

# Turning to God in Your Choice

## Opening

### Slides 3 and 4: Lee Strobel

Atheist to Pastor- He tried to find facts proving the resurrection did not occur. His journey led to his discovery of the Truth of the Resurrection of Christ. He found four facts that boosted his faith. Jesus died and his death was confirmed by experts. Eyewitnesses report confirmed to be within months of the death of Christ. The tomb was empty and no reasonable explanation given. No less than 9 witnesses who walked and talked with the resurrected Christ

### Slides 5 and 6: Dr. Simon Greenleaf

Atheist Professor to Christian Author – At the prodding of some of his students, Dr. Greenleaf used his rules of evidence, cross-examination, and other legal tools to investigate the Gospel accounts of Jesus, the crucifixion and the resurrection. He was certain that a careful examination of the internal witness of the Gospels would dispel all the myths at the heart of Christianity. What he discovered changed his life and he became a Christian. **He said if the evidence for the resurrection of Christ was put into a court of law, according to the rules of evidence, Jesus would be found guilty of resurrection from the dead.**

## Slide 8: Testimony of a King

**Text:** [Dan 4:1-3 KJV] 1 Nebuchadnezzar the king, unto all people, nations, and languages, that dwell in all the earth; Peace be multiplied unto you. 2 I thought it good to shew the signs and wonders that the high God hath wrought toward me. 3 How great [are] his signs! and how mighty [are] his wonders! his kingdom [is] an everlasting kingdom, and his dominion [is] from generation to generation.

## Slide 9: Overview:

The King's Testimony reflected lessons learned

A different Dream

The King Seeks to Understand

The Content of the Dream

The Interpretation from the Lord through Daniel

Fulfillment of the Dream

Restoration

## Slide10: The King had a huge lesson to learn about the kingdom of God

Daniel 4:2 I thought it good to shew the signs and wonders that the high God hath wrought toward me. 3 How great [are] his signs! and how mighty [are] his wonders! his kingdom [is] an everlasting kingdom, and his dominion [is] from generation to generation.

**Slide 10:** [Dan 4:2-3 NLT] 2 "I want you all to know about the miraculous signs and wonders the Most High God has performed for me. 3 How great are his signs, how powerful his wonders! His kingdom will last forever, his rule through all generations.

Nebuchadnezzar was a great king with many accomplishments, but in chapter 4 he recognized that God's kingdom was far greater and His dominion was completely unique because it is an everlasting kingdom.

## **The King Seeks meaning of his Dream**

**The magicians and astrologers would not tell the meaning of this dream**

**Slide 11:** [Dan 4:4-9 KJV] 4 I Nebuchadnezzar was at rest in mine house, and flourishing in my palace: 5 I saw a dream which made me afraid, and the thoughts upon my bed and the visions of my head troubled me. 6 Therefore made I a decree to bring in all the wise [men] of Babylon before me, that they might make known unto me the interpretation of the dream. 7 Then came in the magicians, the astrologers, the Chaldeans, and the soothsayers: and I told the dream before them; but they did not make known unto me the interpretation thereof.

## **What are We Seeking**

**Slide 12:** Both Lee Strobel and Dr. Simon Greenleaf sought to discover the truth of the Gospel message. Both did not believe when they began seeking to discredit the Gospel.

David told Solomon: [1Ch 22:19 ESV] 19 Now set your mind and heart to seek the LORD your God. Arise and build the sanctuary of the LORD God, so that the ark of the covenant of the LORD and the holy vessels of God may be brought into a house built for the name of the LORD."

[Isa 55:6 ESV] 6 "Seek the LORD while he may be found; call upon him while he is near;

## **Daniel Shows Up before the King**

**Slide 13:** Daniel 4:8 But at the last Daniel came in before me, whose name [was] Belteshazzar, according to the name of my god, and in whom [is] the spirit of the holy gods: and before him I told the dream, [saying], 9 O Belteshazzar, master of the magicians, because I know that the spirit of the holy gods [is] in thee, and no secret troubleth thee, tell me the visions of my dream that I have seen, and the interpretation thereof.

**Slide 14:** What the king saw previously with Daniel and the three Hebrew young men was enough to impress him, but not enough to convert him. Being impressed with God isn't the same as being converted.

## **Content of the Dream**

**Slide 15:** [Dan 4:10-17 KJV] 10 Thus [were] the visions of mine head in my bed; I saw, and behold a tree in the midst of the earth, and the height thereof [was] great. 11 The tree grew, and was strong, and the height thereof reached unto heaven, and the sight thereof 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. 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 iron and brass, in the tender grass of the field; and let it be wet with the dew of heaven, and [let] his portion [be] with the beasts in the grass of the earth: 16 Let his heart be changed from man's, and let a beast's heart be given unto him; and let seven times pass over him. **17 This matter [is] by the decree of the watchers, and the demand by the word of the holy ones: to the intent that the living may know that the most High ruleth in the kingdom of men,** and giveth it to whomsoever he will, and setteth up over it the basest of men.

## The King Asks Daniel for the Interpretation

**Slide 16:** Daniel 4:18 This dream I king Nebuchadnezzar have seen. Now thou, O Belteshazzar, declare the interpretation thereof, forasmuch as all the wise [men] of my kingdom are not able to make known unto me the interpretation: but thou [art] able; for the spirit of the holy gods [is] in thee.

