

Daniel 4:34

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

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 honoured him that liveth for ever, whose dominion is an everlasting dominion, and his kingdom is from generation to generation:

Analysis

The phrase "at the end of the days" refers to the conclusion of Nebuchadnezzar's seven-year period of insanity (the "seven times" of v. 32), during which he lived like an animal, eating grass and exposed to weather until "his hairs were grown like eagles' feathers, and his nails like birds' claws" (v. 33). The king's restoration began when "I lifted up mine eyes unto heaven," a gesture symbolizing both physical recovery and spiritual reorientation. Looking upward represents seeking God rather than remaining focused on earthly, bestial concerns.

"And mine understanding returned unto me" indicates restoration of rational faculties, but significantly, sanity returns simultaneously with spiritual awakening: "and I blessed the most High, and I praised and honoured him that liveth for ever." This demonstrates that true rationality includes acknowledging God's sovereignty—atheism and self-sufficient humanism are ultimately forms of insanity that deny fundamental reality. Nebuchadnezzar's blessing of God as "the most High" (Ilaya, אֱלֹהִים) acknowledges divine supremacy, while "him that liveth for ever" contrasts God's eternity with human temporality.

The phrase "whose dominion is an everlasting dominion, and his kingdom is from generation to generation" echoes earlier prophecy about God's eternal kingdom

(2:44). Nebuchadnezzar now personally confesses what Daniel previously revealed through interpretation. This demonstrates that intellectual knowledge of God must become personal acknowledgment through humbling circumstances. His confession points to Christ, whose eternal kingdom replaces all earthly powers (Revelation 11:15).

Historical Context

Nebuchadnezzar's seven-year madness (circa 570s-560s BC) is unattested in extrabiblical sources, leading some skeptics to question the account's historicity. However, ancient kings often suppressed embarrassing episodes from official records. Some scholars connect this narrative with fragmentary references to Nabonidus (Nebuchadnezzar's successor) spending years away from Babylon at the Tema oasis, suggesting possible confusion or that similar incidents affected multiple kings.

The account's literary structure—a royal proclamation acknowledging Yahweh's sovereignty—is unique in Scripture. Written as Nebuchadnezzar's personal testimony, it represents the pagan king's conversion narrative, demonstrating how God humbles the proud to bring them to recognition of His sovereignty. The chapter's Aramaic composition suggests wide distribution throughout the empire, making Nebuchadnezzar's humbling and restoration a public testimony to God's power.

Related Passages

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Study Questions

1. How does Nebuchadnezzar's experience demonstrate that genuine sanity requires acknowledging God's sovereignty over all creation?

2. In what ways might God be using humbling circumstances in your life to redirect focus from earthly achievements to eternal realities?

Interlinear Text

וְלִקְצָת	יוֹמֵיָא	אֲנִי ה	נְבוּכַדְנֶצַּר	עֵינַי י	לְשָׁמַי א
And at the end	of the days	I	Nebuchadnezzar	mine eyes	unto heaven
H7118	H3118	H576	H5020	H5870	H8065
נִטָּלָה	וּמִנְדַּעִי	עָלַי	יָת וּב	וּלְעֶלְיָא	בְּרִכָּה
lifted up	and mine understanding	unto me	returned	the most High	and I blessed
H5191	H4486	H5922	H8421	H5943	H1289
וְלֵה י	עַל מ	שָׁבַחַת	וְהִדָּרַת	דַּי	שְׁלֹטָן
him that liveth	for ever	and I praised	and honoured	H1768	dominion
H2417	H5957	H7624	H1922		H7985
עַל מ	וּמַלְכוּתֵה	עִם	וְדָר:	וְדָר:	
for ever	and his kingdom	is from	generation	generation	
H5957	H4437	H5974	H1859	H1859	

Additional Cross-References

Revelation 4:10 (Worship): The four and twenty elders fall down before him that sat on the throne, and worship him that liveth for ever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying,

Psalms 145:13 (Kingdom): Thy kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and thy dominion endureth throughout all generations.

Jeremiah 10:10 (Kingdom): But the LORD is the true God, he is the living God, and an everlasting king: at his wrath the earth shall tremble, and the nations shall not be able to abide his indignation.

Daniel 12:7 (Parallel theme): And I heard the man clothed in linen, which was upon the waters of the river, when he held up his right hand and his left hand unto heaven, and swore by him that liveth for ever that it shall be for a time, times, and

an half; and when he shall have accomplished to scatter the power of the holy people, all these things shall be finished.

Daniel 2:44 (Kingdom): And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever.

Daniel 6:26 (Kingdom): I make a decree, That in every dominion of my kingdom men tremble and fear before the God of Daniel: for he is the living God, and stedfast for ever, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed, and his dominion shall be even unto the end.

Daniel 4:32 (Kingdom): 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.

Luke 1:33 (Kingdom): And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end.

Daniel 5:21 (Kingdom): And he was driven from the sons of men; and his heart was made like the beasts, and his dwelling was with the wild asses: they fed him with grass like oxen, and his body was wet with the dew of heaven; till he knew that the most high God ruled in the kingdom of men, and that he appointeth over it whomsoever he will.

Daniel 4:26 (Kingdom): 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.