

Nebuchadnezzar's Reconditioning

Sermon #0927
Unknown

Study Given by W.D. Frazee—Date

Now we will begin with Daniel the fourth chapter. I like the book of Daniel, don't you? Wonderful, wonderful book. When I was a boy I used to like to read about Daniel in the lion's den, and the three Hebrews in the fiery furnace, and other wonderful stories. I love the prophecies too. Well now, this fourth chapter, did you ever notice who wrote the fourth chapter of Daniel? Daniel didn't write the fourth chapter. He copied it down, but he didn't write it. Do you know who wrote it? Look at the first verse. Who wrote it?

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

Are you “in” on that one?

“...all people, nations, and languages, that dwell in all the earth;...” Daniel 4:1.

Nebuchadnezzar the king, has a message for you and me, tonight. Isn't that interesting, to get a message from the king of Babylon? We usually associate Babylon with something bad, and it is usually that way too. But friends, to the glory of His name, God reached in His divine hand, and pulled the king of Babylon, out of the Devil's net. And one day soon, we are going to be up there in the city of God, and see Daniel and Nebuchadnezzar, walking down the golden streets, arm in arm. Oh, I would like to see that, the king of Babylon, the very one that ordered those three Hebrews, roasted in the furnace. He is going to be there, he is going to be there. Do you know, there is something interesting?

It took three times, three hits of the hammer, to get the nail through that hard skull. The second chapter of Daniel, you will remember, God gave him a dream. The wise men couldn't tell it and interpret it and Daniel did. Well, he gave glory to God then. But the third chapter, he turned around, and gotten so far away from God, he was willing, at his wise men suggestion, to take that idea of the image, and make it all of gold, instead of just a head of gold.

Is Babylon going to pass away? No sir, we will make an image, all of gold, head to foot. That was when he wanted to burn up the three Hebrews. But when that was over, he was kneeling down giving glory to God. But still, it hadn't gone deep enough. And in this fourth chapter, he tells his own story. And you remember it, don't you? He had a dream, a great tree reached to heaven, its boughs stretched out, all the beasts of the field got under it, birds ate in the branches. Then something

happened, a watcher came down from heaven and said, “cut the tree down, cut it down but leave the stump, until seven times pass over it.” Seven years.

“...that the living may know that the most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will,...” Daniel 4:17.

That’s Daniel 4:17. Now that expression is repeated four times in this chapter. You will notice, 17th verse, 25th verse, 32nd verse, and the 35th verse. Similar thought. In other words, as Nebuchadnezzar was represented by that tree, he was to be cut down, until he learned that God was running things. And that is what happened. After a season of probation, he didn’t pay any attention. One day he was out there looking over things, spread out before him was that beautiful city and he said. “Is not this great Babylon that I have built by the might of my hand to the glory of my kingdom.” The words spoke from heaven, “this is it.”

“...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” Daniel 4:31-32.

And some of you folks will understand, when I say, he was put on a reconditioning program. If you study here, you will see. He got away from the city, and into the country. Was that a good thing? He went on a vegetarian program. That was something different from what he was used to, if you go back to the first chapter. He got plenty of sunlight and fresh air, and even hydrotherapy. It says, his body was wet with the dew of heaven. And it took seven years, that’s a long time, but it is worth it. God’s remedies sometimes do take time, for body or for mind, or soul. Nebuchadnezzar needed it, especially up here. He got it. But notice what the thirty fourth verse says.

“And at the end of the days I Nebuchadnezzar...” Daniel 4:34.

He is telling his own story, writing his own experience, the king of Babylon. He had been out there on the program, for seven years, in the woods, in the wild, in the fields, and forest.

“And at the end of the days I Nebuchadnezzar lifted up mine eyes unto heaven, and mine understanding returned to me,...” Daniel 4:34.

Oh, I hope there is somebody here tonight, that you will get to thinking straight. What have you been running after, dear friends? Pleasure, fame, money, position, friends, good time, something. Suppose you had got it? I think of these dogs in the racing places, that chase these electric rabbits. Running, running, running. The rabbits are always where? Ahead of them. But I have sometimes thought, what

would the dog do, if he caught it? What good would it be to him? Nearly everybody today is running after something. Running, running, running. Very few catch what they are running after. Those that do, like Nebuchadnezzar, he got what he ran after. He got a glorious city, a golden kingdom, but he had to lose it all, to learn a lesson.

“And at the end of the days I Nebuchadnezzar lifted up mine eyes unto heaven, and mine understanding returned unto me...” Daniel 4:34.

Dear one, what is God going to have to do to you, to teach you what Nebuchadnezzar learned, the hard way? I say, “going to have to do you” I ought to put it this way, “what is He going to have to allow to come”? Alright.

“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 honored him that liveth for ever, whose dominion is an everlasting dominion, and his kingdom is from generation to generation” Daniel 4:34.

Nebuchadnezzar had a praise meeting, out there in the wild. Don't you know, Jesus was happy to hear that? We are told, that as a mother watches for the smile of recognition from the little babe, the sign of dawning intelligence, so Christ, hungers for our praise, the response of a loving heart. So when Nebuchadnezzar lifted up his eyes, and his understanding, he was back on the throne. And he praised the God of heaven, Oh, how happy God was. Notice, Nebuchadnezzar goes on, what he learned.

