

# **Daniel 04 - Nebuchadnezzar's Pride; Nebuchadnezzar's Dream; Daniel Interprets Dream; Dream Fulfilled by God; Nebuchadnezzar's Insanity & Humility**

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## **Daniel 4**

### **(C) The dethronement and re-enthronement of Nebuchadnezzar (4:1-37)**

#### **(a) Introduction (4:1-3)**

##### **(i) Salutation (4:1)**

1 Nebuchadnezzar the king to all the peoples, nations, and *populations of all* languages who live in all the earth: "May your peace be great!

1 Nebuchadnezzar the king to all the peoples, nations, and *men of every* language that live in all the earth: "May your peace abound!

1 AN OFFICIAL STATEMENT FROM NEBUCHADNEZZAR THE KING To the people of all nations and languages who live on earth. Peace and prosperity to you!

1 Nebuchadnezzar the king, unto all people, nations, and languages, that dwell in all the earth; Peace be multiplied unto you.

- This is a public introduction of a decree, authored by Nebuchadnezzar, that he wanted to announce to his kingdom in Babylonia. It was written by the most powerful king of the world, to everyone under his authority.

— Apparently Daniel took this decree of Nebuchadnezzar and inserted it into his book

— Something happened in Nebuchadnezzar's life that had a personal impact on him, it was life-changing. It was so profound that he had to write about it and issue it as a public decree.

#### (ii) Nebuchadnezzar glorifies God (4:2-3)

2 I am pleased to declare the **signs** and **miracles** that the Most High God has done for me.

2 It has seemed good to me to declare the signs and wonders which the Most High God has done for me.

2 It gives me great pleasure to tell about the signs and wonders that the Most High God has done for me.

2 I thought it good to shew the signs and wonders that the high God hath wrought toward me.

- Nebuchadnezzar's personal testimony begins...he's not stating objective truths about God, he's revealing truths about God that were highly personal to him

- "...signs" - *'atohi*, refers to natural phenomena that, because of their magnitude or timing, are decisive evidence of God's intervention

- "...miracles" - *timhohi*, supernatural manifestations of divine intervention in the course of nature

- While the king had great respect for *Yahweh*, it does not necessarily mean that he was a monotheist, much less a convert to Judaism

3 "How great are His signs And how mighty are His miracles! **His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom**, And His dominion is from generation to generation.

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.

3 How great are his signs! How powerful are his wonders! His kingdom is an eternal kingdom, and his dominion lasts from generation to generation.

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.

- Nebuchadnezzar is extolling and exalting the authority and sovereignty of God

- God wants Nebuchadnezzar to understand that he is in the position that he is in because God put him there. Daniel was clear in communicating this to him in 2:37-38.

- He'll later briefly revert back to his pride (4:30)

- "...His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom" - in contrast to Nebuchadnezzar's kingdom, which God prophesied in his dream would be temporary

- This perspective of Nebuchadnezzar did not come about easily...and he'll describe how he came to this realization

Here's what Nebuchadnezzar wrote later in his letter:

Dan 4:30 [NASB95]: The king reflected and said, 'Is this not Babylon the great, which **I myself have built** as a royal residence **by the might of my power** and for the glory of **my majesty**?'

Look how what he says above contrasts to what Daniel told him earlier, while interpreting his dream:

Dan 2:37-38 [NASB95]:

37 You, O king, are the king of kings, to whom **the God of heaven has given** the kingdom, the power, the strength and the glory;

38 and wherever the sons of men dwell, *or* the beasts of the field, or the birds of the sky, **He has given them** into your hand and **has caused you** to rule over them all. You are the head of gold.

(b) Nebuchadnezzar's fear on account of his dream (4:4-5)

4 "I, Nebuchadnezzar, was **at ease in my house and happy in my palace**.

4 "I, Nebuchadnezzar, was at ease in my house and flourishing in my palace.

4 I, Nebuchadnezzar, was resting in my home and prospering in my palace.

4 I Nebuchadnezzar was at rest in mine house, and flourishing in my palace:

- "...at ease in my house and happy in my palace" - here's the problem...Nebuchadnezzar, in times of prosperity, did not seek God

- We have the same problem...when things are going well, looking up, mainly positive, we tend to not turn to God as much as when things aren't going well (Cf. Prov 30:8-9)

- It's hard to pray for your daily bread when you own your own bakery...

— Jesus spoke over and over about the difficulty the rich have because they are used to relying upon their resources to buy their way out of their problems. If you're not rich, you have to trust God with your problems.

— There is a curse associated with prosperity...when we have more than we need, we don't focus on God for our needs. If God blesses you with prosperity and wealth, He'll also have to send accompanying problems into your life to keep you in a state of usability because wealth deludes us away from God.

— You can see here that the delusion that Nebuchadnezzar is under is severe considering how God revealed Himself to him...in Dan 2 with Daniel's revelation and interpretation of the dream, and in Dan 3 with God's rescue operation of the three friends from the fiery furnace.

— Yet the prosperity that Nebuchadnezzar was feeling caused him to push those miracles of God out of his mind, so God has to step into the picture again...

5 I saw **a dream** and it **startled** me; and *these* appearances as I lay on my bed and the visions in my mind kept alarming me.

5 I saw a dream and it made me fearful; and *these* fantasies as I lay on my bed and the visions in my mind kept alarming me.

5 I had a dream that made me afraid. The thoughts that went through my mind while in bed and the visions in my head terrified me.

5 I saw a dream which made me afraid, and the thoughts upon my bed and the visions of my head troubled me.

- This is God's pattern with Nebuchadnezzar...God continually is waking him up figuratively and literally with these recurring dreams. This seems to be one of God's favorite ways to reach pagan kings: Abimelech, Nebuchadnezzar (Dan 2), Pilate's wife, et al.

- "...a dream" - don't confuse this with the dream in Dan 2—this is a second dream

- "...startled" - this dream didn't "trouble" him...it "scared" him

- Historians have found a seven year period during his reign when he engaged in no military activity (582-575 BC). This may be the seven years in which he was temporarily insane. If so, he may have had this dream in 583-582 BC.

— If this is the true date, Nebuchadnezzar would have defeated the Egyptians under Pharaoh Hophra (in 588-587 BC), and destroyed Jerusalem (in 586 BC) before he had this dream

(c) Nebuchadnezzar reports dream (4:6-18)

(i) To his magicians (4:6-7)

6 So I gave orders to bring into my presence all the wise men of Babylon, so that they might make known to me the interpretation of the dream.

6 So I gave orders to bring into my presence all the wise men of Babylon, that they might make known to me the interpretation of the dream.

6 So I gave an order to bring in all of the advisors of Babylon so they would tell me the interpretation of the dream.

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.

- Nebuchadnezzar should have known better than to ask the "wise" men of Babylon to interpret the dream for him (Cf. 2:2)

— It's amazing where people go to seek truth, other than God's Word...they'll seek truth in psychology, astrology, etc. God has revealed Himself, so we have truth (in our own hands), these people are just drinking out of the wrong well.

7 Then the soothsayer priests, the sorcerers, the Chaldeans, and the diviners came in and I related the dream to them, but they could not make its interpretation known to me.

7 Then the magicians, the conjurers, the Chaldeans and the diviners came in and I related the dream to them, but they could not make its interpretation known to me.

7 Then the diviners, enchanters, Chaldeans, and astrologers came in, and I told them the dream. But they could not reveal its interpretation to me.

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.

- He still believed in his wise men even though they had let him down previously (2:10-12)

— This time he told them his dream and simply asked them to interpret it. They failed again, so he called in his expert in these matters: Daniel.

