

A HEART FULL OF IDOLS

(Daniel 2)

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(All bracketed [] words inserted into the following scriptures are the author's paraphrase.)

I believe that I am seeing more of a fulfillment of prophecy in the things happening to this movement of people than I've really ever seen before. I'm seeing scriptures fulfilled and it just shows me we are getting very, very close to the end of the earth. It just seems like the road is getting narrower and the truth is getting higher, and more and more people are finding it difficult to hang on. In thinking that through, several months ago the Lord gave us a study in Ezekiel, Chapter 20, showing how God would lead us out of "Egypt." He brings us out of *the world*, and because of our idols, He can't take us directly into the Promised Land. There is a "wilderness experience" that we have as Christians, before He actually leads us into the Promised Land of abiding in Jesus Christ – I guess it is that thought that I want to project to you. I want to put on the board a kind of a chain – chain together the events that happen to Christians as they are headed for the Promised Land.

When I give this study, there are certain people in mind – I see their struggles and I can feel for you. I realize that things are not easy, but I think that this study will answer some of the questions that we have, as far as what is happening. I know of people who are even struggling with abiding in Christ – and I know that we understand that principle, but actually to do it and to practice it is something else. I guess that's really what this study is about, just to kind of look at what has happened and see it in the scriptures – and understand what God is doing with us in our own hearts.

If I were to make a chain to list the chain of events that happen to Christians now – people who believe in God – they believe they want religion in their lives, and the effort is made to come out of Egypt. I know from my own experience and from those around me that the first way we live in coming to know God, is that we begin to walk by faith. I want to put this word on the board, **FAITH** – but I would like to make the claim that it isn't *Jesus' faith* that you begin to live by, but *your own*. We begin to walk according to our own understanding, and that is what is meant in Ezekiel 20 – that you have so many idols that God cannot bring you directly into this land flowing with milk and honey. You are walking by faith all right, but it's *your own faith*.

In the very beginning, we don't really understand to abide in Christ moment by moment by moment. We've been told the words – that we should let Christ lead us; we're disciples of Christ, and so on – but you're still walking according to your own faith. If you weren't, if people didn't do that, you wouldn't have numerous denominations. That's what each denomination stands for. It's an icon representing the faith of those people sitting in that building

– that is *what they think the Bible is teaching*. It's funny isn't it, that as you walk through your Christian experience, God is leading His children *out* of the denominations, away from that way of thinking because there isn't a single denomination walking in *the faith of Christ* – and if we're going to come to that point, we've got to separate from them; come out from among them.

So on the board I have written the word "Faith," and it represents *our faith*. The next step, if you're

walking according to your own faith – the next thing that you experience is “strength.” But whose strength is it? ***It's your own strength.*** You begin to overcome *your* definition of sin, or as you perceive what God is saying in the Bible, you will read do's and don'ts – and you will begin to keep those things *in your own strength.* Whether it's peer pressure causing it, or your own convictions, things are done in your own strength. And yes, we can get on our knees and pray and ask God to deliver us and so on, but ***until you're walking in the Faith of Christ, experiencing HIS LIFE, then it's simply your own faith and your own strength that is happening to you.***

The next step that we come to in this wilderness experience of trying to find the Promised Land, hoping that God will lead us there – and He *is* leading, don't get me wrong; I see the Lord is leading and meeting us where we are. But nevertheless, you're still walking with idols. *Your faith* leads to *your strength* in doing what *you* believe God would have you to do – and the next thing that you enter into, after maybe even years of that, is “suffering.” I want to put this on the board: *Faith, Strength* and then *Suffering* – suffering that is caused by your own failures, when you cannot live up to the truth as you understand it – and you begin to experience what Paul has written in Romans 7: “*the things I want to do I can't; the things I don't want to do, that's what I'm doing,*” and you enter into a suffering, or a facing of your “self,” that you are a sinner. And remember, I'm talking about people who believe in God.

You know, the people of the world will experience something like what we're putting on the board – and it will happen in their lives – God will bring them to a place where they cry out for His help – but right now I'm talking about people who have cried out, and after you believe God is helping you and you come alive in Christ, this is what happens until you learn to *abide* in Jesus Christ. So you enter into your suffering – ***your faith in your strength leads to suffering.*** After the suffering you come to the conclusion of *bondage.* Let me put this next thing on the board – you recognize that you are still are in bondage and you recognize yourself as a sinner, and in bondage to sin. Let me tell you: *It is at this point that many denominations have twisted the scripture to fit their experience* – and they begin to define “*grace*” and “*under the law*” and they begin to teach that you're going to be in sin until Jesus comes, and there can't be any victory. It really does amaze me how many Christians fight the truth of having victory in Christ. It just amazes me that a Christian would argue with you that you can overcome sin – *they try to convince you that you can't.*

But it's when you reach this place of “bondage” that finally, by God's grace, you will be convinced that not only are you in bondage, but you need God's help – I could put bondage *plus* brokenness, if I wanted to. When I first gave this message, instead of “brokenness,” I put being *moldable* (malleable) – you come to that place now where you're open to *the voice of God.* What I'm simply putting down here is what is described in Deuteronomy 8 also, where the Lord says: *I humbled you to bring you to the place where you realize that man does not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God.* That is the point He is trying to bring the Christian to and I think that, in this movement; this is what is happening. We're recognizing that, in the past, we walked by *our own faith, our own strength, entered into suffering, recognized the bondage,* and came to the place where we were in the mindset of recognizing our bondage but open to God – brokenness before God; *being moldable before God.*

Now, I didn't just come up with this chain of events – what I have written on the board is scriptural. I would like to share with you where to find this. Before I do, I want to ask you to turn to Revelation chapter 10. In Revelation 10, this is something that we have read many, many times in the past and I want to go over it again lightly just to make a certain point, something that God has never revealed to

me, it never hit me what He was saying in this book, in this chapter. In Revelation 10 it begins with *another mighty angel coming down from the heavens, clothed with a cloud, and a rainbow is upon his head, his face was as it were the sun, and his feet as pillars of fire*. In the past we have recognized this as the Son of God, as Jesus. In the past scriptures, there has only been one angel or one messenger in a cloud - in Exodus - and we recognize that as the messenger of the Lord, or the Son of God.

