

DANIEL

“Some People Gotta Learn The Hard Way”
September 1, 2024 | Daniel 4



SHEPHERD
CHURCH

Daniel chapter 4 is unique because it is an official **auto-biographical** letter prepared by King Nebuchadnezzar and distributed throughout the **entire** kingdom of Babylon.

Daniel 4:1 (GW) ¹From King Nebuchadnezzar. To the people of every province, nation, and language in the world. . .

- It was intended for **everyone** to read this letter and learn the lessons contained within.

THE KING'S DREAM

1. Nebuchadnezzar has another dream, and it is indeed a **message** from God.

Daniel 4:4-5 (NIV84) ⁴I, Nebuchadnezzar, was at home in my palace, contented and prosperous. ⁵I had a dream that made me afraid. As I was lying in my bed, the images and visions that passed through my mind terrified me.

- A. The wise men were **unable** to interpret the dream.

Daniel 4:7 (NIV84) ⁷When the magicians, enchanter . . . came, I told them the dream, but they could not interpret it for me.

- B. Daniel was called upon because the spirit of the **Holy God** was in him.

Daniel 4:8-9 (NIV84) ⁸Finally, Daniel came into my presence and I told him the dream. (He is called Belteshazzar, after the name of my god, and the spirit of the holy gods is in him.) ⁹I said, “Belteshazzar, chief of the magicians, I know that the spirit of the holy gods is in you, and no mystery is too difficult for you. Here is my dream; interpret it for me.

2. Nebuchadnezzar shares the dream with (Daniel. 4:10-18)

Daniel 4:18 (NIV84) ¹⁸“This is the dream that I, King Nebuchadnezzar, had . . .

THE DREAM'S DESCRIPTION:

3. Daniel explains the symbolism of Nebuchadnezzar's dream.

- A. The tree represents **Nebuchadnezzar** and his vast kingdom.

Daniel 4:22 (NIV84) ²²you, O king, are that tree! You have become great and strong; your greatness has grown until it reaches the sky, and your dominion extends to distant parts of the earth.

- B. The animals represent other **nations** that looked to Babylon for protection and provision.

THE DREAM'S DILEMMA:

4. Nebuchadnezzar was **arrogant** and assumed responsibility for building Babylon.

Daniel 4:30 (NIV84) . . . ³⁰he said, “Is not this the great Babylon **I have built** as the royal residence, **by my mighty power and for the glory of my majesty?**”

THE DREAMS DELAY:

5. Through Daniel, God gave Nebuchadnezzar an opportunity to **change** his thinking and ways.

Daniel 4:27 (NIV84) ²⁷Therefore, O king, be pleased to accept my advice: **Renounce your sins** by doing what is right, and **your wickedness** by being kind to the oppressed. It may be that then your prosperity will continue.”

- A. Daniel courageously **confronted** the sin and wickedness of Nebuchadnezzar!

THE DREAM'S DISCIPLINE:

6. God's messenger said to **cut down** the tree but leave the stump and roots in the grass of the field.

Daniel 4:13-15 (The Living Bible) ¹³Then as I lay there dreaming, I saw one of God's angels coming down from heaven. ¹⁴NIV He called in a loud voice: ‘Cut down the tree and trim off its branches; strip off its leaves and scatter its fruit. Let the animals flee from under it and the birds from its branches. ¹⁵NIV But let the stump and its roots, bound with iron and bronze, remain in the ground, in the grass of the field . . .

- A. Nebuchadnezzar was going to **lose** his kingdom for a period of time.

Daniel 4:24-25 (NIV84) ²⁴“This is the interpretation, O king, and this is the decree the Most High has issued against my lord the king: ²⁵You will be driven away from people and will live with the wild animals; you will eat grass like cattle and be drenched with the dew of heaven. Seven times will pass by for you until you acknowledge that the Most High is sovereign over the kingdoms of men and gives them to anyone he wishes.

- Nebuchadnezzar would be humbled by living away from **people** and with the wild **animals**.
- Nebuchadnezzar would be humbled by living **outside** and eating like an animal.

