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Wayside Chapel
August 30, 2020

"From Beauty to Beast to Believer"
Daniel 4

1. As we begin chapter 4 in the book of Daniel, it appears that perhaps 30 years have passed since God delivered Daniel's 3 friends from the fiery furnace in chapter 3. In chapter 4, verse 3, King Nebuchadnezzar makes an official proclamation about "the Most High God" that is circulated throughout the kingdom. What does it say?

   How has God shown the king that He is all-powerful and able to deliver and preserve those who trust and obey Him? (see Daniel 3:28; 2:47; 1:28; 1:20-21)

2. For the second time a revelation was given to Nebuchadnezzar through a dream and this nightmare, like the one years before, terrified the king. This man had all of the power and wealth of the world but, just as in 2:1, he couldn't find rest because fear gripped him. And Nebuchadnezzar once again summons the wise men. Unlike the dream of the statue (2:7-9), the king is at least gracious enough to tell them what the dream is about. He then orders them to interpret it but they are unable to do so. Finally, the king tells the dream to Daniel (or *Belteshazzar*, his Babylonian name). And in the dream, the king sees a great tree. It was significant because of its size and strength, the beauty of its foliage, its abundant fruit, and because it provided shelter for all birds and animals. The king then sees "an angelic watcher" or "holy one" in the dream. What does this holy messenger shout in verse 14?

3. Daniel reveals in 4:20-22 that the tree represents the king whose "majesty has become great and reached to the sky and your dominion to the end of the earth". This part of the dream would have produced pride in the king as he considers his own greatness and the way that he provided bountifully for the subjects in his realm. The second part of the dream (the cutting down of the tree) would have greatly disturbed Nebuchadnezzar but why would the third part of the vision (vv. 15b-16) be even more terrifying? Why do we see Daniel's reluctance to interpret in verse 19?

4. In verse 23 & 25 of chapter 4, Daniel predicts that Nebuchadnezzar would live in a demented state like an animal for seven years. What will be the purpose of this experience for the king (v.17)?

   What does the fact that the stump of the tree was not to be uprooted indicate (4:15, 36)?

5. When Nebuchadnezzar fails to repent, the predicted judgment falls upon him. How is the king described in this seven-year period (v.33)?

   The king is humbled as he acknowledges God's right to rule. He lifts his eyes to heaven and his sanity and place on the throne is restored. What is the king's response to God? (vv. 34, 37)

   How has God shown Himself faithful to you? How has He revealed Himself as all-powerful and able to deliver as you trust and obey Him?