### **Nebuchadnezzar Demands the Revelation & Interpretation (2:2-13)**

- Nebuchadnezzar's command (2:2-3)
- Chaldean's first response (2:4)
- Nebuchadnezzar reaffirms his command (2:5-6)
- Chaldean's second response (2:7)
- Nebuchadnezzar reaffirms his command (2:8-9)
- Chaldean's third response (2:10-11)
- Nebuchadnezzar's order for destruction (2:12-13)

(ii) To Daniel (4:8-18)

(a) The tree grows (4:8-12)

8 But finally Daniel came in before me, whose name is Belteshazzar according to the name of my god, and in whom is a spirit of the holy gods; and I related the dream to him, *saying*,

8 But finally Daniel came in before me, whose name is Belteshazzar according to the name of my god, and in whom is a spirit of the holy gods; and I related the dream to him, *saying*,

8 Eventually, Daniel appeared before me. (He is called Belteshazzar, in accordance with the name of my god, and the spirit of the holy gods is within him.) I told him my dream:

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,

- Nebuchadnezzar refers to Daniel by his Babylonian name (Belteshazzar), which shows that Nebuchadnezzar is still on the seat of authority in his own life, still calling the shots

— He also takes Daniel's gifting of dream interpretation and re-interprets it through a polytheistic framework

— He also interprets the work of the Spirit with the spirit of his holy gods. He's taking truth and repackaging it according to his own worldview. This shows that Nebuchadnezzar had a massive attitude problem, despite earlier revelations from God, that God here will rectify.

### **Changing Names (Dan 1:7)**

- Daniel - "God is my judge" —> Belteshazzar - Bel (chief Babylonian god) protects"
- Hananiah - "Yahweh is gracious —> Shadrach - "command of Aku, the moon god"
- Mishael - "Who is like God?" —> Meshach - "Who is what Aku is?"
- Azariah - "Yahweh is my Helper" —> Abed-nego - "Servant of Nebo, the god of wisdom"

9 'Belteshazzar, chief of the soothsayer priests, since I know that a spirit of the holy gods is in you and no secret baffles you, tell *me* the visions of my dream which I have seen, along with its interpretation.

9 'O Belteshazzar, chief of the magicians, since I know that a spirit of the holy gods is in you and no mystery baffles you, tell *me* the visions of my dream which I have seen, along with its interpretation.

9 "Belteshazzar, chief of the diviners, since I know that the spirit of the holy gods is within you, and no mystery too difficult for you, explain to me the vision of my dream that I saw, along with its interpretation.

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.

- Nebuchadnezzar recalled when Daniel revealed and interpreted the dream of the giant statue (Dan 2); now Nebuchadnezzar again requests that Daniel reveal and interpret his latest dream

10 'Now *these were* the visions in my mind as I lay on my bed: I was looking, and behold, *there was a tree* in the middle of the earth and its height *was great*.

10 'Now *these were* the visions in my mind as I lay on my bed: I was looking, and behold, *there was a tree* in the midst of the earth and its height *was great*.

10 This is what I saw in the visions of my head while I was in bed: I was looking and—listen carefully!—I saw a tree in the middle of the earth, the height of which was very great.

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.

- Previous dream was an image composed of various metals; this dream is of a tree

- "...tree" - frequently used to describe rulers of nations (Cf. Is 2:12-13; 10:34; Ezek 31:3-17)

— The tree was of tremendous size, residing in the middle of the earth. Because of this, the king likely believed the tree was symbolic of himself. Thus, what happened in this dream could have accounted for his fear (Cf. v5).

11 'The tree grew large and became strong And its height reached to the sky, And it was visible to the end of the whole earth.

11 'The tree grew large and became strong And its height reached to the sky, And it was visible to the end of the whole earth.

11 The tree grew large, became strong, and its top reached the sky. It could be seen to the ends of the earth.

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:

- The tree was strong, high, and visible, similar to Nebuchadnezzar and his kingdom

12 'Its foliage was beautiful and its fruit abundant, And in it was food for all. The animals of the field found shade under it, And the birds of the sky lived in its branches, And all living creatures fed from it.

12 'Its foliage was beautiful and its fruit abundant, And in it was food for all. The beasts of the field found shade under it, And the birds of the sky dwelt in its branches, And all living creatures fed themselves from it.

12 Its foliage was beautiful, its fruit bountiful, and its food sufficient for everyone. The animals of the field found shade under it, the birds of the sky lived in its branches, and every creature was fed from it.

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.

