

“Loving the Lost”

November 30, 2014 PM

Daniel 4:34-37

Nebuchadnezzar was the king of the most despised nation on earth. In this passage he makes one of the most heartfelt and articulate professions of faith in the Old Testament. How can this be? How was it that this man came to faith in the Living God? It was because someone loved this lost man enough. What exactly does that look like?

1. Nebuchadnezzar would never have come to salvation w/o several steadfast witnesses

- Daniel 3:16-18 ¹⁶Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego answered and said to the king, “O Nebuchadnezzar, we have no need to answer you in this matter. ¹⁷If that *is the case*, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and He will deliver *us* from your hand, O king. ¹⁸But if not, let it be known to you, O king, that we do not serve your gods, nor will we worship the gold image which you have set up.”
- a. Bold witness from three of the minor characters in the Daniel narrative. Their witness stated that:
 - Our God is Able
 - Our God is Sovereign
 - Our God is Worthy

2. Nebuchadnezzar would never have come to salvation w/o compassion for the lost

- Daniel 4:24-27 ²⁴this is the interpretation, O king, and this is the decree of the Most High, which has come upon my lord the king: ²⁵They shall drive you from men, your dwelling shall be with the beasts of the field, and they shall make you eat grass like oxen. They shall wet you with the dew of heaven, and seven times shall pass over you, till you know that the Most High rules in the kingdom of men, and gives it to whomever He chooses. ²⁶“And inasmuch as they gave the command to leave the stump *and* roots of the tree, your kingdom shall be assured to you, after you come to know that Heaven rules. ²⁷Therefore, O king, let my advice be acceptable to you; break off your sins by *being* righteous, and your iniquities by showing mercy to *the* poor. Perhaps there may be a lengthening of your prosperity.”
- a. Daniel was well aware of what God thought of *Babylon*, but he still had great compassion for the *individual Nebuchadnezzar*.
- Daniel 9:1-2 In the first year of Darius the son of Ahasuerus, of the lineage of the Medes, who was made king over the realm of the Chaldeans— ²in the first year of his reign I, Daniel, understood by the books the number of the years *specified* by the word

of the LORD through Jeremiah the prophet, that He would accomplish seventy years in the desolations of Jerusalem.

- **Jeremiah 25:11-12** ¹¹And this whole land shall be a desolation *and* an astonishment, and these nations shall serve the king of Babylon seventy years.¹²Then it will come to pass, when seventy years are completed, *that* I will punish the king of Babylon and that nation, the land of the Chaldeans, for their iniquity,' says the LORD; 'and I will make it a perpetual desolation.
- **Ezekiel 18:21** "But if a wicked man turns from all his sins which he has committed, keeps all My statutes, and does what is lawful and right, he shall surely live; he shall not die.

3. Nebuchadnezzar would never have come to salvation w/o the tragedy in Jerusalem

- **Daniel 1:1-2** In the third year of the reign of Jehoiakim king of Judah, Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came to Jerusalem and besieged it. ²And the Lord gave Jehoiakim king of Judah into his hand, with some of the articles of the house of God, which he carried into the land of Shinar to the house of his god; and he brought the articles into the treasure house of his god.

The siege of Jerusalem was a horrendous thing to have experienced and could have lent the participants to be angry and bitter. But Daniel knew that both that event and the humiliation of Nebuchadnezzar were **of the Lord**. Daniel knew that God often times uses tragedy to accomplish His ends, and to bring the lost to a saving knowledge of His grace.