.

“All this came upon the king Nebuchadnezzar. At the end of twelve months he walked in the palace of the kingdom of Babylon. The king spake, and said, Is not this great Babylon, that I have built for the house of the kingdom by the might of my power, and for the honour of my majesty?” -(Daniel 4:28-30)

(4:28-30) - All this was fulfilled twelve months later. As he walked on the flat roof of the palace, he could look out over the great city. Ancient inscriptions extol him as a great builder. Nebuchadnezzar had founded the largest empire up to that time, the first "world empire" and the pattern for others to follow. For sheer magnificence, the city and empire of Babylon were never surpassed in ancient times. The city was fourteen miles square (according to Herodotus, who was an eyewitness). Walls 311 feet high and 87 feet wide enclosed a regular pattern of square blocks and included many gardens, parks and orchards. The palaces, temple tower and hanging gardens were immense. Connecting the great east gate and the temple tower was a festival street built on a magnificent causeway higher than the three or four story houses of the city, and lined with walls covered with carved lions in life-size relief.

Every brick in the city wall was stamped with Nebuchadnezzar's name. Notice the emphasis in v. 30: **"I have built"; "the might of my power"; "the honor of my majesty."** He had forgotten Daniel's warning and paid no attention to Daniel's statement about the Most High God ruling humanity. He was completely absorbed in himself and what he had done. Pride is sin because it is self-centered and breaks the two great commandments that Jesus said all the Law and the teaching of the Prophets hang on (Matt. 22:40). Nebuchadnezzar's pride was due for a fall (see Proverbs 16:18; 29:23).

Yet, though warned of what would happen and given the opportunity to repent, believe God and receive the blessings of God, Nebuchadnezzar continued to let his pride control him. For a full year after God sent him the warning vision, Nebuchadnezzar remained unchanged.

Nebuchadnezzar recounts the wasted year and honestly reports what was in his heart. In the pride of his accomplishment he took full credit for building the great Babylonian Empire and brag of his beautiful palace which he concluded testified of this power and honor of his majesty. He totally ignored the God who had created him and placed him in power, falsely taking credit for the work of God.

Before the words were out of his mouth, God spoke from heaven saying **"Oh king, Nebuchadnezzar, to thee is it spoken; The kingdom is departed from thee."** God reminded him of the warning of the vision and that as He had stated His decree would be carried out. Nebuchadnezzar was struck down and became like an animal living in the fields, exposed to the elements and eating grass like an ox.

Further, Nebuchadnezzar states that his hair grew long like eagles feathers and his nails like the claws of a bird. There is an illness called Boanthropy in which a man's mind sinks into insanity and he thinks that he is an animal and begins to live like one. Medically the disease of Boanthropy is a condition where the sufferer believes that they are an ox. The disease displays itself first by a tendency toward green vegetables and is therefore indistinguishable from vegetarianism, however the next stage (which occurs about five months after symptoms first appear) is unique to this particular mental condition, the sufferer will develop a liking for grass and some species of wild flowers. At this stage the condition is irreversible. The third stage, characterized by mooing and snorting and the deep urge to plow fields, occurs only two months

after symptoms first appear. This stage can last up to five years, but always results in coma and death, therefore it is not an affliction to be taken lightly. There have been documented cases where the sufferer has grown horns and taken to living in a stable.

However, we must be careful to be true to the text. Although the illness, Boanthropy produces the same symptoms, what Nebuchadnezzar experienced was a direct judgment of God. He did not slowly develop this illness, but was struck down immediately by the hand of God. God stripped him of any dignity and even of being a man. Probably the servants in the palace watched over him and some suggest that he was kept in one of the palace gardens. The Bible is silent concerning the succeeding seven years except to say that he lived like an ox.