- The tree was not only in the midst of the earth, high, strong and beautiful, but it also met the needs of the animals

(b) The tree is removed (4:13-18)

13 'I was looking in the visions in my mind *as I lay* on my bed, and behold, an **angelic watcher**, a holy one, descended from heaven.

13 'I was looking in the visions in my mind *as I lay* on my bed, and behold, an *angelic* watcher, a holy one, descended from heaven.

13 "Then I saw in the visions of my head while I was in bed—and take careful notice!—I saw a holy observer descend from heaven.

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

- "...angelic watcher" - angels are constantly going about doing God's business

— If you begin to look up all the passages that talk about angels, you'll quickly get worn out because angels are present and used by God throughout Scripture

### **Activities of Angels (Partial List)**

Past:

- Witnessed creation (Job 38:7)
- Brought judgment (Gen 19:22; Acts 12:22-23)
- Accompanied the Law (Gal 3:19)
- Announced births of John and Christ (Luke 1:11-13,26-27)
- Strengthened Christ (Matt 4:11)
- Announced resurrection (Matt 28:1-7)
- Observed ascension (Acts 1:11)
- Brought messages (Luke 1:13)

Present:

- Protect believers (Ps 34:7; 91:11-12)
- Deliver God's answers to prayer (Dan 9:23; 10:12)
- Take souls to heaven (Luke 16:22)
- Involvement in government (Dan 10:21; 11:1; 12:1)

Future:

- Rapture (1 Thess 4:16)
- Judged by humans (1 Cor 6:3)
- Tribulation judgments (Rev 8:2; 16:1)
- Return of Christ (Matt 24:31; 25:31)
- Bind Satan (Rev 20:1-2)



14 'He shouted out and spoke as follows: "Chop down the tree and cut off its branches, Shake off its foliage and scatter its fruit; Let the animals flee from under it And the birds from its branches.

14 'He shouted out and spoke as follows: Chop down the tree and cut off its branches, Strip off its foliage and scatter its fruit; Let the beasts flee from under it And the birds from its branches.

14 He called out aloud: 'Cut down the tree and cut off its branches. Strip off its foliage and scatter its fruit. Let the animals get out from under it, and let the birds leave its branches.

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 "Yet **leave the stump with its roots** in the ground, But with a **band of iron and bronze** *around it* In the new grass of the field; And let **him** be drenched with the dew of heaven, And let **him** share with the animals in the grass of the earth.

15 "Yet leave the stump with its roots in the ground, But with a band of iron and bronze *around it* In the new grass of the field; And let him be drenched with the dew of heaven, And let him share with the beasts in the grass of the earth.

15 Nevertheless, leave the stump and its roots in the ground, but bind it with iron and bronze in the field grass. Let him be drenched with dew from the sky, and let him graze with the animals in the grass of the earth.

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:

- "...him" - notice that the pronouns change from the tree to becoming personal: "it" becomes "him"

- "...leave the stump with its roots" - the tree is going to be cut down, but the stump is still there. This speaks of the momentary discipline of God to Nebuchadnezzar, and his eventual restoration.

— The remaining of the stump and roots is anticipatory of his restoration. After God takes Nebuchadnezzar through his attitude adjustment seminar, God will put him back where He took him from, but give him greater power and glory.

— God is a God of justice and judgment, but He's also a God of grace. God can seem harsh or severe from a human point of view, but He is also very gracious.

— What we'll see later in this episode is that once Nebuchadnezzar learned his lesson, God ended the seminar, He pulled back the suffering, and He restored Nebuchadnezzar to a higher place.

- "...band of iron and bronze" - the binding of the stump hints at restoration of the tree's life and it's growth after its cutting down

— The significance of the bands is questionable. They kept the tree stump from disintegrating, but could also symbolize the madness that would bind Nebuchadnezzar, or the fact that he would be protected while demented.

16 "Let his mind change from *that of* a human And let an **animal's mind** be given to him, And let **seven periods of time** pass over him.

16 "Let his mind be changed from *that of* a man And let a beast's mind be given to him, And let seven periods of time pass over him.

16 Let his mind be changed from that of a man, and let him be given the mind of an animal until seven seasons of time pass by for him.

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.