“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.

The king of the world, for Babylon ruled the world at that time, learned that there was a greater king, on top of him. That God does according to His will in heaven and on earth. And nobody can stay his hand, or say unto him, what are you doing?

Now this fact that Nebuchadnezzar learned, we sometimes speak of as the sovereignty of God. God is sovereign, He is the king, He is the ruler, He reigns from east to west, from pole to pole, and on through the universe, He is running everything. But now there is another fact I would like to put with that, tonight. If this were the only fact, things would be a lot different in this world. Because it isn't God's will for babies to be sick and in pain, and little robins to be pecked to death by blue-jays. And big fish to eat little fish, and bigger fish, eat the big fish. It isn't God's will for this terrible war in Vietnam, to be killing young men in the prime of life, every day, some more, every day, some more.

And some people can't get the picture together, but this is the first one, what Nebuchadnezzar does. God is the ruler, He is sovereign, He is the king of the universe. But I say now, there is another factor to put with this. It is the free choice of man. The free choice of man. To get a look at this, we will go to Revelation the third chapter, the twentieth verse. I like to study and Daniel and Revelation together, don't you? Yes, they belong together. Revelation the third chapter, and the twentieth verse. And the one who is speaking to us in this verse, is the One Nebuchadnezzar was talking about and writing about, the king of the universe. And what does He say?

"Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in..." Revelation 3:20.

What? (Elder Frazee makes a knocking sound on pulpit) We look out the window, who is there? The King of the universe? Yes. What about the sovereignty of God? Does He run everything? What's the point of that little word in the middle of the verse, with two letters? What is it? If, if. You mean, there is something He wants to do, that He can't do until, unless, you and I do something? That is what He said. So the sovereignty of God is balanced, by the free choice of man. Now this does not deny the sovereignty of God, for the free choice of man is by God's decree. It is the One who made the universe, who made you and me, and made us with the free choice. He could have made us without it and spared Himself Calvary. He could have made us without this free choice, and everything would have gone, just as straight as a computer, and just about as interesting.

You know, machines are wonderful, and they can do a lot of things, but I have yet to see anyone pet one. I have yet to hear anybody say to a machine "I love you." And surely, I haven't yet heard the machine that says, "I love you." If it did, it would be sickening, wouldn't it? It wouldn't mean anything. No, the sovereignty of God, has made you and me free in our choices. And the King of the universe, waits on the porch, while you and I take a moment, or an hour, or a day, or a month, or a year, or a decade, or a lifetime, to make up our minds, to open the door, and let Him in. This is what Nebuchadnezzar finally did, at the end of the day. My dear friends, how long will it take you? How long?

Now, let's look at this for a minute. The sovereignty of God and the free choice of man. God could do anything, but He who can do anything, has chosen to give you and me, free choice. That means, He is limited by His own choice, He has limited Himself. Turn to the sixty eighth Psalm, you will see what I mean. Seventy eighth Psalm. Psalms 78:41, talking about Israel in the desert.

"Yea, they turned back and tempted God, and limited the Holy One of Israel" Psalm 78:41.

Oh, but I thought He was sovereign, I thought He ran everything? Yes! But here are human beings down here in this world, tiny little ants on an anthill. And the king of the universe, was what? Limited by them. Why? Because they wouldn't go along with His best plan. Read the story here in the 78th Psalm. He wanted to give them an Eden diet, and they insisted on an Egyptian diet. There was finally a bit of

compromise and they got, you know, something part way between. That's what a lot of people do, they settle for something less than God's best plan in diet, in education, in life work, in anything and everything.

“...they turned back and tempted God, and limited the Holy One of Israel” Psalm 78:41.

Now, He didn't go off and leave them. Every day, that pillar of cloud kept the sun from burning them. Every morning, they went out there and there was the manna. Every morning, they went out there, and the water was running from a rock. God kept working miracles for them for forty years, and all the while, they were doing what? Limiting Him. You see, He wanted to take them through in two years, and they took how long? Forty years, forty years. Now back to this matter of the sovereignty of God. The sovereignty of God includes this wonderful thought that eventually, all that God has purposed, will come to pass. It takes time but God has plenty of it, He is the master of eternity. Turn over to 1 Corinthians the 15th chapter, you will see what I mean. Twenty fourth verse and twenty fifth verse.

“Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power. For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet” 1 Corinthians 15:24-25.

It is going to be a wonderful day, friends, when the assembled universe will crown Him Lord of all. And He who from eternity rules by right, will rule by the free choice of everyone of His children. And then the sovereignty of God, and the free choice of man will meet, in an eternal union. I want to be there, don't you? And the good news is, as far as you are concerned, it can begin tonight. As far as this planet is concerned, it is still future. But as by faith we open the door to Jesus, it begins here. And He who is Lord of the universe, can be Lord of our lives.

I tell folks, because this glorious eternity lasts forever, there is no way to get any more at the far end, the only way to get more, is to start sooner. You and I control this end of it. The sovereignty of God, the free choice of man. God is king, but He waits on the porch, knocking at the door, wanting to come in, but He waits until I let Him in.

The artist who painted that wonderful picture of Jesus knocking at the door, you have seen it, invited some of his friends to come and view it. And as they stood there and gazed at it, finally one of the men said, “friend, haven't you forgotten something”? What is it? “There is no latch on the door” he said. The artist replied, “the latch is on the inside.” Precisely.

“Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in...” Revelation 3:20.

Oh friends, what more could He do to show us His love? Remember that the hand that knocks, is scarred with nails. That voice that speaks and pleads, broke in a cry

of woe from the cross. The sovereign of the universe gave His life, that you and I might have the privilege of free choice, and might choose Him as our best friend. Oh, friends, I want Him to have all I have, what do you say? Why should we hold back at things? Tonight, I give Him all I have. It isn't much as men might mention, but friends, just to give Him my love, thrills His heart. He will come all the way from the throne, to the manger, to the cross, just to get my love, my choice. So I give it to Him tonight. What will you do? Would you like to stand up and say whatever you would like to say, in your own way, in your words? It is you He wants? It is your words, told in your own way, that He listens for. What would you like to say?

[Man speaks too faintly]

[Elder Frazee resumes] God bless you. It is a blessing isn't it. God bless you brother. Robin has come all the way from California.

[A Lady from the congregation] I am thankful to the Lord who has borne with me so long. I am really thrilled that He is still able to take care of me.

[Elder Frazee] Does He have you? Good.

[A man speaks] I am thankful the Lord led us to Wildwood. I wanted to come for a long time but we couldn't get away. But thankfully He led us here which is just what I wanted. I want to be true to Him and let Him have full control in our lives.

[Elder Frazee resumes] Have you turned things over to Him?

[The man continues] A long time ago.

[Elder Frazee resumes] Good. Did He take you?

[The man] Yes.

[Elder Frazee] Good. That's fine.

[A lady speaks too softly to transcribe what she said]

[Another man speaks] Friday evening is the best time of the week here at Wildwood and it is awfully easy to be a Christian on Friday evening and to give your heart to the Lord. I am thankful that my heart is still tender and is drawn to Him in these Friday night meetings. And it is my prayer that I won't be disappointed but that He can live through me throughout the week. When things get rough that I will still feel the tug of Christ on my heartstrings like I do Friday nights. But I am thankful to certainly be here and for all the blessings that I have received.

[Elder Frazee resumes] God bless you brother.

[The man speaks] The Lord maketh pleasure in men that fear him and those that hope in his mercy. My hope is in the mercy of God. Not in theory not in respect and honor and I want Him to have all there is of me.

[Elder Frazee resumes] Good that makes Him happy.

[A lady speaks] I am glad that I gave my life to the Lord years ago but I am also glad that I can give Him moment by moment I can give Him my life. I can give Him pleasure and may I feel secure in His love every moment.

[Elder Frazee resumes] Thank the Lord.

[A Lady speaks] I am grateful for God who is leading us to be sovereign in the universe. I am seeking Him to lead us to the truth, that is my goal to be led by Him moment by moment.

[Elder Frazee resumes] Amen.

[Another lady speaks] I am thinking that the Lord will not forsake me. And for forty years they wandered. This is all true and you know back there... It is our privilege to be among the hundred and forty four thousand. So we can get the glory now and accept that which is only best. I wonder more and more if that is not going to be our choice. And I wonder if we will be when we are looking at Him that...

[Elder Frazee resumes] That's it, that's it. In other words we want to get full advantage, take full advantage of the sovereignty of God. Get our choice so aligned with His that He can do all He wants to do.

[Elder Frazee resumes] Good. May He bless your heart. He would rather have that than a million dollars. Isn't it nice to be precious?

[Elder Frazee resumes] Good. Now I have a question for the little folks and the big folks. Any of you dear folks that haven't spoken spoken with your lips, would you like to give a silent testimony tonight? I am going to give you an opportunity by raising your hand, if you want to. To say by raising that hand, "Dear Jesus, I open the door, come in and rule and reign in my heart." If you want to do that, just raise your hand. That's right, that's right. Now let's see if song 276 says what you would like to say? You know I like a song that says what is in our hearts, do you? Two hundred seventy six, look at that and see if this is what you would like to say.

My Jesus I Love Thee I know thou art mine. For thee all the follies of sin I resign. My gracious redeemer my savior art thou. If ever I love thee my Jesus tis now. I love thee because thou hast first loved me and purchased my pardon on calvary's tree. I'll love thee for wearing the thorns on thy brow. If ever I love thee my Jesus tis now.

Let's stand and sing the last stanza.

In mansions of glory and endless delight.
I'll ever adore thee in heaven so bright
I sing with the glittering crown on my brow.
If ever I loved thee my Jesus tis now.

Dear Lord, We thank Thee that Thou dost accept us as we accept thee. We thank Thee that as we open the door Thou dost come in. Rule and reign on the throne of our hearts and help us to tell others the wonderful news that they too are precious to Thee and Thou dost wait for their love. For Jesus sake. Amen.

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