

How Great Are His Signs

Daniel 4:1-12, "Nebuchadnezzar the king, to all peoples, nations, and languages that dwell in all the earth: Peace be multiplied to you. I thought it good to declare the signs and wonders that the Most High God has worked for me. How great are His signs, and how mighty His wonders! His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and His dominion is from generation to generation. I, Nebuchadnezzar, was at rest in my house, and flourishing in my palace. I saw a dream which made me afraid, and the thoughts on my bed and the visions of my head troubled me. Therefore, I issued a decree to bring in all the wise men of Babylon before me, that they might make known to me the interpretation of the dream. Then the magicians, the astrologers, the Chaldeans, and the soothsayers came in, and I told them the dream; but they did not make known to me its interpretation. But at last Daniel came before me (his name is Belteshazzar, according to the name of my god; in him is the Spirit of the Holy God), and I told the dream before him, saying: "Belteshazzar, chief of the magicians, because I know that the Spirit of the Holy God is in you, and no secret troubles you, explain to me the visions of my dream that I have seen, and its interpretation. "These were the visions of my head while on my bed: I was looking, and behold, a tree in the midst of the earth, and its height was great. The tree grew and became strong; its height reached to the heavens, and it could be seen to the ends of all the earth. Its leaves were lovely, its fruit abundant, and in it was food for all. The beasts of the field found shade under it, the birds of the heavens dwelt in its branches, and all flesh was fed from it."

Let's pray, O Lord our God, I do pray that You would cause us to hear Your Word today and that You would open our ears and hearts and cause us to understand. We pray that You would help us that we would humble ourselves before You Lord, help us to see Your greatness and Your Majesty Lord. Help us to see how You are able to cast down those who are proud Lord, You are able to reveal Your truth to know the things of the future and to bring them to pass. You are the Great Lord of heaven, help us to know You and to serve You this day, amen.

So as we come to the culmination of God working on Nebuchadnezzar, I wanted to make sure that we took this as an opportunity to look rightly at what faith looks like. In chapter 2 after Daniel tells what God has revealed to him, the contents and meaning of what the dream means, in response to what Daniel says in **2:47**, "**The king answered Daniel and said, "Truly your God is the God of Gods, the Lord of Kings, and a revealer of secrets since you could reveal this secret."** He declares God is who he thinks God is, he speaks truth about who God is, but understand he's not saved. How many churches now, if someone said words like this, everyone would immediately say that person is saved because they acknowledged who God is. That's what Nebuchadnezzar does, but he's not saved. He sets up an idol and commands people to worship another God. It's not faith to just recognize who God is, that is not what saving faith is. Nebuchadnezzar says He is the Lord of Gods, He is the King of Kings, but yet his heart is still far from God. The fact that you acknowledge truth does not mean that you have been born again. Nebuchadnezzar acknowledges truth, but yet he is not born again, that's very clear from Nebuchadnezzar's life. He had faith in the sense that he knew what he believed, but he didn't have salvific faith. It's one thing to say you know who God is, but it's another thing to say you will submit to Him. There's no evidence in chapter 2 that Nebuchadnezzar submitted to God, no evidence that the power of sin over his life was broken. We need to make sure when we hear a profession like that from our children, that doesn't mean that they are saved. When someone raises their hand in church and makes a profession like this, it doesn't mean that they are saved. Let's not make salvation a cheap thing,