- "...animal's mind" - it's amazing how quickly man can think and behave like an animal when they remove themselves from the God who created them

— If you are removed from God, you don't understand your worth, your dignity, the authority God has given to humanity, and in a certain sense we can become animalistic

— When God is rejected, humans tend toward animalistic behavior, becoming more like those who God gave mankind authority over

— Evolution comes on top of that and tells them that they are nothing but naked apes...from goo, to you, via the zoo

- "...seven periods of time" - seven years; God could've allowed this animalistic behavior to go on indefinitely, but in His grace He put a cap on the time at seven years

17 "This sentence is by the decree of the angelic watchers, And the decision is a command of the holy ones, In order that the living may know That the Most High is ruler over the realm of mankind, And He grants it to whomever He wishes And sets over it the lowliest of people."

17 "This sentence is by the decree of the *angelic* watchers And the decision is a command of the holy ones, In order that the living may know That the Most High is ruler over the realm of mankind, And bestows it on whom He wishes And sets over it the lowliest of men."

17 This order is announced by the observers, and the holy ones declare the verdict, so that the living may know that the Most High is sovereign over human kingdoms and grants them to whomever he desires, and he places the least important of men over them.'

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 lesson of this dream is to teach all people that the Most High God is sovereign over the affairs of humankind, not Nebuchadnezzar (v17; Cf. v25,32; 2:21; 1 Sam 2:7-8; Job 5:11)
- This is the lesson that Nebuchadnezzar learned...it took him awhile, but he learned it. Sometimes our doubts, presumptions or ingratitude belays this fact in our lives...it's a lesson we need to learn over and over.
- He can, has, and will set up whom He will, even people of humble origin, to rule nations (i.e., Joseph, Israel's judges, Saul, David, et al.). God does not need the mighty to do His work. Thus it is foolish to become proud over one's accomplishments and importance, like Nebuchadnezzar.

God had sought to impress His universal sovereignty on Nebuchadnezzar previously (Dan 2-3), but the king had not learned his lesson. So the Lord sent him a stronger lesson. This is often what He does (Cf. Job 33:14-17). The last part of this verse is a summary of the theme of the Book of Daniel.

Universal vs. Theocratic Kingdom		
	Universal Kingdom	Theocratic Kingdom
Time	Eternal (Ps 93:1-2)	Future (Dan 2:44)
Scope	Universal (Ps 103:19)	Earthly (Dan 2:35, 44-45)
Rule	God rules directly (Dan 4:17)	God rules indirectly through a human (Ps 2:6-9)
Existence	Always (Ps. 93:1-2)	Contingent upon a human response (Exod. 19:5-6; Matt. 3:2; 11:2-6, 14; 23:37-39)

18 This is the dream *that* I, King Nebuchadnezzar, have seen. Now you, Belteshazzar, tell *me* its interpretation, since none of the wise men of my kingdom is able to make known to

me the interpretation; but you are able, because a spirit of the holy gods is in you.'

18 This is the dream *which* I, King Nebuchadnezzar, have seen. Now you, Belteshazzar, tell *me* its interpretation, inasmuch as none of the wise men of my kingdom is able to make known to me the interpretation; but you are able, for a spirit of the holy gods is in you.'

18 "This is the dream that I, King Nebuchadnezzar, saw. Belteshazzar, tell me its meaning, since none of the advisors in my kingdom can tell me its interpretation. But you are able to do so because the spirit of the holy gods is in you."

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.

- Nebuchadnezzar's interpreters were bankrupt; Daniel's gift of dream interpretation came from God (1:17,20)

— There was nothing inherent in Daniel that allowed him to interpret dreams...it was 100% a gift of God

— Nebuchadnezzar is not getting the picture here...he continues to assert his own authority, he continues to call Daniel by his paganized name, he continues to interpret and attribute Daniel's gifting through a worldview of polytheism.

#### (d) Daniels interpretation (4:19-27)

##### (i) Tree (4:19-22)

19 "Then Daniel, whose name is Belteshazzar, was appalled for a while as his thoughts alarmed him. The king responded and said, 'Belteshazzar, do not let the dream or its interpretation alarm you.' Belteshazzar replied, 'My lord, *if only* the dream *applied* to those who hate you, and its interpretation to your adversaries!

