

A Stump of Hope

I. Slide1 **Announce:**

- A. Slide1b,2 VBS at CM & International: Michelle.
- B. Slide2b Sanctuary: **Pews**, last week gone in 1 hour. **Chairs**, we're going to try a few configurations. **Stage** to be redone in the future (black out). **Paint**, Greige & 2 tone on back wall.
- C. Slide3 Married Couples Retreat: Sign ups start today. Sept.11-13. It will sell out.
- D. Slide4,5 Family Camp Video: For more info/details/or to sign up, see the *Trailblazing Team* in the info booth after service. *They'll be the ones with the cowboy attire.*
- E. Wed night dinner: Meatball subs/salad *to purchase* b4 service.
- F. Israel Informational Mtg: Next Sun 14th after 3rd in New Rm.
- G. Slide6, 7-10 Haiti Trip Pics: HEF

II. Slide11 **Intro: A Stump of Hope**

- A. Dream #2 accomplished 3 things: It warned Neb of Pride. It exposed the incompetent magicians. It gave Daniel another opportunity to Glorify God.
- B. Here is what God was trying to tell Neb through Daniel Prov.16:18 **Pride goes before destruction, and haughtiness before a fall.**
 - 1. The **Talmud** (collection of ancient Rabbinic writings) reads, *Absalom was vain about his hair, therefore was he hanged by his hair.*
 - 2. Another from the **Talmud**, *If ever a man becomes proud, let him remember that a mosquito preceded him in the divine order of creation.*
 - a) *"Every now and then you meet a man who enjoys the reputation of being the most remarkable person he knows."*

III. Slide12 **NEB'S TREE DREAM (1-18)**

- A. (1-3) I believe we have a true conversion here recorded by a once very diabolical king.
 - 1. Neb is writing...It all began 8 years ago.
- B. (4) Interesting this all takes place at rest, or while flourishing.
- C. (6,7) Just like before none of them could answer it.
- D. Slide13a (15) Ah, A Stump of Hope.
 - 1. A stump means, not wiped out completely.

2. Slide13b Is.42:3 A bruised reed He will not break, And smoking flax He will not quench. or Msg *He won't brush aside the bruised and the hurt and he won't disregard the small and insignificant.*
 3. There were *other times* we hear of *not* even a stump left. Mark 11:20 **Now in the morning...they saw the fig tree dried up from the roots.**
 4. Have you had **your** tree trimmed lately? What is pruning for? (growth)
 - a) Maybe you've been cut down to the stump? *Look up Stumpy!* Praise Him, for not *completely* taking you out.
- E. (18) Neb had assurance that Daniel could interpret the dream.

IV. Slide14 DANIEL, THE ONLY INTERPRETER (19-27)

- A. (19b) The king braced himself.
- B. (19c) *Ist I wish this wasn't true.* Daniel had the feeling *a doctor has*, when he has to give his patient the bad news of a terminal disease.
 1. It is not easy to give a message like this *but* Prov.16:7 says, **When a man's ways please the LORD, He makes even his enemies to be at peace with him.**
- C. Slide15 (23) A band of iron & bronze - is *God's merciful boundaries* for your life.
 1. It's God saying, *I'll allow you to be cut down to a stump...but no further.*
 2. *No one will touch you anymore my precious daughter. No one will abuse you anymore my son. Then, I will build you again.*
- D. (25) No matter what **position** we have in life, God gave it to us, & He is sovereign.
- E. (26) Sometimes in His grace God raises them again...**Yet not always.**
- F. (27) **Humble yourself or be cut down.** It's called *dealing with your stuff*.
 1. Basically Neb...**you're** the problem.
- G. Slide16a **Break off your sins** – To break off, to break in pieces, hence to separate, to disjoin, to put at a distance. *Keil & Delitzch*
 1. **Have you broken it clean off? Not leaving even a bit?**
 2. See, you **can't ease off of sin/or ease out of sin.** You must go cold turkey. You have to **turn it off** completely. **Repentance is not just slowing down the speed in which you're traveling.** It's determining to move in totally different direction. **Changing.** Moving down a different path.
 - a) You can **ease into sin** you can **slip into sin but not out of sin** you must...*break off your sins.*

H. By being righteous & by showing mercy to the poor.

1. Slide16b (Msg) *So, king, take my advice: Make a clean break with your sins and start living for others. Quit your wicked life and look after the needs of the down-and-out. Then you will continue to have a good life.*

I. Notice for us, one of the signs of losing the *cultural battle of Babylon* is when a community forgets to take care of/show mercy to the poor. #2 is when we lose track of our own *poverty of spirit* (opp is being proud in spirit).

1. Slide17a Partners Flyer: *Save the Rohingya's. ["Among the worlds least wanted."BBC Humanitarian Crisis. Basic Human Rights. Refugee crisis to Bangladesh & Thailand. Towed out to sea & left for dead. Found caged during Indonesia shrimp boat interims. Mass graves found. Trafficking on boats/left as floating coffins]* our friends at Partners Steve Gumaer & Brad Hazlett are helping.

J. Slide17b Perhaps – Meaning, maybe God would intervene.

1. Note: Daniel approached the king w/tact. He was specific & honest. And, He gave the king hope.

K. In what shape or size does pride come in your life?¹

1. Suppose Daniel was standing before you. What prideful attitudes would God have him point out to you? Stubbornness? Conceit? Having all the answers? Self-centeredness? Hero of your own stories?

V. Slide18 NEB'S "I"-DOLATRY (28-33)

A. James 4:6 *God resists the proud, But gives grace to the humble.* (FYI - and He still does)

B. (29) 12 months - 1 year to repent...*but he didn't.*

1. **Convictions slowly fades away**, as the days turn into weeks, & weeks into months, months into a year.
 - a) God's judgment maybe **slow...but** it is **certain.**
2. Gods **silence** doesn't mean He is **asleep**, his **quietness** doesn't mean He doesn't **care.**
3. Sometimes *like a surgeon* **God has to hurt us to heal us.**
 - a) So He often uses His scalpel of afflictions.

C. Slide19 Walking about his palace – One of *the 7 wonders of the ancient world.*

1. Here he takes in a very deep breath (inhale) of all **HE'S** accomplished.

¹ Swindoll, Daniel, Pg.52

- D. **Slide20a** (30) Neb **stopped** ruling Babylon **and** Babylon **started** ruling Neb.
- 9/10ths of Babylon itself, and 19/20's of all the other ruins are composed of **bricks stamped with Nebuchadnezzar name** on them. He appears to have built or restored almost every city and temple in the whole country. *Easton's Dict*
 - He was admiring Babylon's **colossal walls** and it's beautiful **ceramics**. **It's** he was **Hanging Gardens**, now considered 1 of the 7 wonders the ancient world. **I'm** sure the king pointed to Babylon's 1000 yard **processional**. **It's 53 temples to Ishtar**. **It's 7 story Ziggurat**. **It's 10,000 seat banquet hall**.
Babylon was a reason to boast.
 - Slide20b Pride** made *the boaster a beast*, as once before it made *an angel a devil* Spurg
- E. **2 problems:**
- He thought **he** did it...*Is not this great Babylon, that I have built for a royal dwelling by my mighty power*. **Thus** Neb is suffering from "I"-dolatry.
 - Why** he did it...*for the honor of my (his own) majesty?*
- F. **Slide20c** Christ sends none away empty **but those** who are full of themselves.²
- Anytime you build something, *any size*, for **your** glory, **you have** *The Neb Syndrom*
 - Look** at the **house** I built. **Look** at **my new baby** I brought forth. **Look** at the **company/empire** I have built. **Look** at the **clientele** I have built up. **Look** at the **children** I have raised.
 - Slide20d** *He who sings his own praise is usually off-key.*
- G. (33) The **royal rug** was pulled out from under the **conceited king**.
- Neb was no longer playing with a full deck**. Or as Kelly's grandma once said, *He was a few French Fries short of a happy meal*.
 - Slide20e** This is what **C.S.Lewis** called **Severe Mercy**. It is dealt with by God severely(the disease), **but** with Mercy(stump).
- H. There is a **documented psychological condition** called *ZoANthropy is a form of mental disorder in which the patient imagines himself to be a beast*.³
- Also called *LyCANthropy* [*lukos*/wolf, *anthropos*/man] *Transforming of a man into a wolf or werewolf syndrome*. **Slide21** [werewolf, wolfman, wolverine, Wolf Man Jack]
 - Slide22** **Also**, **BOanthropy** (bovine/ox, *ate grass, put out to pasture*). **CYanthropy** (dog).
 - Eagle's feathers** – Dread locks?

² Donald Gray Barnhouse in Revelation. Leadership, Vol. 1, no. 2.

³ Websters, New Universal Unabridged Dict.

3. **Finger nails** – like claws (Guinness book of records)
 4. He was *the Werewolf of Babylon*. *not London*
 - a) Let's remember, its not about *a mental illness* but about **Divine Discipline**.
- I. Tradition says, that **Daniel** cared for Neb during this time.

VI. Slide23 **NEB PRAISES (34,35)**

- A. **At the end of the time** - Why wait so long, why not after 6 months.
 1. **Ask yourself why you waited so long? How much time did you waste before coming to the Lord, or spend in a backslidden state?**
- B. When he finally felt lower than *a speed bump*...**he lifted his eyes!**
 1. Like my fav story King Manasseh in 2 Chron.33.
 - a) He had to be brought to ground zero, before he'd look up.
 2. Our 1st step to sanity is to **look up**, lift up your eyes to heaven.
 3. Just like **the prodigal** that finally came face to face with a hog, in which he finally **came to himself, I will rise & go to my father**.

VII. Slide24 **NEB RESTORED (36,37)**

- A. Like Manasseh his kingdom was restored unto him.
 1. **Yet** this time he gives all glory unto the true King of Kings (see vs.37).
 2. James 4:10 **Humble yourselves before the Lord, and He will lift you up.**
- B. What a great *tract* Neb wrote for us about his conversion.
 1. **Can you write yours out & give it to someone?**
 - a) Tell of how the Lord changed your heart & gave you a new one.
- C. **End:** I believe what Neb is saying to us here is what the Palmist says in 66:16-20 **Come and listen, all you who fear God, and I will tell you what he did for me. For I cried out to him for help, praising him as I spoke. If I had not confessed the sin in my heart, the Lord would not have listened. But God did listen! He paid attention to my prayer. Praise God, who did not ignore my prayer or withdraw his unfailing love from me.**