In Revelation 10, if you'll notice, *the rainbow is upon his head - that is the everlasting covenant, and he is clothed with a cloud*. The Son of God is clothed with a cloud. And in Job chapters 36 & 37 clouds are defined spiritually as *the people of God*, or someone carrying the water of God, carrying the message. Here the son of God is clothed with a cloud and if a cloud represents a person, for Christ to be clothed in the cloud shows Christ in their heart. In other words, in Revelation chapter 10, you are seeing a movement of people led by God. It isn't just a fluke, it isn't just them doing it, but Christ is leading a group of people. To understand more in depth of Revelation 10, we have past studies on tapes on this where we show what it means -- *his face is like the sun*, and so on. We can prove beyond a doubt that this is Christ – I would rather say it is Christ in His people. Now what people is it? In verse 2:

Revelation 10:2

2 And he had in his hand a little book open: and he set his right foot upon the sea, and *his left foot* on the earth,

Now the little book, in so far as I have always understood this, represents the book of Daniel. Why would I say Daniel? I want to turn to Daniel chapter 12, and in Daniel 12, Daniel is told in verse 9:

Daniel 12:9

9 And he said, Go thy way, Daniel: for the words *are* closed up and sealed till the time of the end.

That the words of the book that he is given here, his prophecies are not going to be understood until the time of the end -- and in verse 4 of Daniel 12:

Daniel 12:4

4 But thou, O Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book, *even* to the time of the end: ...

In Revelation 10, that is a picture of Christ in a movement of people carrying the book and the book is opened. In other words, they began to have an understanding of the prophecies in Daniel. I can look back in church history and I can see who that was. I can see in the 1800's a group of people who were understanding the book of Daniel and coming to some conclusions about the prophecies in that book. This is just simple church history. But if you'll notice in Revelation 10:2, the feet are on the earth and sea. That shows me a literalism. That shows me that when I go back and read the people who were given these prophecies and coming to an understanding, that they had one foot on the earth and one foot on the sea according to the scriptures. This movement of people was led by God for sure, but they were reading these things in a literal way -- and as we read Revelation, chapter 10, let's just keep reading this, verse 3:

Revelation 10:3

3 And cried with a loud voice, as *when* a lion roareth [roars]: and when he had cried, seven thunders uttered their voices.

Now, the only sound a cloud makes is thunder – that's it – showing the cloud or the people, this movement responding to what God was teaching them. But notice what this says.

Revelation 10:4

4 And when the seven thunders had uttered their voices [and *seven* is just *spiritual perfection*, not “literal,” but “spiritual”], I was about to write: and I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Seal up those things which the seven thunders uttered, and write them not [don’t write them].

John was not permitted to put *that* in the scriptures, in his prophecy of revelation. He wasn't going to allow John to write the literal meaning of those things. But look at what he says – verse 5:

Revelation 10:5

5 And the angel which I saw stand upon the sea and upon the earth lifted up his hand to heaven,

Now stop a minute. What is in his hand? It's the book. He has the little book in his hand and he lifts his hand to heaven. Now somehow I think the Lord is telling us that the hand with the book was lifted up into the heavens. Another way of saying it is: the Savior, in opening the book, lifts it up for a heavenly understanding, a spiritual understanding, you see? Verse 5:.

Revelation 10:5

5 And the angel which I saw stand upon the sea and upon the earth lifted up his hand to heaven [the heavens],

Now it doesn't say: “he lifted up the book,” it says: “he lifted up his hand.” But if you back up a few verses, the book is in his hand – and he lifts it up to the heavens, and we know the story from here on out. When he spiritualizes this book, or lifts it up to the heavens, gives it a spiritual meaning, an heavenly understanding, John is told to go take the book, now, from him, eat it. It's going to make your belly bitter, but in your mouth, it will be sweet as honey. And he is told to take the little book now, it has been lifted into the heavens, it has spiritual meaning to it and you have got to prophesy again. You've got to give this prophecy again before many peoples, nations, tongues and kings, *after* it has been lifted up to the heavens. Now what does he mean that *it is going to be sweet in your mouth like honey, but bitter in your belly?* Well, your “belly,” of course, is your *mind*, and your “mouth” is what passes through, going to the belly; it's where the food passes through. It's sweet to your understanding, but when it gets to your belly, and begins to be broken down and assimilated into who you are, it is a bitter thing to have to face. It's sweet to understand it but it is a bitter thing to experience.

Now that in a nutshell is what I think is happening to people with the abiding – that it's a sweet truth, but when you begin to face the abiding message, day by day by day, and you come to your Savior, and you have to die to self, it becomes a bitter experience to you. It's sweet to understand but when it enters into you and begins to be assimilated into your person, it becomes bitter. The point is, the book of Daniel, if we're accurate about how we're interpreting Revelation 10, that book of Daniel should be lifted up to the heavens at the time of the end, understood in a higher way. Now, why say all that. Below is the Christian experience:

Your faith

Your strength

Your suffering

Your bondage

Your bondage coupled with brokenness

I told you that the above was scriptural. I didn't just make that up or put that chain together. Let me ask you the spiritual symbol, the symbol for faith. That symbol for faith, we know, is gold. What about strength? Job 22:25 talks about the strength of silver and I guess all of you by now have figured out where we're going with this -- but we have gold and silver -- suffering is brass. What about bondage? Psalm 107, let me read this for you.

