

THE HEART OF A BEAST

Dan. 4

Nebuchadnezzar a gifted and illustrious man. His family like a flash across the horizon of history.

This family also faded into obscurity in a strange way. More said about this heathen ruler than any other King in Scripture.

First, we must speak of God in human history.

1. God knows and rules the future.

✓ Isaiah 39:5-8 revealed to Hezekiah - King of Judah, the future captivity of Judah at hands of Babylonian King.

The occasion of the prophecy came when the King of Babylon sent ambassador to invite Hezekiah to join in a conspiracy of nations against Assyria. Hezekiah, flattered by the foreign visitors, displayed his personal possessions plus treasures in house of God.

Out of this vanity, the Lord sent the prophet to announce the coming Babylonian captivity.

✓ Genesis 15:13, 16 tells of God's knowledge, reveals to Abraham his seed will be captive in Egypt for 400 years. God sees all history in the present tense.

✓ Romans 11:25-29 - I would not have you ignorant of this mystery - fulness of Gentiles. Fulness, an exact number. The end of history will turn at that time. To us, events happen moment at a time, day at time, week at time. Course of history is full of surprises. God is never surprised. His purpose

is hard for us to see.

2. God raises up men to execute His Judgement.

✓ Jeremiah 25:9, 27:6, 43:10 - God calls the heathen Nebuckadnezzar "my servant". This is remarkable Hebrew word "ebed" - same word applied to David - 2 Sam. 7:8. Same word applied to Messiah - Isa. 42:1 - Word applied to Cyrus - King of Persia - Isa. 44:28, 45:1. He called "The Shepherd", "The anointed of Jehovah." God used these and other pagan Kings to execute his judgements.

✓ Jeremiah 27:2-11 - When God wills or purposes a thing, no man, nor group of men can stop God's judgment. Prophet sent yokes to all nations, asking them to submit to Babylon, that they be spared. People said the preacher is a rebel against God.

The 28th chapter of Jeremiah is one of the most dramatic in the story of God's people. He wore a yoke around his neck and he walked up and down the streets of Jerusalem. Signifying God's message. False prophet Hananiah, broke the yoke off his neck, declaring that the power of Nebuchadnezzar would soon come to an end. This false prophet died seven months from that day. No man can change God's decree.

✓ Isaiah walked barefoot three years. Through Jerusalem illustrating destructive power of Assyria.

✓ Ezekial, dug a hole in the wall of his own home. 12:5-7, carried his own household stuff into the street, signifying total captivity of Judah.

✓ Daniel describes Nebuchadnezzar, a heathen idolater - 2:12, 3:19, 4:30.

God chose him, used him.

Great fact puts fear in our hearts - terror for the course of America. The Communist rod could be the force to scourge us.

3. Note invincible conquests of Nebuchadnezzar

Nations around Judah delivered into hands of conquering King. City of Tyre, Egypt all made a part of the powerful domain. Finally, the beloved city of Jerusalem, trampled under Nebuchadnezzar's feet.

Babylon made one of the golden Kingdoms of the earth. Became a type or symbol of a city of the world in Revelation 17.

605 B. C. - The Battle of Carchemish had five results.

1. Assyria passed away forever.
2. Egypt was completely broken.
3. City of Carchemish buried under desert sand.
4. Judah made servant of Babylon.
5. Nebuchadnezzar brought to chosen place by God. Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, Azariah, chosen and deported to Babylon.



II. STRANGE DREAM - V. 5

Mercy of God - long-suffering to this heathen King.

Nebuchadnezzar is the golden head of the giant image in Dan. 2.

Fellow stands up - "I'm going to tell it to you like it is," he has his God cornered in a small room. His religion compartmentalized - He has God locked up.

Why, it goes beyond us - no man can express his whole religious experience, goes beyond us.

That is what happened to Nebuchadnezzar - describing his confrontation with God. Glory overwhelmed him.

Exclamation - the vision of towering tree - V. 4.

Strange - not marching his army - at rest - goblets full of wine - music in the palace - I was at rest.

I saw a dream - a part of him - afraid.

What things God can send - lightning - whirlwind - earthquake - fire - a dream!

God spoke to Pharoah's butler and baker. Pilate's wife - I had a dream tonight. Matt. 27:19.

Great towering (tree) - grew and grew - leaves were fair.

Cut off its branches - shake off its leaves. Scatter its fruit. Cut a cypress tree and it never grows back. Cut a fir, it never grows back. Some trees will have a shoot from the stump.

Speaks of leaving the stump - 7 years pass over it and let a beast heart be given it until he knows "God is God".

There is the dream.

Counselors - magicians - astrologers - no idea what the dream meant.

Daniel, listened, "astonished" for hour - (speechless)

What shall the preacher say?

Paul before Felix and Drusilla - shall I reason of righteousness - temperance - judgment.

Shall the preacher tell them the truth of God.

Not popular to condemn - denounce sin and threaten men with judgment to come.

What shall the preacher say - Daniel as a slave - lion's den or fiery furnace waiting.

"It is Thou, Oh King."

"Thou art the man", Nathan said.

### III. Intrepretation of Dream.

The beast heart.

Seven years the King shall be insane - a madman. Think of himself as animal and act like it.

Disease, Lyeanthropy, strange, Bo Anthropos - man feels he is a cow or ox. Or pheasant and roost in tree at night instead of sleeping in a bed.

Sorcerers tried hard at transforming others into wild beasts. As result one Irish family doomed by a wolf for 7 years.

Film Beauty and The Beast - advertised beast holding beautiful girl in his arms.

Not unusual for Kings to be insane - Charles VI of France, Christian VII Denmark, George III England.

Prophet said it will continue until you acknowledge the true living God of Heaven.

Appeal, it is not fate - it is God who runs this world. Nebuchadnezzar, if you will break from your sins, repent, turn from iniquities, God will forgive and abate this fearful judgment.

He gave him 12 months.

Flood - 120 years - Noah preached.

Saul - Samuel said God had given him years and years to repent.

Holy Spirit pleads with men today. If you will hear His voice, do not harden your heart.

God never pleads tomorrow.

The King - is at rest - dreams - tall tree. Be insane 7 years, madman.



IV. God's Judgment Justified.

1. Nebuchadnezzar personally a violent man.

Example: Chapter 2 - Preparing to butcher a group of men who could not recall a dream he had forgotten.

Chapter 3 - Heated a furnace 7 times hotter to roast 3 young man.

Jer. 29 - Prophet names 2 Jews he roasted in the fire.

2 Kings 25 - Put out King Zedekiah's eyes after he had slain the man's sons before his face.

2 Kings 24 takes Jehoiakim 18 years old and imprisons for 36 years.

2. Politically he brought untold misery.

Uprooted people - departed whole nations. Resettled them in strange land.  
Homes gone "by the rivers we sat down and wept - hung our harps on the willows.

He refused to repnt.

3. Twelve months to repent and turn.

Walking on top of his golden palace.

Like a clap of thunder his mind snapped and he went unsane.

Ran away from his fears like an ox hid himself in the thickets along Euphrates river.

Prodigal Son - far country - came to himself. Godarene Demoniatic - tombs.

7 Years he changed.