God is giving us these markers in Nebuchadnezzar's life where we know he is not saved, but yet how often do we take the same markers in people's lives today and say they are saved. Nebuchadnezzar acknowledges that Daniel's God is different than all the Babylonians' god, but yet he still goes and worships the Babylonian gods. If you keep worshipping other gods, you don't know the true God, if you know the true God you know that He is a jealous God. He considers it adultery to go worship other gods, He put away Israel for this, He put away Judah for this. This is not what salvation looks like, this is what a false profession looks like. In chapter 3 we see further revelation, we see God's further mercy to Nebuchadnezzar because He continues to reveal Himself to Nebuchadnezzar. We even see him tremble before God when God saved Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, it says in **Daniel 3:24-25** **"Then King Nebuchadnezzar was astonished and he rose in haste and spoke, saying to his counselors, "Did we not cast three men bound into the midst of the fire?" They answered and said to the king, "True, O king." "Look!" he answered, "I see four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire, and they are not hurt, and the form of the fourth is like the Son of God."** As I mentioned last week, that word translated "haste", that's more that he rose up in terror, he was shaking with fear when he sees this. When he sees one like the Son of God standing in the midst of the fire, when he sees the fire not affecting the men, he knows who God is and he is filled with fear. He saw that God ruled over the natural world, he saw that these flames that killed the strongest men in his army, they did nothing to Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. He believed that God ruled in the world, but it seems clear from this that he is not saved. How many people would we look to and see a profession of faith where they say they fear God and tremble with fear of God, and think they are saved, but Nebuchadnezzar is not saved. You read the chapter 4 leading up to where God sends him out to eat grass like an ox and it's clear that it's all about exaltation of Nebuchadnezzar, he is not a saved man. How many professing Christians today would go, "God doesn't control everything!" They don't have the faith of Nebuchadnezzar, he didn't have saving faith, but he saw God as the One who acted and the One who could rule the waves and rule the sea. How many professing Christians see sickness and they see prosperity and they see death and they say that these things are not from the hand of God. Nebuchadnezzar understood they were and yet he still wasn't saved. Let's make sure we understand what it means to have faith. All those things, you can see and recognize the revelation of God and have no faith because you are walking by sight, you're walking by the mercy of God's revelation to you, but that doesn't mean that you have submitted to God and salvation is about submitting to God and being humble before the mighty hand of God. That is not what happened to Nebuchadnezzar even though he understood the God was ruling all things, but that's not enough to be saved either. Think how cheap we have made salvation. Nebuchadnezzar turns around and he makes it a capital crime to blaspheme God, he says they will be cut to pieces if they blaspheme God. **Daniel 3:28-29, "Nebuchadnezzar spoke, saying, "Blessed be the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, who sent His Angel and delivered His servants who trusted in Him, and they have frustrated the king's word, and yielded their bodies, that they should not serve nor worship any god except their own God! Therefore I make a decree that any people, nation, or language, which speaks anything amiss against the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego shall be cut in pieces and their houses shall be made an ash heap; because there is no other God who can deliver like this."** How many Christians aren't even offended when God is blasphemed and you have non-Christian who says it should be a death penalty offense to blaspheme God, but yet he doesn't believe in God. Let's not make faith a cheap thing, let's not make faith the wide way. Nebuchadnezzar is not saved here. Nebuchadnezzar was filled with terror before God, but he's not saved. James talks about this in **James 2:19, "You believe that there is one God you do well, but even the demons believe and tremble."** Nebuchadnezzar at this point isn't saved any more than demons are, but he trembled before God. How many times do we think

