

Daniel 4:28-37 – Confessions of a former Egomaniac

TSK, HebrewLexicon, Henry, Trapp, Geneva, Poole, Delitzsch, Gill, Calvin, INT,

Brothers and Sisters in Jesus Christ: The straw broke the Egomaniac's back, so he started to confess.) God's power leaves men without doubt that he alone is the true God. It certainly left Nebuchadnezzar without doubt as to God's greatness and God's goodness. Today you will hear the 2nd part of Nebuchadnezzar's confessions. The last time you heard of Nebuchadnezzar's call for the praise of God and he began to explain why: God had beaten him down to the point of absolute surrender. God made him live among the animals like a wild beast for 7 years. God stripped him of his power and his full purses to absolutely nothing. The thing that really grabbed his attention before he surrendered to God was God's sovereignty over all things. Pay attention as this is particularly relevant to our culture. Our culture has an exaggerated view of itself in what we think we are and what we think we can accomplish.

Our headings are: **I Confess: God is the Sovereign Savior**, and **I Confess: God is the Sovereign Keeper**.

Our goals are: That you will **remember to be humble yourself before God, receive his salvation and sanctification**, and **recommit yourself to speak of God's sovereignty to the spiritually arrogant**.

I Confess: God is the Sovereign Savior

28 All this came upon King Nebuchadnezzar. 29 At the end of the twelve months he was walking about the royal palace of Babylon. 30 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?"

1. **After Daniel told Nebuchadnezzar that he would live among the wild animals for 7 years, he had an opportunity to submit himself to God and save himself from judgment.** Isn't this what God had said to Nineveh? They repented and were saved from destruction. Or like when the wicked Ahab repented (1Kings 21). God's judgment is often conditional. (This is the punishment. If you don't change, you will get it.)

2Peter 3:9 The Lord is not slack concerning *His* promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance.

In this case, God was very patient. However, Nebuchadnezzar took God's delay in judgment as if God forgot what he had threatened. His arrogance and self-esteem remained.

2. **After a year, watching his power continue to expand, he was boastful of himself. He watched and saw the beautiful gardens of Babylon, the riches of his people, his people bowing to him, and maybe even the great expanse of the city and his empire. (The city of Babylon was more than 70km in circumference.) Instead of giving God the glory, he thought: "Look at the wonderful things I built by my own power." No doubt he did not show justice to the poor and needy. In short, he did not break-off from his sins as Daniel had urged him nor humbled himself. He forgot that the cattle on a thousand hills belong to the Lord... the earth and all its fullness belong to the Lord. He forgot that all power and strength came from the Lord. Pride does come before a fall. Remember another man like he?**

Acts 12:21 So on a set day Herod, arrayed in royal apparel, sat on his throne and gave an oration to them. 22 And the people kept shouting, "The voice of a god and not of a man!" 23 Then immediately an angel of the Lord struck him, because he did not give glory to God. And he was eaten by worms and died.

Consider also:

Habakkuk 1:16 Therefore they sacrifice to their net, And burn incense to their dragnet; Because by them their share is sumptuous And their food plentiful.

So refusing to give God the glory, or rather, WHILE he was boasting about his power and wealth, he went crazy.

Psalm 10:4 The wicked in his proud countenance does not seek God; God is in none of his thoughts.

The story is told of Alexander whose crown fell in the water but was saved by a man. He rewarded the man, but then executed him because the man had put the crown on his own head. God is similarly displeased with those who try to steal his authority and praise.

31 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!

3. Speaking directly from heaven, the Lord confirmed that his judgment was falling on Nebuchadnezzar.

Others heard for sure. Maybe that is why they never appointed another king during his crazy years. They knew this was God's doing and they were waiting for God's renewal.

32 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."

4. God then drove him out (probably through his servants) to live like the wild animals, and even eating grass. This, he was told, was to show that this was the work of a sovereign God who rules over all the earth. And this sovereign God gives to whomever he wishes.

33 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.

5. And without a delay, this took place. God took reason away from Nebuchadnezzar and he went crazy.

He lost his memory and he acted as if he had no soul... like a beast. He ate grass. He wore no clothes and his body was wet each day by dew. His hair grew long and knotty. His nails were long and dirty. He probably lost his voice.

Isaiah 14:16 "Those who see you will gaze at you, *And consider you, saying: 'Is this the man who made the earth tremble, Who shook kingdoms,*

Keep in mind that this was Nebuchadnezzar's own confession. He wanted the world to know that he had rebelled, God had humbled him, and he was thankful.

James 4:6 But He gives more grace. Therefore He says: "God resists the proud, But gives grace to the humble."

I Confess: God is the Sovereign Keeper

34 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

1. Finally, Nebuchadnezzar's eyes were opened and he saw the deplorable spiritual condition he was in – that it was worse than his physical condition. So he repented and praised God.

Psalm 123:1 A Song of Ascents. Unto You I lift up my eyes, O You who dwell in the heavens.

Indeed, those who do not praise God lack understanding. Look also at Manasseh's repentance. He was one of the most wicked kings of Israel and Judah, but he too was humbled by God so he repented.

2Chronicles 33:12 Now when he was in affliction, he implored the LORD his God, and humbled himself greatly before the God of his fathers, 13 and prayed to Him; and He received his entreaty, heard his supplication, and brought him back to Jerusalem into his kingdom. Then Manasseh knew that the LORD was God.

...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?"

2. Now look at what Nebuchadnezzar said after he returned to his senses.

God lives forever. Nebuchadnezzar's people had said: "O king, live forever." But Nebuchadnezzar said "no." God lives forever.

God rules forever. Nebuchadnezzar pointed out that There is no one to take over God's throne as he does not die. Henry: "There are no revolutions in God's kingdom." Kings change, but God's kingdom is from generation to generation.

No person on earth matched God. (This was Nebuchadnezzar's personal repentance.) It is a good warning (and encouragement) to you. If you think highly of God you will automatically think lowly of yourself. No one can match God's power or stop it.

Isaiah 40:17 All nations before Him are as nothing, And they are counted by Him less than nothing and worthless.

No person can stop the will of God from being accomplished... in heaven and on earth.

Psalms 115:3 But our God is in heaven; He does whatever He pleases.

Romans 11:33 Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and His ways past finding out! 34 "For who has known the mind of the LORD? Or who has become His counselor?" 35 "Or who has first given to Him And it shall be repaid to him?" 36 For of Him and through Him and to Him are all things, to whom be glory forever. Amen.

No person can rightly question God's purposes... So don't... even when you might not like the circumstances of your life. Name your trouble – and no doubt they can be many, like Job, but don't question God's purposes. He always does what is best for his glory and for your good.

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.

3. His counselors and wise men realized that Nebuchadnezzar was back in his right mind, 100% fit and ready to continue ruling the kingdom. So they brought him back. But what is said next is what is amazing. God made Nebuchadnezzar more majestic than before. He became richer and wiser. God stained his pride so it was no longer useful. This means Nebuchadnezzar was now fitter to rule the kingdom than before! Lessons:

a. When you became a Christian, you were more equipped for what you are called to do, not less. And this is another reason to evangelize.) He was no longer promoting his own will, but God's.

b: Troubles only last as long as you need to learn the lesson God is giving you. (God never says: "My goal was to hear about complaining about how bad life is or how unfair my life circumstances are... so now that I've heard non-stop complaining, I will remove the troubles.") Not at all. God requires that you learn to stop complaining.

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.

4. Nebuchadnezzar started this account with praise and ended it with praise. And you can see his strong sense of humility. That was the ground of his praise.

Conclusion:

God is sovereign in salvation, totally. God is sovereign in sanctification, totally. Nebuchadnezzar could not claim any part...but surrender. His pride was destroyed. His salvation applied. His sanctification initiated. No wonder he could praise the God of heaven with such richness.

Brothers and Sisters in Jesus Christ: 1. Salvation is not just talk as Nebuchadnezzar earlier in his life, it is real. It takes place deep down in your soul. Yes, everyone has doubts at one time or the other in his life. But if you have doubts all the time, you need to ask God to show you if you are really his. If you are not, ask him to help you receive what Jesus Christ did on the cross for sinners. 2. Your Christian life must be characterized by praise. Who could stop praising God for his great sovereign salvation and sanctification? If you don't praise God as you ought, refresh yourself of God's sovereign salvation. 3. Because you have this great salvation, you will tell it to others. And you will not be ashamed to give them your testimony of

how God saved you. 4. Even as a Christian, you must guard yourself against pride. Pride comes before a fall.

Finally, how low does God have to bring you before you surrender and accept what he offers – eternal salvation? May you respond today! And keep in mind that God has no obligation to break you. He may just as well leave you to go to hell. Look to him to save you from your sins.