



INSTRUCTIONS IN RIGHTEOUSNESS

Dr. Peter D. Wyns

Entry 7 - 2

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Saving The Most Difficult

God can save the most difficult people. Even hard hearts can become tender and righteous when believers partner with God. Through the ages, cruel headhunters, violent slave traders, and blood-thirsty tyrants have turned from wickedness, found Christ and changed their ways. Many became champions of the faith. The most difficult, however, are not always the wicked. Sometimes, those who are nice are hardest to reach. They may be well educated, talented and self-sufficient. Some of them don't believe in God and some think they don't need Him. Like Saul of Tarsus (Paul the Apostle) even they will yield when God turns them upside-down. There is one man in the Bible who I think has the most extreme conversion. God moved him from ultra-wickedness to a brilliant salvation. It happened because God's people got involved. That man's name was Nebuchadnezzar.

I want to share Nebuchadnezzar's story to communicate the power of God's saving grace. No one is an impossible case for God. Let's see our friends and loved ones come to Christ. No one is beyond hope.

It was the first miracle I saw after coming to Christ. I prayed secretly and saw the conversion of my older brother and sister without witnessing to them or telling anyone else about my secret prayer. I did not know it at the time, but I had done as Daniel did.

Nebuchadnezzar was a most ruthless and wicked man. He had no regard for humanity; he only sought his own pleasure and fame. He demolished Jerusalem and took the most brilliant nobles as slaves. He changed their names to those of demon gods, made them learn the ways of Babylon. Then he forced them to serve him.

Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah were 4 of the Hebrew men that he incarcerated. During their training and indoctrination they were fed the food and wine of Babylon. This forced them to break the laws that God had given them. It meant eating food that

God called unclean; it was not kosher for Jews. They did not want to be defiled by eating pork or bloody meat so they asked for a diet of vegetables. Their overseer agreed provided they were healthy. They proved that obeying God made them more healthy than those who ate the richer diet. After 3 years of conditioning, Nebuchadnezzar had them brought before him to see if they were sufficiently intelligent and skillful enough to serve his purposes. After meeting with them he discovered that these Jews were 10 times wiser than his own wise men, so he included them as advisors along with his own sorcerers and fortune tellers. What he did not understand was the power of their God and how their presence would change the dynamics of his life and kingdom. For the first time in Nebuchadnezzar's life, a ray of hope was shining on him. It came from the lives of Daniel and his friends. This new paradigm would either make or break him, but he could never stay the same. God started to work on Nebuchadnezzar because the Hebrews were praying, and they were God's friends.

The process for Nebuchadnezzar's salvation had begun and Nebuchadnezzar had a dream from God

that scared him to death but he could not remember it. He ordered his wise men to tell him the dream. He had no regard for life and said that their inability to tell him his dream would result in them being cut to pieces and their homes destroyed. Their witchcraft could not help them and they were sentenced to death. Then God revealed the dream and its meaning to Daniel. He explained it to the king and the king promoted him over Babylon and over his wise men as well.

Nebuchadnezzar knew that Daniel had a powerful God, but he would not reject his gods or change from his wicked ways. The Jews served him well, but they walked with God. They prayed, gave thanks and refused to compromise their faith.

Nebuchadnezzar did not improve. He built a 90 foot gold statue of the false god that he was named after. It was the god, Nabu. The name Nebuchadnezzar means, "My god Nabu will protect all of my boundaries." He ordered everyone in the land to worship the idol Nabu. Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah would not bow down to this idol and Nebuchadnezzar was furious. He threw them into a fiery furnace. Suddenly, he saw that one who looked like the son of the gods was walking with the 3 Hebrew men among the flames. They came out of the furnace and did not even smell of smoke. Nebuchadnezzar was amazed and declared that no

one in the land should say anything against the God of the Hebrews or they would be put to death. Still Nebuchadnezzar did not bow his knee to God, nor did he change his vile ways.

Soon, Nebuchadnezzar had another dream. This one was about himself. Daniel told him that the dream revealed that he would fall from power, lose his sanity, become demonized and be like a wild animal living in the fields. Daniel advised him, "**Renounce your sins by doing what is right, and your wickedness by being kind to the oppressed.**" **Dan. 4:27.**

Nebuchadnezzar did not listen. One year later as he was boasting of his own greatness, God sent the judgment. He turned into a wild man and it lasted for 7 seasons. Finally, God restored him and then Nebuchadnezzar took Daniel's advice. He repented, turned away from evil and praised God. He said, "**I, Nebuchadnezzar ... praised the Most High; I honored and glorified Him ... His kingdom endures from generation to generation ... No one can hold back His hand ... I praise and exalt and glorify the King of Heaven, because everything He does is right and all His ways are just. And those who walk in pride He is able to humble.**" **Dan. 4: 34-37**

This was a monumental miracle. God promoted His Hebrew friends, saved a wicked king and changed a nation because the Hebrews co-operated with Him. Here is a list of some of the outstanding things they did:

1. They put their faith in God.
2. They did not compromise on what God required of them.
3. They prayed faithfully.
4. They gave thanks to God in the midst of great disappointment.
5. They served Nebuchadnezzar with all the skill they could find, but they did it as unto God.
6. They were prepared to lose everything, even their lives, rather than deny God or worship others.
7. They were compassionate to those who destroyed their homeland, gave them the names of demons and imprisoned them.
8. They were flexible and they waited for God's timing.
9. At the right time, they spoke boldly about their God.
10. They persisted in faithfulness and Nebuchadnezzar was saved.

There are difficult people in your life and God has put the key to their future in your hand. Their salvation is not impossible if you partner with God. A process for their salvation will begin as you step into the place of faith and ministry. At first, the situation may get worse and it may take time before you see results but you have power with God. Begin to intercede, give thanks to God, serve those people with great compassion and do not complain. Wait for the timing of the Lord. He will tell you what to say and when to say it.

Pray fervently and effectively and trust God. "**God's kindness leads toward repentance.**" **Ro. 2:4 AΩ**



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