Psalm 107:10

10 Such as sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, *being* bound in affliction and iron;

Bondage is seen in iron – and you can couple that with Psalms 105:18. It states:

Psalm 105:18

18 Whose feet they hurt with fetters: he was laid in iron [his soul came into iron – that's what's in your margin.]:

His soul came into iron. You know, when you see a prisoner being led away – it's iron – they have him chained in iron. Of course, below that we have got bondage and brokenness and that is iron mixed with clay. The reason I have it like this is because clay, if it's without water – is brittle. If it has water it is moldable and shapeable – and I haven't concluded yet how to look at this in Daniel, chapter 2. As we look at the gold, and the silver, the brass, the iron and the iron mixed with clay, as I look at a Christian, he finally has to come to the point where he is in bondage and if I look at him without water, he's brittle, with water he's moldable. Either way, that stone is going to hit him at that point and destroy the idols, the image in his head, and set him free. The stone will become a great mountain. But let's turn back to Daniel 2, and in Daniel chapter 2, where this vision is given, I want you to see something.

Daniel 2:28

28 But there is a God in heaven that revealeth [reveals] secrets, and maketh [makes] known to the king Nebuchadnezzar what shall be [where?] in the latter days. ... [Now notice verse 30]

Daniel 2:30

30 But as for me, this secret is not revealed to me for *any* wisdom that I have more than any living, but for *their* sakes that shall make known the interpretation to the king, and that thou [you] mightest [might] know [look at it again] the thoughts of thy [your] heart.

This man was the king of BABYLON, the king of Babylon. He was ruling over Babylon, hence the gold, the silver, leading to brass, and iron and then finally iron mixed with clay. When you first come to the Lord, I don't care who you are, what denomination you belong to, you still walk by *your* faith. That is how you have learned to live your life and you pick up that Bible and off you go, reading it and coming to some conclusions without ever allowing the Lord Jesus Christ to lead you fully. It is impossible for Him to lead you fully because you still don't understand the principle of "*self death*." And that is what he has got to lead you to. And you are sitting on your own throne, in confusion, not recognizing the confusion you're in. You realize you don't know it all but you still think you know something. You're still living and breathing and the king of Babylon is on his throne and Daniel says, *let me show you the latter days, what is in your heart.*

Now why the latter days? – because this message of abiding in Jesus Christ was given to the first century church. Catholicism took that truth and destroyed it. That was just one of the truths. But Satan did away with the abiding truth. And God has been reforming his church, trying to bring them

out of Catholicism, and I could say, get Catholicism out of them, but bringing them out of Catholicism -- and in the last days remember the remnant church, Revelation 12:17, the last day church keep God's commandments and the testimony of Jesus. Remember Revelation 14:12, *here is the patience of the saints; they keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus*. That's abiding. He is describing the abiding message. When I look back at this movement that brought us the definition of the sanctuary in Daniel 8, and Daniel 9, I can look back and see, yes, they were led of God, but yes, their feet were on the earth. And God has lifted that book into the heavens, and he wants us to see something more than just pointing the finger at the Catholic Church, or Medo-Persia.

There's something more to the scriptures than that. And we've got to face what is in our own hearts, and it hurts! That's what I'm headed for, by God's grace, in this study to help us see the pain that some of us are facing and what is going to have to happen for us to make it. I'll tell you, the road is getting narrower and people are falling off the path, and we knew it was going to happen. I just pray that ... you know, it breaks my heart every time I see it happen. I'll tell you, we need a deeper, more meaningful definition of these things. There is a stone that is going to be cut out without hands. Let's talk about that. We know in Daniel chapter 2 that this is what takes place in verse 35

Daniel 2:35

35 Then was the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver, and the gold, broken to pieces together, and became like the chaff of the summer threshingfloors [That's all of your idols crashing down and being destroyed]; and the wind [or the spirit] carried them away, [so] that no place was found for them: and the stone that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth.

Now he says in verse 34: "*it was a stone cut out without hands, without your own works.*" This stone, in other words, is a gift of God. What is the stone? Well, I'm sure all of us understand that. If you'll look at Isaiah 28:16, this little scripture song that we sing:

Isaiah 28:16

16 Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD, Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, [it is] a tried stone, a precious corner *stone*, ...

Notice who lays it – God does. It comes to you without your own works, cut out without hands. It's the stone of Jesus Christ, a sure foundation.

Isaiah 28:16

16 ... he that believeth [believes] shall not make haste [or run into sin hastily].

Now there's something I want to add to this. If you'll turn over to Matthew 16, Jesus describes and discusses the stone in Matthew 16, when he asks Peter: "*Who do ye say that I, the son of man, am?*" In Matthew 16:16, Peter said: "*you are the Christ.*" What if I re-worded that, what if I translated that – "*you are **the** anointed one, you are the son of the living God.*" Now there is the stone but now look at what Jesus says to him.

Matthew 16:17

17 ... **Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona** [son of Jona]: **for flesh and blood hath** [has] **not revealed it unto thee** [you], **but my Father which is in heaven** [has revealed this unto you].

He just told Peter: "*You understand that I am the anointed one through hearing my Father speak to your conscience. You're abiding.*" That is the gospel that Jesus came to proclaim, the preaching of hearing, the gospel of hearing, the logos of hearing. Now notice what he says in verse 18:

Matthew 16:18

18 ... That thou art [you are] Peter, and upon this rock I will [I'm going to] build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.

Now if you think that because you understand Jesus is the son of God, that Satan doesn't have a chance against you, think again. Because over the years we have been proclaiming that fact – born in eternity, the son of God, and it hasn't set one of you free from sin. What is it that sets you free from sin? – The fact that you recognize Jesus as the anointed one, the son of the living God. You can't leave out the anointed one, because when you face the fact that He is the anointed one, you begin to come into the understanding that He did not overcome sin in and of Himself – His Father through Him – overcame sin. And this is what he states, if you'll look at John 14 with me – in John 14:10:

John 14:10

10 Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? the words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth [that's dwelling] in me, he doeth [he's doing] the works.

Now what did he just say? He says that the works He's doing and the words He is speaking is proof that God is in Him. You see folks, Jesus Christ was a man, He was a human being, in the likeness of sinful flesh. And yes, in his mind, He carried a load more knowledge and information than we have. But that isn't how He overcame sin. He overcame sin by allowing the will and the life of God to flow through Him. And that's what He is saying: “*believe me at least for the works you are seeing. I'm a man just like you are, but I'm not sinning. Can't you see that God is working through me, at least believe I'm the son of God because of the works I'm doing.*” Now look at the next part of this:

John 14:11

11 Believe me that I *am* in the Father, and the Father in me: or else believe me for the very works' sake. {You see?}

12 Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on [believes into] me, the works that I do shall he do also;

Now stop a minute. Matthew 16 He says: “*On this rock I'm building my church and the gates of hell will not prevail against it.*” In John 14, He says: “*Greater works will you do if you believe into the anointed one.*” You see, that principle, that He is “the anointed one,” the Son of God, **that** is the rock God is building His church on. You can believe Jesus was born in eternity and never overcome sin in your life. But when you understand He is the anointed one, bringing the life of God and you understand to open your heart and let that life flow through you, the gates of hell, the fortresses, the strongholds that Satan has on you, cannot prevail against that man as He brings God into your very being. You see, it isn't simply the fact He's the son of God. It's the fact He's anointed with the mind of the living God. It is the mind of God that brings divinity into Jesus the man, and ultimately into the remnant church, giving you divine nature.

Again, it isn't simply: “He was born in eternity and the trinity isn't true--now that I know that I'm going to heaven.” Wrong – you understand He's the anointed one, that you have the mind of Christ who has the mind of God, friend, you're not going to heaven, you're there. You're in heaven, if you can be in that place. Now He says in Matthew 16: “*The gates of hell will not prevail against it.*” In verse 19:

Matthew 16:19

19 **And I will give unto thee [you] the keys of the kingdom of heaven:...**

You see? That's what you get in abiding. You can couple that with 1 John chapter 2 where he states: *"You know all things, you have an anointing and you know all things. You have no need that any man teach you anymore how to live. Jesus Christ is going to teach you. This anointing you've received"* -- He gives you the keys to the kingdom of heaven and whatever is bound on earth is bound in heaven. Whatever is destroyed on earth is destroyed in the heavens. You see, you are walking in a committed life, with Jesus Christ guiding you moment by moment. Pray without ceasing. Live in this abiding place and let him live through you and the gates of hell that have overcome you, all of your life, will stop. They cannot prevail against Jesus Christ as He brings God to you.

Now back to Daniel 2 and that is the stone cut out without hands that smites that image in your heart. In the latter days it will smite that image when you come to the point of recognizing your bondage coupled with the clay (whether you look at it as brittle or having some water where it can be shaped). The point is, when you reach that point, you are no longer walking in your own faith and strength, you've passed through the suffering of recognizing your sin and struggling to overcome, and finally coming to the place of the iron. *I am in bondage* – and you are now standing before God in bondage willing to be broken and He will send the stone cut out of the mountain without hands to smite those idols and destroy them. That stone will become a great mountain – a mountain is a kingdom. It will become a great kingdom in you, and you are now in the kingdom of the Son of God.

Now I thought that was interesting to see how the Lord had brought that out, but I thought, well, this is happening to Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon. Let's go back and read about the king of Babylon. Next chapter, in Daniel chapter 3, and by the way, remember that we can look at this book spiritually, because Jesus has lifted it up to the heavens. You know, I was lying in bed one night, I think it was around midnight when I got up, and when the Lord hit me with this understanding of Revelation 10, and I had to get up and go read Daniel right then, and put it in the heavens, in a higher way. Right off the bat, in chapter one you see where Daniel refuses the king's meat and wine – he refuses the understanding of the king of Babylon. That's the first lesson we need to learn, isn't it? Not to follow self, recognize – you know, you're in confusion. You don't just give your heart to Jesus Christ, and bang, you understand everything in the Bible. You've got a lot of baggage you're carrying and you don't want to eat that meat and drink that wine, you see. That's the first lesson he tells you in Daniel chapter 1. Daniel 2, he lays out the whole system of events that takes place in a believer and what is going to have to happen before He can move in their life to set them free from sin. Well, in Daniel chapter 3, we have the story of Nebuchadnezzar building a golden image. And you know, he told people to bow to his golden image. Gold is a symbol of faith – bow to my understanding.

Is that not what we do when we first come to the Lord? I know good and well that's what I did. That as I read the scriptures, I couldn't understand why other people didn't see it the way I did. And if they didn't bow or submit to my understanding of that, I threw them into a furnace of fire. Now, in past studies we have seen that fire is a *consuming spirit*. If it is the spirit of God, it consumes sin in your life. But if it is coming out of a human being like us, it consumes other people. It's a fire out of our mouths to consume – and this is what you see in Nebuchadnezzar. He had the image of gold, walking in his own understanding, walking in his own faith, and he consumed those who would not bow to his golden image. And like I say, there isn't a single Christian I know of that isn't in that place, that hasn't been in that place at least one time in their life. *"This is what the Bible says, that's the way I see it, and if you don't bow, I'll separate."* You see what I mean? That's how you wind up in a denomination to begin with. I'm not saying that there's anything wrong with that, it's just what happens to us. And God

has got to lead us through that and lead us out of it, but thank God that those people that we consume in the fire, the Lord Jesus Christ can still stand with them and save them through the fires that we set. That's what happens in Daniel 3.

But let's go to Daniel 4. Daniel Chapter 4 is extremely revealing – and I'm hoping that you have read this and you're familiar with what is in these chapters. Nebuchadnezzar has another dream, and I guess we need to take the time to read this and I pray as we read this, you get into the heavens with it. In Daniel 4, I want to start reading at verse 10.