Though Nebuchadnezzar recognized Daniel as a man filled with the Spirit of the Holy God, Nebuchadnezzar had not yet yielded himself to the Holy God.

## Slide 17: Be ready to Share

[1Pe 3:15 KJV] 15 But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and [be] ready always to [give] an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear: **Give advice not threats.**

## Slide 18: Daniel's Explanation

[Dan 4:19-26 KJV] 19 Then Daniel, whose name [was] Belteshazzar, was astonished for one hour, and his thoughts troubled him. The king spake, and said, Belteshazzar, let not the dream, or the interpretation thereof, trouble thee. Belteshazzar answered and said, My lord, the dream [be] to them that hate thee, and the interpretation thereof to thine enemies. 20 The tree that thou sawest, which grew, and was strong, whose height reached unto the heaven, and the sight thereof to all the earth; 21 Whose leaves [were] fair, and the fruit thereof much, and in it [was] meat for all; under which the beasts of the field dwelt, and upon whose branches the fowls of the heaven had their habitation: 22 It [is] thou, O king, that art grown and become strong: for thy greatness is grown, and reacheth unto heaven, and thy dominion to the end of the earth. 23 And whereas the king saw a watcher and an holy one coming down from heaven, and saying, Hew the tree down, and destroy it; yet leave the stump of the roots thereof in the earth, even with a band of iron and brass, in the tender grass of the field; and let it be wet with the dew of heaven, and [let] his portion [be] with the beasts of the field, till seven times pass over him; **24 This [is] the interpretation, O king, and this [is] the decree of the most High, which is come upon my lord the king: 25 That they shall drive thee from men, and thy dwelling shall be with the beasts of the field, and they shall make thee to eat grass as oxen, and they shall wet thee with the dew of heaven, and seven times shall pass over thee, till thou know that the most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will. 26 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.**

## **Slide 19: Daniel Encourages the King to Repent**

Daniel 4:27 Wherefore, O king, let my counsel be acceptable unto thee, and break off thy sins by righteousness, and thine iniquities by shewing mercy to the poor; if it may be a lengthening of thy tranquillity.

[Dan 4:27 NLT] 27 "King Nebuchadnezzar, please accept my advice. Stop sinning and do what is right. Break from your wicked past and be merciful to the poor. Perhaps then you will continue to prosper.'

## **Slide 20: King James Commentary**

The interpretation (v. 24) indicated that the king would be afflicted with insanity (generally believed to be a form of lycanthropy; "wolf man" disease). The monarch would actually believe that he was a wild animal, and this insane behavior would continue for seven years.

God's intended purpose for Nebuchadnezzar was to know Heaven rules. The king could have avoided this humiliating fate if he genuinely humbled himself.

## **Slide 21: Dream Fulfillment (We may Forget but God Does not Forget.)**

The announcement came to Nebuchadnezzar in the same words he heard in his dream. This showed him that the dream was about to be fulfilled, and he would be reduced to the existence of an animal – specifically, an ox.

[Dan 4:28-33 KJV] 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. 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, and for the honour of my majesty? 31 While the word [was] in the king's mouth, there fell a voice from heaven, [saying], O king Nebuchadnezzar, to thee it is spoken; The kingdom is departed from thee. 32 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. 33 The same hour was the thing fulfilled upon Nebuchadnezzar: and he was driven from men, and did eat grass as oxen, and his body was wet with the dew of heaven, till his hairs were grown like eagles' [feathers], and his nails like birds' [claws].

## **Slide 22: The King Had no fear of God**

God interpreted the first dream. He delivered the three Hebrew men from the Hot fire, and He told the king his future if he didn't repent and humble himself

The King chose to go his way in spite of all the warnings.

How many friends and relatives have we warned yet they continue on their journey down the broad road headed towards huge consequences.

## **Slide 23: Christians will all face Judgment**

[Rom 14:10 KJV] 10 But why dost thou judge thy brother? or why dost thou set at nought thy brother? for we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ.

[2Co 5:10 KJV] 10 For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things [done] in [his] body, according to that he hath done, whether [it be] good or bad.

## **Slide 24: Those who Reject Christ will be judged**

[Rev 20:11-14 KJV] 11 And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. 12 And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is [the book] of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. 13 And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works. 14 And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death.

## **Slide 25: Is your Name Written in the Book of Life?**

[Rev 20:15 KJV] 15 And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.

## **Slide 26: God Erases Names**

[Exo 32:32-33 NLT] 32 But now, if you will only forgive their sin--but if not, erase my name from the record you have written!" 33 But the LORD replied to Moses, "No, I will erase the name of everyone who has sinned against me.

## **Slide 27: Repentant King Restored**

[Dan 4:34-37 KJV] 34 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: 35 And all the inhabitants of the earth [are] reputed as nothing: and he doeth according to his will 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? 36 At the same time my reason returned unto me; and for the glory of my kingdom, mine 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.

## **Slide 27: This Time the King Saw what God Wanted him to See**

Nebuchadnezzar could only see the truth about himself when he first saw the truth about God. The Babylonian King did see who God was, and he eloquently praised His sovereignty. After this his reason returned.

## **Slide 28: Are you in the place in God's Kingdom God wants you to be?**

God wanted to restore Nebuchadnezzar. The goal wasn't to bring him low, but to bring him to his proper place before God and among men. Truly, Nebuchadnezzar learned that those who walk in pride He is able to put down. [Jas 4:6 KJV] 6 But he giveth more grace. Wherefore he saith, God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble.