



Daniel 4

Daniel Chapter 4

Nebuchadnezzar the king, unto all people, nations, languages, that dwell in all the earth;

He is addressing everybody. This is Nebuchadnezzar speaking, folks where ever you are, spread abroad around the world.

Peace be multiplied unto you.

It is interesting that a similar salutation is used by Peter at the beginning of his epistles and also by Jude, as they add peace and mercy, or peace, mercy and grace be multiplied unto you, but it is a similar salutation. You would almost think that one of the New Testament writers was opening this salutation as the wish for peace to all of you.

I thought it good to show the signs and the wonders that the high God had wrought toward me. 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.

Here is Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, making this marvelous declaration concerning God. Now, in his first dream that was interpreted by Daniel, where he saw this image with the head of gold and chest of silver, stomach of brass, the interpretation of that dream was that though he was the head of gold his kingdom was to be replaced by an inferior kingdom of the Medes and the Persians. And, after a succession of world dominating empires, God would ultimately establish a kingdom that would never end, the glorious reign of Jesus Christ. And, he saw this in the vision. And, it was interpreted for him by Daniel. And, yet though he acknowledge that there was no God like the God of Daniel that was able to reveal secrets and to tell dreams and so forth, yet it seemed that he did not truly in his heart submit to the interpretation of the dream because he wanted to feel that his kingdom was an everlasting kingdom. That his dominion was over all. So, he built that huge image of gold, all gold, in a declaration that his kingdom would be an everlasting kingdom, but now God has shown to him some signs and some wonders, and how great are His signs, how mighty are His wonders. And, the signs and the wonders that God has shown to him, cause him to understand and to acknowledge that his kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, not mine, but His. And, His dominion is from generation to generation.

So, now he tells the story. That was the introduction. The salutation, the greetings as he writes a universal letter, to everyone in the world. And, this now is my testimony. This is my experience. These are the signs and the wonders that God showed to me to make me cognoscente of the fact that His kingdom is the everlasting kingdom.

I Nebuchadnezzar was at rest in mine house;

This probably dates the time of this chapter towards the end of Nebuchadnezzar's reign. Nebuchadnezzar was tireless in his efforts first of all of establishing the Babylonian kingdom as the world dominating empire conquering first the Assyrians and then the Egyptians, the Syrians, then Jerusalem, and finally into Moab and Ammon, and he conquered the world. Having then conquered the world, then having sacked the world, looted the world, he brought the gold and the silver back from Jerusalem. He brought the brass pillars that were at the porch of Solomon's Temple. He cut them up and brought them back. Having looted the world he had sufficient gold and silver and precious gems to make Babylon a glorious city, plus he brought back slaves from all of these nations. The Jews were brought back as slaves, and made slave laborers within Babylon. And, so he set his genius to the building of this mammoth city of Babylon, which no doubt was the greatest city in the ancient world.

The walls were sixty miles in circumference, fifteen miles square in each direction, three hundred feet high, eighty-seven feet thick, a hundred brass gates, towers along the walls, gorgeous palaces, the hanging gardens of Babylon, all of these marvelous architectural feats. By the number of temples that were built in the city of Babylon, it is estimated that the population in the city of Babylon was into the millions. And, now it is finished, this glorious city, and he is resting. He is sitting back and sort of enjoying all of these marvelous accomplishments.

Nebuchadnezzar was at rest in mine house, and flourishing in my palace; I saw a dream which made me afraid,
God interrupted his rest. God gave to him a dream and it struck fear into his heart.

and the thoughts upon my bed and the visions of my head troubled me.
This night vision, this dream, it troubled him.

Therefore I made a decree to bring in all of 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, the soothsayers; and I told them the dream, but they did not make known unto me the interpretation.

Now you wonder why he would call these fellows who had failed in the interpreting of his earlier dream. In the earlier dream where he saw this great image, he had forgotten that dream. And, so he demanded that they tell him what he dreamed and what it meant, and they said that it was impossible. No one could do that.

Now he remembers this dream and explains the dream, but they do not tell him the interpretation. Some of the commentators suggested that they knew the interpretation, but were afraid to tell him knowing that he was a short tempered kind of a guy and would order their execution if he did not like their performance. The Bible does not indicate that, that is just the thought of some commentators. It does declare that they did not make known unto him the interpretation.

But at last Daniel came in before me

Now, why didn't he call him first, because Daniel was the one who was able to tell him the dream and give him the interpretation. And, Daniel was sort of the head over the counselors. So, you wonder why he was not called first.

But at last Daniel came in before me, whose name was Belteshazzar, according to the name of my god,

Now, there are those who claim that Nebuchadnezzar was converted and that this is a testimony of his conversion. That is possible, however, I find it difficult in that he is still referring to Bel as his god or Marduk. And, he had given the name of Belteshazzar to Daniel, named after his god. But, he acknowledges that in Daniel is the Spirit of the holy God.

Now, we just assume always that gods are holy, don't we? Because our God is so holy. One of the main characteristics of God is His holiness, but that is not so of pagan gods. Pagans gods were not holy at all. Read of the Greek gods and all and there was nothing holy about those gods. They were lecherous old gods. They were licentious. They were always lusting after different women and different things. So, the idea of a holy God is rather exclusive to Judaism and the Christianity. And, you do not find that as a characteristic of pagan gods, but often times the pagan gods are pictures as quite licentious and lascivious.

So, the holy gods, in the spirit of the holy gods, manifests itself no doubt in that holy living of Daniel. Daniel was a man of God, and he lived a holy life. A life of prayer, a life of commitment unto the Lord. He lived such a clean good life, that when some men were conspiring to get him, looking for some kind of flaw so that they might accuse him before the king, they realize they can not find anything in this fellow Daniel.

He is such a pure man. In him is the Spirit of the holy God. And so they said the only way we are going to get him is we are going to have to get him some how in regards to his commitment and his worship of God.

So you remember they came in and flattered the king, Darius, and said you know you are so important people do not realize how great and wonderful and important you are, so to help the people realize we have made up this decree about the greatness of Darius the king and no one should offer a prayer to any god or anyone for a period of time except to you, then the world will realize just how great and marvelous you are. The king was flattered by it and signed the decree, and these fellows knew that Daniel was faithful in prayer and they knew that they had Daniel, that Daniel would not actually bow to the decree because it involved his own spiritual convictions.

When is it proper for a Christian to violate the law? When the laws violate my Christian convictions. When to obey that law would be to violate my Christian convictions. When Peter was commanded by the rulers not to preach anymore in the name of Jesus. He said, "Whether it is right in your sight to obey God or obey man, you can judge, but as for us, we can not but speak the things that we have seen and heard." In other words, we are not going to obey your edict, because that violates my commitment unto God. And, so my convictions and my commitments to God are the top priority in my life. And, should laws be established that would violate my convictions towards God, then I must obey God rather than man, and in that case it is right for the Christian to be disorderly as far as the worldly government is concerned, because of the violation of my commitment to the Lord and convictions.

So, he acknowledges that in Daniel is the Spirit of the holy God. And he said to Daniel,

no secret troubles you, tell me the visions of my dream that I have seen, and the interpretation thereof.

And, so he explains to Daniel now this visions that he had in the night. The visions on his bed that troubled his head.

Thus were the visions of my head in my bed; I saw and behold there was a tree in the midst of the earth, and the height of it was great. The tree grew and it was strong, and the height reached into heaven, and the sight thereof to the end of all the earth;

It was a tree that just became tall and it could be seen by the ends of the earth. It was a world kind of a dominating sight.

The leaves thereof were fair (Beautiful), and the fruit thereof much(plentiful), in it was meat for all: the beasts of the field had shadow under it, and the fowls of the heaven dwelt in the branches, and all flesh was fed of it.

It was a nourishing kingdom. It was a world wide kingdom.

I saw in the visions of my head upon my bed, and , behold, a watcher and an holy one came down from heaven;

This speaks about us as being surrounded with a great cloud of witnesses, encompassed about. And of course that is a reference to these men of faith in the Old Testament. But, there is a truth that the angels desire to look into the marvels of God's grace unto people especially through our salvation. Angels are curious about you. Angels are watching. The Bible says He shall give His angels charge over thee in all thy ways, to bear you up lest at any time you dash your foot against the stone. Speaking of angels, it says that they are ministering spirits that have been sent forth to minister to those who are heirs of salvation.

We are living in a material world, but we are surrounded by a spiritual world that is just as real as is the material world, this spiritual world of angelic beings.

I can imagine that as Jesus was being mocked that God had to restrain the angels from just really tearing up humanity. You remember when Peter drew his sword to defend the Lord and began to swing and cut off

the servants ear, Jesus said to him to put away his sword, didn't he realize that if He wanted to He could call for ten legions of angels to deliver Him. They would be more than happy to step in and stop the whole thing.

In the New Testament, we read how the angels of the Lord were ministering unto the disciples, the apostles, on various occasions. We remember when Peter was in prison and the angel of the Lord came and told Peter to put his sandals on and to follow him and the doors of the prison opened and he lead Peter out of the prison. We read of Paul, how he speaks about fourteen days on the stormy sea and the angel of the Lord stood by him and assured him that not a person would be lost. These are the ministry of angels.

I imagine that sometimes when they see you do some of your stupid things, they say, "Look.. oh no don't look.. Oh my...Can you believe that?"

The watcher and the holy one came down from heaven. Here is this vast marvelous tree, filled with fruit, nourishing the world, and these watchers and the holy one came down from heaven;

He cried aloud, and said thus, cut down the tree, and cut off his branches, shake off his leaves, and scatter his fruit, and let the beasts get away from under it, and the fowls from his branches; 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; let his heart be changed from a man's, and let a beast's heart be given unto him; and let seven time pass over him. This matter is by the decree of the watchers, and the demand by the word of the holy ones: to the intent (purpose of it all) that the living may know that the most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and gives it to whom so ever he wills, and sets up over it the basest of men. This dream I king Nebuchadnezzar have seen .

The great tree prominent in the earth, nourishing the earth, and now it is ordered to be cut down to be given the heart of a beast until seven times have pass over him.

Now in the book of Daniel, time is used to describe a year. He speaks of a time, times and a half time. Time, a year, times, two years and half time, as six months, and he gives it to you as forty two months, and you have time equaling twelve months or a year. There are some commentators that say it was not a period of the seven years, but it was actually seven weeks or a seven something times being a loose and free kind of a interpretation. It could be days or months. And there have been those that have said until seven times or seven seasons have passed over it. And thus they interpret it as being a year and three quarters, as you would have summer, fall, winter, spring, summer, fall, winter, until seven times or seven seasons have passed over it. But, if you uses the scripture to interpret the scripture, it is hard to exact anything but actually a period of seven years and to take it as literal years, that the beasts heart would be given to him and he would be changed and have his portion with the beasts in the grass of the earth.

So, he than commands Daniel,

Now thou, O Belteshazzar, declare the interpretation, forasmuch as all of the wise men of my kingdom are not able to make known unto me the interpretation;

Now this would take away from the idea that they did not know but were afraid to give the interpretation. He said they are not able to give it.

But thou are able; for the spirit of the holy gods is in you. Then Daniel, whose name was Belteshazzar, was astonished for one hour,

It could be that Daniel realized the implications of this vision, that he was actually hesitant to tell the king exactly what it meant. Daniel's thoughts troubled him. Daniel was a loyal subject to Nebuchadnezzar. There was no doubt a bond between them. Daniel was a faithful servant, even serving the pagan kingdom. The Bible tells us that what ever we do in word in deed, we should do all for the glory of God. We should serve in our places as unto the Lord. God has put me here. My life will be a witness for God here. And, I

think that we as Christians have an obligation to maintain our Christian witness in the market place, in the area of business. I think it is important and vital that we maintain that Christian testimony where ever we might be, that we would be that most diligent, the most faithful of all of the employees as a testimony and as a witness for Jesus Christ. Daniel was such!

and his thought troubled him. The king spoke, and said, Belteshazzar, let not the dream; or the interpretation, trouble you. Belteshazzar answered and said, my lord, the dream be to them that hate thee,

Your enemies are going to like the interpretation. It is not good. It is not pleasant for you.

The tree that thou sawest, which grew, and was strong, whose height reached into 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 beast of the field dwelt, and upon whose branches the fowls of heaven had their habitation: It is thou, O king,

Now it is interesting that in the vision of the image, thou, O Nebuchadnezzar, are the head of gold. He saw himself in the first dream. Now, in the second dream the tree, Nebuchadnezzar, is you.

Thou art grown and become strong; for thy greatness is grown, and reaches unto heaven, and thy dominion to the end of the earth. (You have really conquered the civilized world of that day.) And whereas the king saw a watcher and an holy one coming down from heaven, and saying, Cut 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; This is the interpretation, O king, and this is the decree of the most High, which is come upon my lord the king:

This is God's decree concerning you, and he acknowledges his submission to the authority of Nebuchadnezzar, my lord the king.

That they (the spirits that have been watching them) shall drive you from men, and thy dwelling shall be with the beasts of the field, and they shall make thee 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.

Now, remember that was the intent of the dream that he might know that the most High rules in the kingdom of men and gives it to whomsoever He wills and sets over it even the basest of men.

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.

In other words, you will be restored. The kingdom will be maintained for you during this period of time until you come to this acknowledgment that the heavens do rule.

Now Daniel speaks to him out of his heart. He is going to give him just good friendly advice, and Godly counsel.

Wherefore, O king, let my counsel be acceptable unto thee, and break off thy sins by righteousness,

One of the worst sins is that of pride. It is one of those that is spoken of as one of the deadly sins. That is the origin of sin. It originates with pride. When Satan lifted up himself against the rule of God, it was pride. I will exalt my throne above the stars of heaven. I will sit in the congregations in the sides of the north. I will ascend above the stars. I will be like the most high. Pride is the root of most sin. So, he says to put away your sin and your iniquities by showing mercy to the poor.

Now most of these marvelous buildings in Babylon and all were built by slave labor, and it was not very merciful. In fact, Nebuchadnezzar was very severe against the Jews, and Isaiah tells us that the reason why God allowed the Babylonian kingdom to fall was of their ill treatment of the Jews. So, Daniel is telling him to be good, have mercy on the poor, and it may be that he could lengthen his time of peace. He was at rest in his palace. And, maybe he could lengthen this time of rest and prosperity that he was enjoying.

Now, this is what happened to Nebuchadnezzar, verse 29:

At the end of twelve months he walked in the palace of the kingdom of Babylon

The Hebrew for in the palace is on the palace. He was probably walking on the palace roof looking over the great city of Babylon, its splendor, its fortifications, its temples, its brass gates, and its marvelous commerce.

The king spoke, 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 honor of my majesty?

Aren't I great? Haven't I done this by my power, and for the glory of my majesty? Pride.

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 like the 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.

God reigns! God is sovereign! I get comfort in this, because as I look at the world's conditions tonight, I get very upset. I am disturbed. I have little grandchildren growing up and I read of the things that are being taught the children in the schools today. I look at the social trends. I look at the world in which we are living, a world that has no conscience of evil. I look at the sexual promiscuity and all of the resultant devastation, plagues that have come from sexual promiscuity. I read of the abortions, and our President declaring that he is going to push federal actions to guarantee a woman's right for abortions, so that states will not be able to enact laws that would in any wise restrict the woman's right for abortions. I read how the President declares that he is going to be helping to promote laws that will give favored positions to the homosexual communities, giving them privileges that we, normal people, do not have, protecting them in jobs and housing and all. These things trouble me. The rise of the worship of Satan is alarming. And these things are being promoted by the rock groups, by television, and these things concern me.

The only comfort that I have is that I know that God rules, and that God is in control and that He allows even the basis of men to get positions of authority and power in order that he might manifest His righteous judgment. But, when He judges it will be righteous. And, thus He will not judge the righteous with the wicked, that was the whole issue with Abraham, when the angels were going down to destroy the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah. Abraham's question was shall not the Lord of the earth be just, would you destroy the righteous with the wicked. There are fifty righteous people in that city. Would you destroy the righteous with the wicked? Would that be fair? And the Lord assured him if he could find fifty righteous they would spare the city. Finally, he worked it down to ten righteous. And, when he came down to the city of Sodom they could not find ten righteous. There was only that righteous man Lot, who was vexed. His righteous spirit was vexed by the things that were going on in Sodom, just like your righteous spirit gets vexed when you see the television promoting the gay pride parades around the country. It vexes my righteous spirit.

But, it was comforting to realize that the angel said to Lot, "get out of here. We can't destroy this place until you are gone." And as I see the same conditions that existed in Sodom, existing here. And, I see this flood tide of evil taking over, my comfort is that God rules and God is just and that He will deliver the righteous before his judgment falls. And, I can not believe that we are very far away from that day of God's righteous judgment. And, I do believe the only reason why the Lord has not already begun is that God is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. And, He is leaving open the door a

few more days in order that those who are ordained to salvation might come in. And, I rejoice that in the midst of a world that is on the fast track down, where sin abounds, grace overflows. And, we are seeing that marvelous work of God's grace, and what a contrast we are in the world today. I have never seen so many people come to Christ, and on the other hand, I have never seen conditions worst. But, God rules, that I know. I have comfort in that.

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 the oxen, and his body was wet with the dew of heaven, till his hair was grown like eagles' feathers (like filthy matted hair), and his nails like birds' claws.

I was interested as I read this. I saw a picture of Howard Hughes before he died. A man who really had just about everything that the world could offer, but I saw a picture of him and his scraggly matted hair, his long talon like finger nails, and that paranoia that he had, not wanting to see people, not wanting people to see him. He wore gloves trying to be so sanitary, afraid to touch anything. And, with everything he had, he was imprisoned in his own mind and by his own mind and by his own surroundings. I thought of all those people that wanted to be like Howard Hughes, and you think, oh.my.

Here he was Nebuchadnezzar bereft of his senses, living out in the field like an animal, at night his body covered with the dew of heaven, eating grass.

And at the end of the days I Nebuchadnezzar lifted up mine eyes unto heaven, and mine understanding returned unto me,

As suddenly as he went insane, just so suddenly his sanity returned. He has lifted up his eyes to heaven. He has learned the lesson that God wanted him to know, that it is God's kingdom, that is the everlasting kingdom and that the Lord rules over the kingdom's of man.

I blessed the most High, and I praised and honored him that lives forever, whose dominion is an everlasting dominion, and his kingdom is from generation to generation:
Praising God. Worshipping God. Acknowledging God.

And all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing;
All the inhabitants of the earth are as nothing before God, like dust in the balances.

Now, in Biblical days, they used the balances for commerce, weighing out your produce, they put them in these balances. So, the Bible speaks about just weights. You do not use one set of weights that you sell by and one that you buy by. And, they would do that, but they would always try to impress you with their honesty. So, before they would weigh things in the balances, they would blow the dust out. They were so honest they did not want to charge you for dust. But, the nations before God are like the dust of the balances. They can be blown away. The inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing.

and he does according to his will in the army of heaven,
In the vast kingdom of heaven, is hundreds of millions of angelic beings, actually ten thousands times ten thousands, plus thousands of thousands. So, that is a hundred million, plus millions of angels.

and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay his hand,
You can not stop the plan of God, nor the purposes of God from taking place, that which He has purposed for this world. You can not stop it.

or say unto him, What doest thou?
Now, Paul the apostle, likens God unto a potter and us as clay. Clay in the Potter's hand, speaking of the absolute sovereign power of the Potter over the clay to make of it what ever kind of vessel He wishes. God

can do whatever He wants in your life. It is by the mercies of God that we are not consumed. And Paul said the clay does not have any right to say to the Potter, why are you making me like this? God's absolute power over man. That would terrify me, if I did not know if the Potter loved me supremely. A lot of things have happened in my life that I did not understand. The Potter put a lot of wrinkles in this vessel that I could not rationalize. I was wanting to ask, "What are you doing?" But, I know that the Potter loves me and that His purpose and plan for my life is better than anything I could devise. And, I also know that the only way that I can discover what is in the mind of the Potter is by yielding to His touch, and allowing Him to form and shape me according to His will. And, I know that His will is the best thing that could ever happen to me.

So, he speaks of the sovereignty of God over man.

At the same time my reason returned unto me; and for the glory of my kingdom, mine honor and brightness returned unto me;

When God restored him, He restored him completely. He had learned his lesson. It was a bitter lesson to learn. He learned it the hard way, but he learned it, and that is what is vital. He now acknowledges the sovereignty of God over his life. He now submits himself to that one that rules over the earth. And, with that recognition, there comes a restoration of the kingdom, of the place of power and glory and prominence that he had once experienced. The honor, the brightness returned.

and my counselors and my lords sought unto me; and I was established in my kingdom, and excellent majesty was added to me.

God even gave him more. Oh, the grace of God and the goodness of God, though we may fail, and we have to go through a period of chastisement and we suffer because of our own follies, yet as God restores, he is not satisfied in just bringing us back to an equal position, but he adds His grace, His love, and His mercy. And, so the excellent majesty was added unto me.

Now, the proclamation,

Now I Nebuchadnezzar praise and extol and honor the king of heaven,

That is what God was wanting. That is what God desires from you that you will praise, extol and honor the king of the universe.

all whose works are truth, and his ways judgment: and those that walk in pride he is able to abase.

The Bible tells us that we should humble ourselves in the sight of the Lord and He will lift us up. The Bible tells us that pride goes before destruction, a haughty spirit before a fall. The Bible tells us that he that exalts himself shall be abased, but he that humbles himself shall be exalted. These are vital important lessons. The prophet says he has shown you, O man, what is good, God has shown you the good way, and what does the Lord require of you; that you do justly, love mercy, and walk humbly with thy God. The man who is proud is the man who has not yet had a personal encounter with God. Once you have a real vital, personal encounter with God, where you realize the greatness, the awesomeness of God, you can no longer again ever be proud, for the inhabitants of the earth are as nothing to Him. So the proper attitude in coming to the realization of the greatness of God is seeing also the nothingness of myself and thus I praise and extol and honor the king of heaven. To God be the glory, great things He has done! And, God forbid that I should glory in anything save the cross of Jesus Christ, and that work that He has wrought for me upon the cross. All praise, glory and honor be unto our King forever and ever, our glorious Lord and Savior!