- **Boanthropy**: A behavioral disorder that causes a person to imagine they are a cow and act accordingly.
- It would take for **7** periods of time (years) for Nebuchadnezzar to recognize God's sovereignty.

GOD DELIVERS ON HIS WORD

7. What God had **decreed** was delivered.

Daniel 4:28, 33 (NIV84) ²⁸All this happened to King Nebuchadnezzar . . . ³³Immediately what had been said about Nebuchadnezzar was fulfilled. He was driven away from people and ate grass like cattle. His body was drenched with the dew of heaven until his hair grew like the feathers of an eagle and his nails like the claws of a bird.

NEBUCHADNEZZAR EXPERIENCES DELIVERANCE

8. Finally, Nebuchadnezzar **voluntarily** looked to Heaven recognizing God's sovereignty

Daniel 4:34 (NIV84) ³⁴At the end of that time, I, Nebuchadnezzar, raised my eyes toward heaven . . .

A. Nebuchadnezzar was delivered because raising his eyes toward heaven, was an act of faith and **submission**.

Psalms 123:1–2 (GW) ¹I look up to you, to the one who sits enthroned in heaven. ²As servants depend on their masters, as a maid depends on her mistress, so we depend on the LORD our God until he has pity on us.

B. When Nebuchadnezzar acknowledged God, his **sanity** was restored.

Daniel 4:34 (NIV84) ³⁴At the end of that time, I, Nebuchadnezzar, raised my eyes toward heaven, and my sanity was restored . . .

C. The first thing Nebuchadnezzar did was to **praise** and honor God.

Daniel 4:34 (NIV84) ³⁴. . . Then I praised the Most High; I honored and glorified him who lives forever. His dominion is an eternal dominion; his kingdom endures from generation to generation.

D. Nebuchadnezzar recognizes the **sovereignty** of God.

Daniel 4:35, 37 (NIV84) ³⁵All the peoples of the earth are regarded as nothing. He does as he pleases with the powers of heaven and the peoples of the earth. No one can hold back his hand or say to him: "What have you done?" . . . ³⁷because everything he does is right and all his ways are just. And those who walk in pride he is able to humble.

E. Nebuchadnezzar **shares** his experience with the world.

Daniel 4:1–2 (NIV84) ¹King Nebuchadnezzar, To the peoples, nations and men of every language, who live in all the world: May you prosper greatly! ²It is my pleasure to tell you about the miraculous signs and wonders that the Most High God has performed for me.

APPLICATION & NEXT STEPS

1. God **hates** pride.

Proverbs 8:13 (NIV84) ¹³To fear the Lord is to hate evil; I [The Lord] hate pride and arrogance, evil behavior and perverse speech.

A. Pride is the sin of elevating oneself to **equality** with God. The irony is that it actually moves us away from God rather than closer.

2. The **consequences** of pride are far reaching.

Proverbs 16:18 (GW) ¹⁸Pride precedes a disaster, and an arrogant attitude precedes a fall.

A. Pride removed Nebuchadnezzar from every good thing in his life and can do the same for us.

B. Pride can lead to a false sense of security, worth and **identity**.

Deuteronomy 8:17–18 (MSG) ¹⁷If you start thinking to yourselves, "I did all this. And all by myself. I'm rich. It's all mine!"— ¹⁸well, think again. Remember that GOD, your God, gave you the strength to produce all this wealth so as to confirm the covenant that he promised to your ancestors—as it is today.

3. Pride can affect our ability to be used by God because we don't recognize God's **sovereignty**.

Proverbs 11:2 (NIV84) ²When pride comes, then comes disgrace, but with humility comes wisdom.

4. **Humble** yourself before the Lord.

1 Peter 5:6 (NIV84) ⁶Humble yourselves, therefore, under God's mighty hand, that he may lift you up in due time.

Luke 18:14 (The Living Bible) ¹⁴. . . For the proud shall be humbled, but the humble shall be honored."

A. Humble (*imperative verb*) - one who causes his heart to **bow** down.