“While the word was in the king's mouth, there fell a voice from heaven, saying, O king Nebuchadnezzar, to thee it is spoken; The kingdom is departed from thee. And they shall drive thee from men, and thy dwelling shall be with the beasts of the field: they shall make thee to eat grass as oxen, and seven times shall pass over thee, until thou know that the most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will. The same hour was the thing fulfilled upon Nebuchadnezzar: and he was driven from men, and did eat grass as oxen, and his body was wet with the dew of heaven, till his hairs were grown like eagles' feathers, and his nails like birds' claws.” –(Daniel 4:31-33)

(4:31-33) - God had given Nebuchadnezzar twelve months as a gracious opportunity for repentance. But he had not repented. Now God's judgment came suddenly. While the king was still congratulating himself, a voice from heaven declared the fulfillment of what Daniel had prophesied. Since the king's pride kept him from submitting to God's Word, the king would have to be subject to God's will whether he liked it or not. In the same hour, he became like an animal and driven away from people, and his hair and nails were not cut. The once proud king was living in a humbled condition below that of the poorest of his subjects.

However, Nebuchadnezzar's punishment was to be temporary and corrective. Although he lost his mind, he did not lose his kingdom. His kingdom was kept for him (verse 26), probably ruled by faithful regents who may have secretly confined the king and kept the knowledge of the seriousness of his illness from the general public.

“And at the end of the days I Nebuchadnezzar lifted up mine eyes unto heaven, and mine understanding returned unto me, and I blessed the most High, and I praised and honoured him that liveth for ever, whose dominion is an everlasting dominion, and his kingdom is from generation to generation:” –(Daniel 4:34)

(4:34) - At the end of the seven seasons (three and one-half years), God allowed the king to become conscious of his pitiful, helpless condition. Notice the contrast between this verse and verse 30. Now the thoroughly humbled king could no longer look out over Babylon and boast of his power. Babylon was still there, but it was no help to the king in his condition, nor did he have any power over the city and its people. But there was still one direction the king could look and find help. As he looked up seeking help from heaven, his understanding and

intelligence returned. That understanding brought a new knowledge of Who the One True God is, and the king praised and honored Him. Recognizing that God lives forever showed that the king knew God was different from the idols he formerly worshiped. Recognizing that God's dominion and kingdom or rule is everlasting and will continue from generation to generation does not leave room for any other God.

When the seven years was over God restored Nebuchadnezzar to his sanity. The text says immediately the king lifted his eyes to heaven and his sanity was restored. Many men would have been bitter at experiencing the chastening hand of God, but the passage seems to point out the king had some faint glimmer of rationality and although he could not speak, in his heart he silently recognized the sovereignty of God by lifting his eyes to heaven. God's purpose in chastening Nebuchadnezzar was accomplished and with full repentance the king praised God and honored Him, ". . . **who liveth forever, whose dominion is an everlasting dominion and his kingdom is from generation to generations.**" -(Dan. 4:34)

Nebuchadnezzar continues in his discourse to fully acknowledge the greatness of God who is our Creator. Once Nebuchadnezzar would not accept God's authority and rule over his life, he would rebel at the idea that God was greater than himself and God had any part in his coming into power and building the Kingdom of Babylon. However, that foolishness was now gone and he humbly proclaimed the majesty of Almighty God and His sovereignty over his life.

God then restored Nebuchadnezzar once again to power as the King of Babylon and Emperor of the Empire, but this time with a changed understanding of the reality of his existence and position. The king proclaimed "**Now I Nebuchadnezzar praise and extol and honour the King of heaven, all whose works are truth, and his ways judgment: and those that walk in pride he is able to abase**" -(Dan. 4:37). Nebuchadnezzar's confession plainly shows contrition and a changed heart. His words are that of a man converted to the truth who savingly acknowledges our God and Redeemer. Many is the sinner who resists the Lord's offer of grace and stubbornly refuses to submit to the truth that lies deep within their heart know is true. What a joy, however, it is to see the repentant sinner, admit his sin and humbly come to the Lord for salvation. Nebuchadnezzar unashamedly and truthfully lifts up the name of God and praises Him which reveals the great relief he now felt at having the burden of his pride and sin removed.