someone who trembles before God means they are saved? Sorry, but that doesn't mean they are saved. This is God increasing His revelation to Nebuchadnezzar, it's the mercy of God. But he's not done with Nebuchadnezzar because in chapter 4 we see where, I think it is the testimony of a saved man. I want to go through some of the reasons why I think that's true, but I think this is how we need to see this letter and as we go through this letter, I think this is Nebuchadnezzar's testimony of salvation. The first reason is in his introduction he says that "this seems good for me to do." He's not doing it out of compulsion or fear, he is doing it because that's how he blesses the God of heaven and he is working to be a blessing. Even this king who rules over the world, he's this tree that has been set up again after it was cut down, and his point isn't to point toward himself, his point is to point the glory to God. This is what it looks like, this is what we are supposed to do. We don't go witness because if we don't people in church will talk about us, we should go witness because we know who God is and we want other people to know the God that we know, that's exactly what Nebuchadnezzar is doing here. He's saying that he wants other people to know the God that he knows. **Psalm 110:3, "Your people should be volunteers in the day of your power in the beauties of holiness from the womb of the morning, you have the dew of your youth."** Nebuchadnezzar is a volunteer here, that's a sign of salvation. This is a normal work for those who are saved, they stop glorifying themselves, and they work to glorify God, that's what Nebuchadnezzar is doing here. Even those other commands about cutting them into pieces, he is glorifying himself at the same time. He is saying, "Look at my zeal for God!" That's very different from chapter 4, in chapter 4 Nebuchadnezzar doesn't look that great, which is much more what it looks like to be a Christian. When we think of Paul preaching the gospel in all those towns in Asia, remember he goes there and there are Jews there and they have heard about who God is, this is where they heard about who God is first. Nebuchadnezzar sends out this letter because he wants God to be made known and instead of being known just in this spot in the Middle East, now God is known on multiple continents, now He is known throughout a hundred kingdoms. The gospel and knowledge of God goes forth, that's what Nebuchadnezzar wants and that's what it looks like to be saved. Another thing that it looks like to be saved is that he taught those who came after him. We see that in chapter 5 when Daniel recounts the contents of this letter the Belshazzar and then he tells him in verse 22, **"But you his son, Belshazzar, have not humbled your heart, although you knew all this."** Nebuchadnezzar was making it known, not just to his generation, but the generation to come. That's what Christ says, that if you have the faith of Abraham, you do the works of Abraham and one of the works of Abraham is found in **Genesis 18:19, "For I have known him in order that he may command his children and his household after him, that they keep the way of the Lord, to do righteousness and justice, that the Lord may bring to Abraham what He has spoken to him."** Nebuchadnezzar is testifying to his son that this is who God is, so much so that Daniel says "You have rebelled against that, you have not humbled yourself like your father was humbled." There's other reasons, but the last one that I will list is found in Daniel 4:37, "Now I Nebuchadnezzar, praise and extol and honor the king of heaven, all whose works are truth and His ways justice and those who walk in pride, He is able to put down." God had humbled Nebuchadnezzar, that's the difference between chapter 2, 3, and 4. In chapter 2 and 3, Nebuchadnezzar is a proud man and he is exercising his power by saying what a great man he is. That's not what happens in chapter 4, in chapter 4 he says look how great God is, that as powerful as I was, He was able to make me eat grass like an ox, and he doesn't hide it, he walks in the light, he doesn't hide the fact that God shamed him, he doesn't hide the fact that it was God who restored him to the kingdom because how else would he become king again? He had gone insane and lost his mind, but Nebuchadnezzar is willing to testify of his sin, he's willing to testify of his humbling, and he's willing to say, "Look, God humbles those who rise up against Him." That's what faith looks like, faith doesn't just look like God is great, but so am I. That's not what

faith looks like, it looks like God is great and I need a Savior because I am not. That's much more what Nebuchadnezzar is saying here. So as we study through this letter from Nebuchadnezzar to all the people of the world, I think that's how we should read it. I think we should read it as a testimony of someone's faith. Other people disagree with that, but I think that's what this is and when you read this to the parallels to the epistles it's really interesting, especially the first three verses. Almost every epistle starts this way. It's kind of odd, but I read through them all this morning and they all start like this except 1st, 2nd, and 3rd John, not sure why John started his different, but they all have the same pattern. Here's who I am, here's who you are, may peace grow on you, and this is who God is. This is the pattern of what the epistles start with.

Verses 1-3, **“Nebuchadnezzar the king, to all peoples, nations, and languages that dwell in all the earth: Peace be multiplied to you. I thought it good to declare the signs and wonders that the Most High God has worked for me. How great are His signs, and how mighty His wonders! His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and His dominion is from generation to generation.”** This is a pretty simple reading and we don't have any of his other letters so we can't know for sure how he starts letters, but if you look at how the Queen of England starts letters now she starts with her 34 titles. Nebuchadnezzar was the ruler over a whole bunch of nations and that's probably how he started his letters because that's how everyone who came after Nebuchadnezzar started their letters. But here he just starts with his name, he knows they know who he is. He isn't trying to exalt himself any more than Paul when he starts his letter and says, “Paul, a bondservant of Jesus Christ.” He is just saying that he wants them to know who this testimony is coming from. Remember, Nebuchadnezzar is the head of gold on this statue, he's the one whose an exceptional king, but he doesn't talk about any of that, he just simply says he is the king. Then he says who he is writing to, all the people, nations, and languages that dwell in the earth. He is saying that everyone in the earth is to know who he is. Think of Psalm 19, where it says all nations, all languages declare who God is, that's exactly what Nebuchadnezzar is doing, he is declaring it to the whole world. Later we will see that everyone in the world was looking to Nebuchadnezzar. He is writing a letter that says he wants all to hear who Nebuchadnezzar is, all the people, if you look in Revelation it's “tribes” there. That's the idea, it's tribes, like these would be family groups based on relationships, based on genes and blood relationships. He is saying all the tribes of the earth, all of you should know who Jehovah is. Nations would be political divisions, so people based on family and then people based on political divisions. So it could be a king that rules over multiple tribes. For example, King Jehoiakim was ruling over the Jews and the Benjamites, some of the Levites, so you could have king that rules over multiple tribes and some tribes were so big they had multiple kings. So this is in the family sphere and the civil sphere, he is writing to all the different civil divisions. Languages was the other way to categorize people, by the language that they speak. He wants this to be translated into every language. Nebuchadnezzar is writing to every language division and notice the similarity to the language in **Revelation 5:9, “And they sang a new song saying, “You are worthy to take the scroll, and to open its seals; for You were slain, and have redeemed us to God by Your blood out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation.”** Nebuchadnezzar is doing the same thing that you see the saints and Christ doing later, this is the song that they sing, that God will redeem out of every tribe, every tongue, every nation. This is why Nebuchadnezzar wants it to go out to every tribe, tongue, and nation. Then he says, “peace be multiplied to you”, and I think this is another sign of salvation in Nebuchadnezzar. He is promoting peace, he's praying that peace comes upon all of them, that it be increased on all of them. In the last chapter we see a king that doesn't have peace, somebody dares to oppose him and he's filled with fury, he hears about it and he gets angry and demands they are brought before him immediately.

This is a man who had no peace, and here he is praying for the peace of others. This is why we are commanded to pray for our rulers in **1 Timothy 2:1-2, "Therefore, I exhort first of all that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men, for kings and all who are in authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and holiness."** This is what Nebuchadnezzar is trying to cause to happen for every tongue, tribe, and nation. That's not what he was trying to cause to happen before he ate grass for seven years, back then he was trying to get everyone to bow down and submit to him. He didn't want their peace, he wanted their worship. Now he wants their peace, this is very different, this is what we should desire, this is even why we go witness, it's because we desire for them to have peace with God. This is our duty, Jesus Christ is the Prince of Peace and we are the body of Christ so we are to be promoting peace throughout the world. Not false peace, but true peace, peace with God, because if you don't have peace with God then all the other peace is transitory. **"I thought it good"**, this is an important phrase when you consider what God had done to and for him, he decided that the whole world should know. When you think about it, if you're a ruler that wants to maintain your power, you don't admit that you were weak and ate grass and went insane for seven years. That doesn't really help your political position. If someone was running for office in the United States, can you imagine if part of their thing was that a few years ago they were insane and ate grass for seven years and their fingernails grew to be like talons. I think that would eliminate any possibility of them being elected, but here you have Nebuchadnezzar who is openly testifying to this and I suspect that most of the time that this was happening to him, his government was trying to hide it. Just like we see when our governments try to hide when presidents are sick or have strokes and they go on and pretend like nothing happened. That's probably what happened to Nebuchadnezzar and when he is restored to the throne, he writes a letter to everyone telling them what happened to him. This is a man who is not seeking his own, this is a man who is seeking the glory of God. According to man's wisdom, you would never disparage yourself or humble yourself, but instead that's what Nebuchadnezzar willingly does. It seems good to him. **"To declare the signs and wonders that the Most High God has worked for me."** The signs are those things that are to show something unusual is happening here, something that signifies and wonders are things that can't be explained, something that amazes you, something out of the ordinary. Like the three being cast into the fiery furnace and surviving. He wants to declare these things, the things that God has done, those things that He had taken him down to nothing and he raised him back up again. He wants people to see the signs and the wonders that the Most High God had worked for him. Nebuchadnezzar, the other ones, the fiery furnace, all the people were around there that saw it. Right? All the people from the provinces heard about it, that's not what this is. He was alone and God did this for him. Now obviously he has an impact on the rest of the world, but it's personal what God does for Nebuchadnezzar, it's his testimony. He could have gone out to eat grass like an ox and restored, but never said anything, God did it to him and for him and Nebuchadnezzar's response was to declare it to the nations. **"How great are His signs"** That word "great" means large in size or domineering in character. Great in such a way that you say God is in control and I don't need to be anxious. It doesn't mean that you just close your eyes and don't deal with the situation, but you realize you don't have to worry because God has gone before you. What things disturb your peace that shouldn't? When evil rises up, that's part of God's plan, times of prosperity and sickness, these are all part of God's plan. Even the wicked and evil things like Obergefell saying that two sodomites can marry in this country, that shouldn't cause us anxiety, instead that should cause us to say "what is God doing? Where are we failing?" It shouldn't cause us to be anxious because God is sovereign. So he continues and says, **"explain to me the visions of my dream that I have seen, and its interpretation."** He commands Daniel to explain what he saw and this week we will just go through this first part.