Daniel 4:10

10 Thus *were* the visions of mine [my] head in my bed [while I was sleeping]; I saw, and behold a tree in the midst of the earth, and the height thereof [of it] *was* great.

11 The tree grew, and was strong, and the height thereof [of it] reached unto heaven, and the sight thereof [of it] to the end of all the earth:

12 The leaves thereof *were* fair, and the fruit thereof much, and in it *was* meat for all: the beasts of the field had shadow under it, and the fowls of the heaven dwelt in the boughs thereof, and all flesh was fed of it.

You could say that is a description of how Nebuchadnezzar saw himself. And spiritually speaking, remember we're trying to read this from the heavens – and that is how Nebuchadnezzar saw himself – and this has to be spiritual, he's talking about the birds of the heaven lodging in this tree, you see.

Daniel 4:13-15

13 I saw in the visions of my head upon my bed, and, behold, a watcher and an holy one came down from heaven;

14 He cried aloud, and said thus, Hew down the tree, and cut off his branches, shake off his leaves, and scatter his fruit: let the beasts get away from under it, and the fowls from his branches:

15 Nevertheless leave the stump of his roots in the earth, even with a band of [what?] iron and brass, ...

Now here we see, what I believe the Lord is trying to accomplish in each one of us. Before I get into any more explanation, let's go over to a different part of this chapter, let's read the interpretation starting at verse 24:

Daniel 4:24-25

24 This *is* the interpretation, O king, and this *is* the decree of the most High, which is come upon my lord the king:

Notice the decree of the most high. This is God's decree for the person walking in his own faith, walking in the gold, in his own strength, walking in the gold and the silver. Just those two words, gold and silver tell you of treasure. You've got your own treasures, you're the rich man. That's the definition of a rich man; he'll never enter into the kingdom of God like that. God has got to do something to you to bring you into the abiding truth.

Daniel 4:25

25 That they shall drive thee [you] from men, and thy [your] dwelling shall be with the beasts of the field, and they shall make thee [you] to eat grass as oxen, and they shall wet thee [you] with the dew of heaven, and seven times shall pass over thee [you], till thou [you] know [this truth –] that the most

High ruleth [rules] in the kingdom of men, and giveth [He will give] it to whomsoever he will.

Remember Luke 17:21: “*the kingdom of God is within you.*” Listen to me; if the kingdom of God isn't in you, your own kingdom is in you until you allow His kingdom to take the place of your own. Until He dethrones you, you see, he's talking about an inward thing. In verse 26

Daniel 4:26

26 And whereas they commanded to leave the stump of the tree roots; thy [your] kingdom shall be sure unto thee [you], after that thou shalt have known [after you know the truth] that the heavens do rule.

Your kingdom will be sure to you when you understand this truth: the heavens rule. You don't do it in your own strength. You don't read the Bible, move out in your own strength to implement everything you think the Bible says. When you do, you're going to enter into suffering, and recognize the bondage that is in your life. The king of Babylon, this is what he faced. I want you to see what happens to him – verse 27, let's not leave this out.

Daniel 4:27

27 Wherefore, O king, let my counsel be acceptable unto thee, and break off thy [your] sins by righteousness, and thine [your] iniquities by shewing [showing] mercy to the poor; if it may be a lengthening of thy [your] tranquillity.

28 All this came upon the king Nebuchadnezzar.

29 At the end of twelve months he walked in the palace of the kingdom of Babylon [still walking in confusion].

30 The king spake, and said, Is not this great Babylon, that I have built for the house of the kingdom by the might of my power ...

Right there friend, is gold and silver. And what did God do? He cut down that tree, he cut down that man, he cut down that character trait that he was eating from. God cut it down, the tree falls and around the stump (by the way, which is still left in the earth) – the stump is still in the earth, God puts a band of brass and a band of iron. Right here in Daniel chapters 3 and 4, we see the fulfillment of what God told him in Daniel chapter 2. God is trying to paint a picture for us to help us see the folly of walking in this wilderness and not coming to the promised land and trusting Him that He can lead us on into the promised land, and overcome all the nations that are greater and mightier than us. It is this cutting down of the tree that I want to talk about in this study. Everything that I've said is to bring us to this point. It is the cutting down of that tree – that is where we face humility. **A PROUD PERSON CANNOT HEAR GOD** – and God has got to cut that tree down, surround it with suffering in iron and bondage to wake us up. If you could come to the end of chapter 4, and let's read verse 34:

Daniel 4:34

34 And at the end of the days I Nebuchadnezzar lifted up mine [my] eyes unto heaven [the eyes are *your understanding*-- I lifted my understanding heavenly], and mine [my] understanding returned unto me, and I blessed the most High, and I praised and honoured him that liveth [lives] for ever, whose dominion *is* an everlasting dominion, and his kingdom *is* from generation to generation:

Remember, Jesus brings you everlasting dominion in your life, not just simply like our own, that we overcame sin, and you still struggle with it. No, He will take it away when you allow the mind of Christ to move in you to do that. Verse 35:

Daniel 4:35

35 And all the inhabitants of the earth *are* reputed as nothing: and he doeth [does] according to his will [notice this] in the army of heaven, and *among* the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?

Now what does he mean by that? He doesn't mean that you are moved around like a puppet and that you have no choice in what you do. But through the circumstances, God will achieve His purpose. I want to read this quote before I go on in Daniel, just to highlight this point--that God had a knowledge of the events of the future, even before the creation of the world. "He did not make his purposes to fit circumstances, but he allowed matters to develop and work out. He did not work to bring about a certain condition of things, but He knew that such a condition would exist." That is how I see this scripture in Daniel 4 – that God will do according to His will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth. He doesn't move you like a puppet, but He does create things and have things happen to move you in a certain place, so that you can see yourself, and make the decision. Verse 36:

Daniel 4:36

36 At the same time my reason returned unto me; and for the glory of my kingdom, mine [my] honour and brightness returned unto me; and my counsellors and my lords sought unto me; and I was established in my kingdom, and excellent majesty was added unto me.

37 Now I Nebuchadnezzar praise and extol and honour the King of heaven, all whose works *are* truth, and his ways judgment: and those that walk in pride he is able to abase.

Like it or not, a Christian living according to his own faith and strength is living in pride. And it is pride that brings the suffering, it is pride that has chained you and you are chained in sin. And God is able to break that. But what does He have to do first? He has to chop down the tree first. So with this I want to turn to Habakkuk and in Habakkuk, I want to read starting in Chapter 1, verse 1:

Habakkuk 1:1

1 The burden which Habakkuk the prophet did see.

2 O LORD, how long shall I cry, and thou wilt [you will] not hear! *even* cry out unto thee *of* violence, and thou wilt not save!

3 Why dost thou shew [do you show] me iniquity, and cause *me* to behold grievance? for spoiling and violence *are* before me: and there are *that* raise up strife and contention.

4 Therefore the law is slacked, ...

Strife and contention only comes through pride – Proverbs 13 tells us that. He is dealing with a people that are prideful – and notice again what he says in verse 4:

Habakkuk 1:4

4 Therefore the law is slacked, ...

Do you know what slacked means? The Strong's number is [6313] and that word means *lacking vital warmth*. The law is lacking vital warmth. Why? Because we're taking it off of a cold stone instead of from a living Savior. The law is lacking vital warmth ...

Habakkuk 1:4

4 ... and judgment [or the ways of God, or that which is right] doth [does] never go forth [from that] : for [because] the wicked doth compass about the righteous; therefore wrong judgment proceedeth

[proceeds]. [Now here is God's answer to Habakkuk's prayer.]

5 Behold ye among the heathen, and regard, and wonder marvellously: for *I* will work a work in your days, *which* ye [you] will not believe, though it be told *you*.

Habakkuk 1:6

6 For, lo, I raise up the Chaldeans [I'm going to raise up the Chaldeans],...

Remember we just read from Daniel about the king of Babylon, the king of the Chaldeans and what is taking in that person. Therefore we know what's happening in these people. Notice what he calls them in verse 6:

Habakkuk 1:6

6 ... bitter and hasty nation, which shall [they will] march through the breadth of the land, to possess the dwellingplaces *that are* not theirs.

Who bought you? The Lord Jesus Christ bought you, He possesses you. If you come to Him, He should possess you. To march through the land is *self examination*. But a Chaldean marches through the land to possess it himself. Now let's go to verse 7:

Habakkuk 1:7

7 They *are* terrible and dreadful: their judgment and their dignity shall proceed of themselves.

Now that says a lot doesn't it? But let's look back at the word "dignity." This is what I want to key on for just a moment. This word "dignity," the number is [7613] -- Genesis 4:7 is the first place it's used and I want to turn back over there -- Genesis 4:7. This is where Cain is told: "*If you do well, shall you not be accepted.*" That word "accepted" is the word. But a more literal rendering would be: "If you do well, exaltation." You see, that word "accepted," and this word over in Habakkuk -- "dignity" means "a lifting up," it means "to be exalted." And he says in Habakkuk 1:7 that they're terrible and dreadful, their judgment (or that which is right) and their dignity (their exaltation) comes from themselves. It doesn't come from God. Let's take this word [7613], go to Leviticus chapter 13 and I want you to see something there. In Leviticus chapter 13, I want to start reading at verse 1:

Leviticus 13:1

1 And the LORD spake unto Moses and Aaron, saying,

2 When a man shall have in the skin of his flesh a rising [that word *rising* is [7613] -- a rising in the flesh], ...

Now listen to me. Romans 7:14 says that this law is spiritual, and I know that there is literal meaning here. But life comes in the spiritual application of it. And in this scripture, he is dealing with a disease called leprosy. And when you have a rising up in the skin of your flesh, an exaltation, he says, a scab. Well I looked up the word "scab," it's [5597]. You won't believe these definitions, the root of this is seen in 1 Samuel 2:36 -- and in 1 Samuel -- let me turn over there because I want to read this to you, I want to be as accurate as I can. Here's what the verse says:

1 Samuel 2:36

36 And it shall come to pass, *that* every one that is left in thine [your] house shall come *and* crouch to him for a piece of silver and a morsel of bread, and shall say, Put me, I pray thee, into one of the priests' offices, ...

That word "put me" is the root of the word "scab" and it means *to pour out* or *to anoint*. This word "scab" is "that which has been poured out." It is that which has come out of you. You see, if there be a rising up in the skin of your flesh or a pouring forth out of it, out of your flesh, a pouring forth comes out. What about the next word?

Leviticus 13:2

2 ... or bright spot, ...

That word, the number for it is [934] the root of it is found in Job 37:21, and in Job 37:21 it's the word "bright."

Job 37:21

21 And now *men* see not the bright light ...

You see it is a brightness. What if I just said, *in your flesh if you think you see something good* -- if there is an exaltation, a pouring out of your flesh, something bright, something that you think is good, you see? Do you see what he's saying there? It's amazing how the Lord wrote this book and the earthly person can see one thing and that's fine. But on the other hand, there is a heavenly wisdom that He has hidden in this, the hidden wisdom of Jesus Christ. Praise God for that. But let's look at this in Leviticus 13:2.

Leviticus 13:2

2 When a man shall have in the skin of his flesh [what if I just said an outward manifestation] a rising, a scab, or bright spot [a self-exaltation, a pouring forth of himself, a bright thing, a bright spot], and it be in the skin of his flesh *like* the plague of leprosy; then he shall be brought unto Aaron the priest [and Aaron is going to look at this thing], or unto one of his sons the priests:

3 And the priest shall look on the plague in the skin of the flesh [the high priest will look at this on the plague in the skin of the flesh]: and *when* the hair in the plague is turned white, and the plague in sight *be* deeper than the skin of his flesh, it *is* a plague of leprosy [it's leprosy]: ...

That word "deeper" is a metaphor for "your thoughts", Proverbs 18:4 and Proverbs 20:5. When that leprosy is something deeper, it's actually in you, a part of you, that Aaron discerns that, when your high priest can discern that (Jesus Christ-Aaron was a picture of the risen Saviour) he will declare that to be leprosy. How were lepers cleansed? Well, first of all, the first leper that comes to my mind is Naaman, and what happened to Naaman? That's in 2 Kings Chapter 5 – we all know the story. He was told to go dip in the Jordan River seven times to be cleansed of leprosy. What is the Jordan River? -- dying to self. Why seven times? – spiritual perfection. Before what? -- Before he's cured of self, of leprosy. There are a couple of other points, too. I want you to look in your Bibles with me at Matthew chapter 8 verse 1:

Matthew 8:1

1 When he was come down from the mountain, great multitudes followed him.

2 And, behold, there came a leper and worshipped him, saying, Lord, if thou wilt [you will], thou canst make me clean [you can cleanse me].

3 And Jesus put forth *his* hand [His works], and touched him [with His works], saying [and said], **I will; be thou clean.** And immediately his leprosy was cleansed.

Do you see the picture there? Jesus Christ placing His hand on you and healing you of self? Do you

see that? Let's look at another in Luke 17, let me turn over there, Luke chapter 17, and this is the story of the ten lepers -- let's start reading at verse 11:

Luke 17:11

11 And it came to pass, as he went to Jerusalem, that he passed through the midst of Samaria and Galilee.

12 And as he entered into a certain village, there met him ten men that were lepers, which stood afar off:

13 And they lifted up *their* voices, and said, Jesus, Master, have mercy on us.

14 And when he saw *them*, he said unto them, **Go shew yourselves unto the priests.** And it came to pass, as they went, they were cleansed. Now hold it – instead of saying "as they went", what if I said, "as they obeyed the spoken word"? Isn't that what happened? Didn't He speak and give a command and as they obeyed what He said, they were cleansed of leprosy. That's dying to self – that is doing what God leads you to do.

Now it is obvious from the scriptures that the Chaldeans in Habakkuk chapter 1, have leprosy – and when it says: *Their judgment and dignity proceeds from themselves* – they are carrying leprosy. They are still living according to their own faith and their own strength, and they have leprosy – and anyone living that way is in confusion. You might have come out of the denomination, but I'm telling you that confusion is still a part of your make up, until something takes place. God in his mercy will cut down the tree – and He'll put a ring of brass and a ring of iron around that tree – and allow you to endure suffering for a purpose. This is what I've been wanting to get to.

I'd like to ask you to turn to 1 Peter – and in 1 Peter, I want to talk about suffering. This book is wonderful when it comes to suffering and the attitude that we should have in suffering, I think, is precious in this book. Now a scripture in 1 Peter, chapter 4, that all of us are very familiar with, let's read this in verse 12:

1 Peter 4:12

12 Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you:

13 But rejoice, inasmuch as ye [you] are partakers of Christ's sufferings; [so] that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye [you] may be glad also with exceeding joy.

Now what is he talking about when he talks about the sufferings of Christ? Well I want you to back up in 1 Peter chapter 2 and look at verse 19. He's talking about servants, but we've all been servants to sin, and actually that is what brings on the cutting down of the tree. There has got to be an humbling of God's people, that is what I am seeing happen to people around the country – and some people are not facing it and allowing themselves to be humbled. Let's just read this. Verse 19:

1 Peter 2:19

19 For this *is* thankworthy [That word "*thankworthy*" is [5485] and it's the same word "*grace*" translated throughout the scriptures. For this is grace, *This is thankworthy*, King James put – I'm saying: *This is grace,...*], if a man for conscience toward God endure grief, suffering wrongfully.

20 For what glory *is it*, if, when ye [you] be buffeted for your faults, ye shall [you] take it patiently? but if, when ye [you] do well, and [you] suffer *for it*, ye [you] take it patiently, this *is* acceptable with God

[this is grace in the presence of God. King James put: *acceptable with God*. This is [5485] “*grace*” in the presence of God.]. [Notice this next verse.]

21 For even hereunto were ye [you] called [to suffer wrongfully]: [Why?] because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps:

22 Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth:

23 Who, when he was reviled, [He] reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but [He] committed *himself* to him that judgeth [judges] righteously:

We have been called to suffer as Christ suffered, wrongfully. Notice this – the Lord Jesus Christ suffered wrongfully. You have been called to enter into the sufferings of Christ. Now how can I apply this? Listen, the tree must be cut down. There has got to be humility before God so that you can hear God and enter into the abiding, so that *that* rock without hands can enter into you and become a great mountain. But notice, the Lord Jesus Christ suffered wrongfully. What did Jesus do when he was accused wrongfully? Well, He opened not His mouth. What about when they reviled Him? Well, He didn't revile back – and we're called to walk in His steps. When the Lord brings you into a place in your life where someone accuses you, where someone abuses you, where someone comes against you in a way that is absolutely demonic, and you recognize that you are not at fault, how should you handle that? Well, according to the scriptures, this is your chance for the tree to come down. This is your chance to recognize that in and of yourself there is no good thing – there is nothing there that's good – and even if you are accused, you take it patiently. You don't rise up, you don't let self rise up, but you die to self – and it's a wonderful opportunity that God is giving you to overcome self and die to self as Jesus did. Let me read this again.

1 Peter 2:20

20 For what glory *is it*, if, when ye [you] be buffeted for your faults, ye shall take it [you take that] patiently? ...