His acknowledgment of the nonexistent gods of polytheistic paganism was abandoned. Two statements made by Daniel seem to positively refer to Nebuchadnezzar's redemption. Some questioned whether Nebuchadnezzar was truly saved or not. The evidence is that in the closing verses of this chapter the king proclaimed God's greatness and sovereignty without any reservation. Further when Daniel rebuked Belshazzar in Daniel 5:22-23 he reminded him that he had not humbled himself nor accepted God as Nebuchadnezzar had. Lastly, in Daniel's vision of Chapter 7 in referring to the Babylonian kingdom, God's description of Nebuchadnezzar is "**The first was like a lion, and had eagle's wings: I beheld till the wings thereof were plucked, and it was lifted up from the earth, and made to stand upon the feet as a man, and a man's heart was given to it.**" -(Dan. 7:4) This acknowledges the change which occurred in the king's

life. These evidences strongly suggest that Nebuchadnezzar believed God and was saved by faith the same as are all men who put their trust in the Lord.

“And all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing: and he doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?” -(Daniel 4:35)

(4:35) - That people are as nothing compared to God means that God is not like the gods that the pagans tried to manipulate. That his will is supreme in the angelic army of heaven and among the people on earth does not leave any room for any other god either. That none can stop his hand or question what He is doing shows that neither humans nor so-called gods have any power that compares to his. This is a tremendous confession of the greatness of God. God's judgment was not punitive; it was corrective and did its work well. What Nebuchadnezzar confessed sounds like saving faith.

Only in this life will submission to divine discipline bring mercy and restoration (Hebrews 9:27). A humble walk with God that accepts both blessing and testing from his hand and that glorifies Him in it all is the best assurance that God will continue to give us his grace and mercy (Mic. 6:8; 1 Cor. 11:32; Heb. 12:5, 10f, 28).

“At the same time my reason returned unto me; and for the glory of my kingdom, mine honour and brightness returned unto me; and my counsellors and my lords sought unto me; and I was established in my kingdom, and excellent majesty was added unto me.” -(Daniel 4:36)

(4:36) - With Nebuchadnezzar's reason and intelligence restored, his kingdom was also restored to him. With it came honor and brightness. His counselors and officers gave him their allegiance again. He was not only established in his kingdom rule, but had even more majesty added. How like God this is! When Adam and Eve fell, they lost their innocence, their fellowship with God and their happy, healthy environment in the Garden of Eden. But the salvation God gives does more than restore innocence. He clothes us with the robes of Christ's spotless righteousness. He gives us continuous fellowship. He promises more than restoration to a garden. He has prepared a city, an eternal home and a perfect environment for our redeemed souls and glorified, immortal bodies. God added excellent majesty to Nebuchadnezzar. He will add the excellent majesty of Christ to us as we sit with Him in his throne (Revelation 3:21).

“Now I Nebuchadnezzar praise and extol and honour the King of heaven, all whose works are truth, and his ways judgment: and those that walk in pride he is able to abase.” -(Daniel 4:37)

(4:37) - The king was truly humbled by his experience, and he now placed a threefold emphasis on honoring and praising God as the King of heaven. This passage seems to be a copy

of a proclamation Nebuchadnezzar made after God restored and increased his glory. He recognized that all God's deeds are truth and all his ways just. From his own experience, he declared that God is able to abase those who exalt themselves in pride. It seems that Nebuchadnezzar's experience did not cause him to be bitter, but yielded the "peaceable fruit of righteousness" -(Heb. 12:11). God knows what He is doing. We can afford to commit ourselves to him -(2 Tim. 1:12).

In the next segment I will be dealing with Daniel 7 and the hidden Vatican Agenda revealed in ways that many fail to recognize.

Pastor Bob