Verses 10-12, **“These were the visions of my head while on my bed: I was looking, and behold, a tree in the midst of the earth, and its height was great. The tree grew and became strong; its height reached to the heavens, and it could be seen to the ends of all the earth. Its leaves were lovely, its fruit abundant, and in it was food for all. The beasts of the field found shade under it, the birds of the heavens dwelt in its branches, and all flesh was fed from it.”** So he’s going to describe the things that he saw, the visions in his head while he was laying on his bed. He was looking and interested in the dream and he saw something that he recognized as significant and what he saw was a tree in the midst of the earth. Later we will see that this is Nebuchadnezzar when we see Daniel’s interpretation of it. That word “midst” means “middle”, the tree is in the middle of the earth, so Nebuchadnezzar sees himself as the center of the earth. This is who he thought he was, he thought all things revolved around him and we will see that later. So God in the dream is showing the prominence of Nebuchadnezzar. Its height was great, so this was a very tall tree, this is a tree you could see from very far off. The tree grew and became strong, so this tree wasn’t finished and it’s still a tree that’s growing and getting stronger. That’s where Nebuchadnezzar was in his kingdom, it was still growing stronger and continuing to increase in the influence and the affect that it had on the rest of the world. It was continuing to increase in strength. That word “might” can also be translated as an obstinacy because there is a sense that Nebuchadnezzar was increasing in obstinacy. God had showed him that He knew the secrets of men in chapter 2, He showed him that He ruled over fire in chapter 3, but Nebuchadnezzar, instead of submitting he just becomes more obstinate. So I think there are aspects of truth in both of those. He knows who has the interpretation of the dream, but instead he goes to these false prophets. Remember that this is happening in the same place they built the tower of Babel and the whole reason for the Tower of Babel was to reach heaven and it had a name so that everyone looked towards there because they were trying to establish a name for themselves and unite all the people. Notice what’s happening here, **“it’s height reached to the heaven”** just like the Tower of Babel. God is saying to Nebuchadnezzar that he had actually achieved that, his height was in the heavens. But as we consider this too, let’s make sure that we consider those verses that Chuck read this morning, that this really is a picture of the kingdom of God, only the kingdom of God doesn’t get torn down. The Kingdom of God is to reach the heavens and is to be looked to by the world, not because we are trying to glorify ourselves, but because we are here to glorify ourselves and that is the purpose of creation. As we consider this, consider what Babylon wanted to do, what Nebuchadnezzar did, and what the church is to do, and is doing. **“It could be seen to the ends of the earth”**, that’s what the goal of the Tower of Babel was, for everyone to be looking towards it, that’s what happened with Nebuchadnezzar. Everybody was looking towards him, he could be seen everywhere, there was no part of the earth that wasn’t influenced by Nebuchadnezzar. That doesn’t mean he ruled over all the earth, it means he was seen in all the earth and everyone was affected by him. That’s what the Kingdom of God is supposed to be like, that’s what the church is supposed to be like, everybody in the world is affected by the church, everybody sees the church, everybody sees the effects of the church. **“It’s leaves were lovely”**, Nebuchadnezzar’s kingdom did more than just control things. When you get to the description of the fourth kingdom, the Roman empire, it’s all about control and crushing, it’s about having absolute authority. Nebuchadnezzar’s kingdom is actually about things that are lovely, it’s about beauty and bringing in good things, not just about destruction like Rome was. It’s about actually being a blessing, that’s what Nebuchadnezzar’s kingdom was like, but imagine how much more that that’s what the Kingdom of God is supposed to be like. We are supposed to be beautiful in this world, the beauty of holiness. We are to worship the Lord. The beauty of holiness is not just that people look so holy, the idea is that when we order things the way that God ordered them, there’s a beauty to them. Think of Solomon with the Queen of Sheba. She looks at how they set the tables and

that testifies that God is good. This is what the Kingdom of God is supposed to be, a testimony to the rest of the world. Do people see the Kingdom of God as lovely because of you? This is part of each of our duties, we are actually supposed to cause beauty in the world. That's what Nebuchadnezzar did and he is just a type. We have a duty to do this. **"Its fruit abundant"**, the fruit of the Tower of Babel wasn't abundant at all, but the kingdom of Babylon brought real peace to the world. It's hard for us to recognize where we are now that there used to be all kinds of Indian tribes that would fight constantly. When Nebuchadnezzar was conquering in the Middle East and Asia, it wasn't any different, it was constant war for most of these people. Even with David, you hear that it's springtime, the time to go to war, and now Nebuchadnezzar all of a sudden brings peace to a large section of the world. This is real fruit and this is what the church is supposed to be doing, bringing real peace to the world. We are supposed to have real effect on people's lives, there's no idea of sacred and secular, no idea of Sunday morning you come and do these things and it doesn't affect the rest of your life. That's not what the Kingdom of God is like, it's producing fruit that effects everyone else, not just those who are part of the kingdom. The fruit is abundant, it's not just producing here and there, it's producing large volumes of fruit that are being consumed by the world. **"And in it was food for all"**, the Kingdom of God is supposed to be feeding everything. That's why Nebuchadnezzar is a picture. **"The beasts of the field found shade under it"**, they found protection under it. Even the wicked should find protection in the church because the church is supposed to be declaring justice, the church is supposed to be caring for the widow and the fatherless, rebuking the oppressor. This is the shade that the church is supposed to give, this is the shade that Nebuchadnezzar gave even as a fallen, pagan king. How much more does the church have the duty to do this today? **"The birds of the heavens dwelt in its branches"** I think that's just two pictures that are parallel. **"And all flesh was fed from it."** That's the kingdom of Nebuchadnezzar, how much greater is the Kingdom of God? We will talk more about this next week because Nebuchadnezzar was wanting to be the focus of all and that's not the point of the kingdom of heaven, the point is to make the Father all in all.

Applications

1. Do you have a view of the world like Nebuchadnezzar did, that God is the cause of all things? This is who God actually is, He is the One who causes everything to come to pass that comes to pass. He's going to make that clear to Nebuchadnezzar by making him eat grass and he won't die. Do you realize that the human body doesn't normally consume grass? That's as much of a miracle that you can eat grass for a year that you can walk in the midst of a fire. God is sovereign over all things and Nebuchadnezzar understands that. Do you understand that? The more we understand that the more we will be like Daniel, where nothing causes us to be distressed, nothing causes us to be shaken because we recognize that God is sovereign. Not just in words because everybody in this room would say that's true, but I mean in deeds and one of the simplest deeds is we don't sit here and get stressed out about things. We accept the fact that God truly is ruling.
2. How do you see the Kingdom of God? Do you see it as influencing the whole earth? Do you see it as the light of the world? That's how God describes us, we are the light of the world, that the world walks and moves in the light given by the church. Is that how you see the Kingdom of God? Not just this thing that's supposed to be a blessing to those who are part of it, it is a

blessing, but the duty of the Kingdom of God, the duty of the church is to have fruit that the whole world feeds off of. It's easy for us to ignore that fruit that the world is feeding off of today, and there is real fruit that the world is feeding off of today, but how often in the church do they not even point back to? This is because the church is this tree. Do we point back and say the reason that we can read in this room is because of the tree that is the Kingdom of God, the reason that rulers are voted for is because of the tree instead of just having dictators like the vast majority of the history of the world. Do we look and see that the tree that everybody is looking to the tree even if they don't realize it because everyone in this world is being affected by the church? Is that who we see the church as being? Do we see the church as having a duty to be aesthetically pleasing? To be bringing beauty into the world? The church has done this in many idolatrous ways and we aren't to be like the Roman Catholic church, but we are supposed to actually be bringing beauty into the world, order into the world. We are supposed to have an abundance of fruit, we are supposed to produce so many good things that they good things aren't just for the people in the church, they are supposed to be a blessing to those that are outside. Are we being a blessing to those who are outside? That's what the Kingdom of God looks like, that's even what Nebuchadnezzar looked like. Are we fruitful or are we being controlled by the world? It's a real failure on the part of the church when the world isn't feeding itself on the abundance of the church and instead the church is eating the scraps of the world and so often we eat the scraps of the world. It uses the symbolism in Deuteronomy 28, are you the dog wagging the tail or are you the tail being wagged by the dog? Certainly over the last ten year I have seen the church be wagged by the world so many times. Look at how many people in the church are embracing sodomy because the state said that sodomy is good so we won't even say that sodomy is evil and that anyone who practices it won't inherit the Kingdom of God. We need to get back to where the church wags that tail instead of being wagged. We are the light of the world and the world walks by the light given by the church. When Christ left He was the light of the world, but when He left He said "You are the light of the world." Do we protect even those that are not part of it, the beasts of the field and the birds of the air? Are we a blessing to the whole world? Is that what we expect from the church of Jesus Christ or have we made God small, because those are the two choices. The world sees the church as being like Rome, that all we do is go and destroy and beat up the poor homosexuals, all we do is go and attack these poor women that just want to abort their baby. Are we declaring that the truth is that the church is a blessing to the world? The world is going to claim that we are like Rome, we need to be declaring the truth and being the truth that the church is actually a blessing and the whole world feeds of its fruit.