Well stop. Some of us won't even do that! Even when we are in error we refuse to see it. But he asks the question: What's in that? You're supposed to do that. But he says: “*What glory is it, if, when you be buffeted for your faults, you take it patiently? But if when you do well and suffer for it, you take it patiently, this is grace in the presence of God.*” This is what grace is. This is what God is looking for in you. He might put you in a situation – might nothing – He is going to; He's going to do it with every one of us. We are called to this, to face ourselves, to face what we've done – and to let a person accuse you, and even if they're wrong, even if they're absolutely wrong in what they say to you, if you rise up against it, that is not Christ – and you're still living in your own strength. God has brought you to the Jordan, and He wants you to dip and kill that leprosy and that is your chance to do so. That is your chance to keep your mouth shut and to take an attitude--you can say in your heart: *You know, I don't think that that's true--but I'm not going to justify myself. I'm not going to be angry and come at this person, jump on them with both feet, and defend myself. I'm going to die and take it and I'm going to trust that God will bring that person into line, that God will show them that they have made a mistake.* When He was reviled, He reviled not again – when that man was accused, He didn't jump in the middle of everything and defend Himself and what He had done. But the man left it up to God.

My point is this: The tree has to come down – self has got to die – and every time we enter into conflict with a brother or sister in Christ, that is our opportunity to dip again in the Jordan and to find that death and to keep our mouths shut and to walk in unity as much as we can. But when we come against that person, and you carry that bitterness, you have fallen off of the path and this study is a

warning to every one of us. If you can't look at your past and recognize that you are in sin, you have been in sin, you have been doing what you're *self* guided you and told you to do, you're never going to hear the Saviour when He speaks to you to come home. You're never going to have the kingdom of God become a great mountain in you, because *a proud person cannot hear God* – and it is a blessing that He would humble you, that He would take the time to humble you in the first place.

There are people in this world who I have offended but who have offended me. There are people in this world who have accused me of some of the most ungodly things, and some of these things were true. But some of them weren't true. And it's my time to dip in the Jordan and to be dead to self and leave them alone and not come back at them swinging, but leave them up to God, because God has got to humble them too. You know, when a person persecutes you, they are walking in the gold and silver. That's who persecutes, that person walking in his own faith and in his own strength. I've had my dip in the Jordan, and I'm being dipped all the time. There has got to be seven dips, spiritually perfect, before I die to self – and the Lord is showing me daily. But by God's grace this whole movement of people that we have that has come through the fire of these denominations and we have come out into an understanding of the Son of God, and now the abiding message. It's one thing to understand the principle of abiding. It's another to let it happen in your life. If you are proud and carrying your own ideas, walking in your own strength, it's never going to happen. You've got to find death.

Let me say it again. Whether the accusation or whatever has happened to you is accurate or inaccurate, whatever someone has said, whatever someone has done to you, it doesn't matter. The question is: How are you going to handle it? Can you enter into grace and leave it up to God to deal with that person? Can you forgive that person and not walk in bitterness? Listen, you've got to come to that place, because if you don't, you're not crossing the Jordan – you've had a taste of the fruit, but you're saying the enemy is too big, I can't deal with it. But you have been called to suffer wrongfully, just like Jesus had to suffer wrongfully. It was that dying to self, now listen, listen to what this man did. *He died to self even to the point of giving his last breath for us.* He died to the point of death, He died to self to the point of death, trusting that God would deal with it – and God most certainly dealt with it. He raised him from the dead, He gave that man a name above every name and every knee will bow and confess that man is Lord. Hallelujah! Can you do that? Can you face death to self, even though you're wrongfully accused?

Listen, you're not any more wrongfully accused than Jesus was – and it is His mind that's in you. Can you get rid of the bitterness? Can you face yourself? Can you see the sin in your life? Can you confess that it's sin? If you can't, you're off the path. If you can, you're still going forward. Remember, we're single file, each one of us facing individually what God has for us. We're single file – the path is getting even more narrow as we go. But I'll tell you what, we're getting closer and closer to that day when the Lord Jesus Christ will literally be seen. Hallelujah for that day! I praise God for that hope. Now I want to close this study looking at 1 Peter chapter 4. Let's go back to this scripture in verse 12.

1 Peter 4:12-19

12 Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing[s] happened unto you:

13 But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; [so] that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye [you] may be glad also with exceeding joy.

14 If ye [you] be reproached for the name of Christ, happy *are ye* [you]; for the spirit of glory and of

God resteth [is resting] upon you: on their part he is evil spoken of, but on your part he is glorified.

15 But let none of you suffer as a murderer, or *as* a thief, or *as* an evildoer, or as a busybody in other men's matters.

16 Yet if *any man suffer* as a Christian, let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify God on this behalf.

17 For the time *is come* that judgment must begin at the house of God: and if *it* first *begin* at us, what shall the end *be* of them that obey not the gospel of God?

18 And if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?

19 Wherefore let them that suffer according to the will of God commit the keeping of their souls *to him* in well doing, as unto a faithful Creator.

Why "*as unto a faithful Creator*"? Because dear brother and sister, it is that suffering, even though it might be wrong in your eyes, it is that suffering He is using to re-create you, and without it, you're not going to make it. If you harbor bitterness, you've lost. If you can't die to self, you've lost. Put it away – go forward in Christ. I want to have a prayer.

Most gracious Heavenly Father, in Jesus name we come to thee. We pray to receive thy spirit, to go forward in Jesus Christ, to make the changes that are necessary, to overcome and be victorious, and to glorify thee. We pray Father, not to be led into any darkness, but to be walking in the light as Jesus is in the light, that He would lead us, that our hearts would be open, that we would not be deceived – again that You would be glorified in the age of the ages. May the fruit of the spirit be seen in our lives. May we be filled with the very life of God. In Jesus' name, Amen.