3. What are the signs of your faith? We can see the signs of Nebuchadnezzar's faith, we see his humility, we see his willingness to serve God, we see that he walks in the light and is willing to say things that would be pretty embarrassing for a king, but he's openly admitting it. We see him trusting in God and acting like God is sovereign over all things, we see him witnessing to who God is, is this what your faith looks like? Are you trusting in your faith because you say, "Look! I say God is God! What more do I need to say?" Nebuchadnezzar was still in rebellion when he said God was God. Make sure your faith actually has works, not because your works will save you, but that if God has saved you, His Spirit is working in you to do the good works that He has prepared beforehand for you to walk in. We've accepted signs of faith of praying a prayer, saying things; that's not what it looks like. What it looks like is far more what it says in Daniel 4. It's

interesting that some of the commentaries that talk about not thinking Nebuchadnezzar is saved, their standard for salvation today is on a whole different scale. Let's at least be consistent in what it looks like. They look at it and say what they call salvation today, Nebuchadnezzar easily meets that standard. The problem was that Nebuchadnezzar added things to his faith. When we think of adding things to our faith, we think of works based righteousness, but there are other things you can add. You can say you worship God, but then you add worshipping another God. If you have faith but you also have pride and you say look at how great you are, I'm sorry, but God hasn't humbled you. The meek are the ones who inherit the earth, not the proud. We need to define meekness properly because Moses was meek. But we need to understand that the person who is about exalting himself, it doesn't matter who he says God is, that's not what it looks like to have saving faith. I like how Calvin put it in his conversion, God by sudden conversion subdued and brought my mind into a teachable frame. If you are too proud to be taught by God, you don't believe He is your God. You might profess it and you might say all kinds of things, but if you're not willing to learn from God, you're saying you are above God. That's not a sign of salvation, that's a sign of rebellion. So the question is, does your faith look like Nebuchadnezzar's? Nebuchadnezzar's in so many ways look like Paul's. It looks like Peter's, is that what your faith looks like?

4. Do you glorify God in your sphere? Nebuchadnezzar had a special sphere, he was ruling over all the civilized world, but Nebuchadnezzar says, "This is my duty, to glorify God in the sphere where God has placed me." Do you glorify God in the sphere that God has placed you? Whether it's just glorifying Him in your family? Are you glorifying Him when you raise your children? Are you glorifying Him in your workplace and those areas where you have influence? Do you use the position that God has given you to exalt yourself or to exalt God? Is it about your glory or is it about God's glory?
5. In the Tower of Babel, they were trying to make a name for themselves, Nebuchadnezzar was trying to make a name for himself, the Kingdom of God is not like that. Here we make a name for God, we declare His name and try to make His name great. Is that what your life is about? Is your life about making your name great or is your life about making God's name great? Nebuchadnezzar switches from making his name great to making God's name great, that's what it looks like to be saved. Is that what your life looks like?

Let me pray, Oh Lord God, we do thank You for this passage. We pray as we continue to consider this letter that Nebuchadnezzar sent throughout the whole world Lord, that You speak to us through it, that You instruct us through it, that You chastise us through it, that You guide us to the truths contained therein. Lord, You did this to Nebuchadnezzar for very specific reasons, Lord give us a greater sense of Your sovereignty as we consider it, give us a greater sense of Your mercy, Your longsuffering, Your kindness even in putting up with Nebuchadnezzar for so long. Lord, let us have a greater sense of Your sovereignty. Let's have a greater ability to rest in You instead of trying to rest in our own strength and understanding and trying to rest in all those things that will fail us just like Nebuchadnezzar's rest failed him. The only true rest is in You, increase our rest in You. We ask this in Your Son's name, amen.