19 "Then Daniel, whose name is Belteshazzar, was appalled for a while as his thoughts alarmed him. The king responded and said, 'Belteshazzar, do not let the dream or its interpretation alarm you.' Belteshazzar replied, 'My lord, *if only* the dream applied to those who hate you and its interpretation to your adversaries!

19 Then Daniel (also known as Belteshazzar) was greatly troubled for a while and was terrified by his thoughts. The king said, "Belteshazzar, don't let the dream or its meaning terrify you." Belteshazzar responded, "Your majesty, if only the dream were about your enemies and its meaning about those who oppose you!

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.

- Daniel was alarmed at the interpretation God gave him of this dream; he wished that the interpretation applied to Nebuchadnezzar's enemies rather than to Nebuchadnezzar himself

— It's difficult to be the bearer of bad news, as Daniel is here, because many people want to shoot the messenger. Yet Daniel is always faithful to disclose exactly what God had given him.

— It's easy to speak truth if you don't care about love, and it's easy to speak love if you don't care about truth. But Paul tells us to "speak the truth in love" (Eph 4:15). This is the calling of the believer.

— It's a difficult balancing act, but God provides assistance through His Spirit to walk this balancing act in our interactions with others.

[Dan 2:36]

This verse reveals the heart of Daniel as well as any in the entire book of Daniel. He knew the meaning of this dream and how well Nebuchadnezzar deserved what was to come upon him. Nevertheless, Daniel's heart was concerned for the king and grieved over what he had to tell him. This was the distinctive feature of the true prophets of God: though they often had to predict judgments, they were nevertheless grieved when any of God's creatures were chastised.

20 The tree that you saw, which became large and grew strong, whose height reached to the sky and was visible to all the earth,

20 The tree that you saw, which became large and grew strong, whose height reached to the sky and was visible to all the earth

20 The tree that you saw, which grew large and strong until its top reached the sky and became visible to the whole earth

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 and whose foliage was beautiful and its fruit abundant, and in which was food for all, under which the animals of the field lived and in whose branches the birds of the sky settled—

21 and whose foliage was beautiful and its fruit abundant, and in which was food for all, under which the beasts of the field dwelt and in whose branches the birds of the sky lodged—

21 with beautiful leaves and abundant fruit—enough food for everyone—and under which wild animals of the field found shelter and the birds of the air had nests in its branches—

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:

- By repeating the facts of the dream that the king had told it to him, Daniel assured the king that he understood the dream exactly, and was interpreting it accurately

22 it is you, O king; for you have become great and grown strong, and your majesty has become great and reached to the sky, and your dominion to the end of the earth.

22 it is you, O king; for you have become great and grown strong, and your majesty has become great and reached to the sky and your dominion to the end of the earth.

22 it's you, your majesty! You've become great and strong, your greatness has grown to the heavens, and your dominion reaches to the distant parts of the earth.

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.

- Daniel interprets the tree as Nebuchadnezzar (Cf. 2:38)

#### (ii) Tree's removal (4:23-26)

23 And in that the king saw an angelic watcher, a holy one, descending from heaven and saying, "Chop down the tree and destroy it; yet leave the stump with its roots in the ground, but with a band of iron and bronze *around it* in the new grass of the field, let him be drenched with the dew of heaven, and let him share with the animals of the field until seven periods of time pass over him,"

23 In that the king saw an *angelic* watcher, a holy one, descending from heaven and saying, "Chop down the tree and destroy it; yet leave the stump with its roots in the ground, but with a band of iron and bronze *around it* in the new grass of the field, and let him be drenched with the dew of heaven, and let him share with the beasts of the field until seven periods of time pass over him,"

23 "Your majesty saw a holy observer descending from heaven and saying, 'Cut down the tree and destroy it, but leave the stump in the ground, along with its roots, bound with iron and bronze in the field grass. Let him be soaked with the dew of the sky and live with the wild animals of the field until seven seasons pass over him.'

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;

- An angel is going to come along and chop down the tree, but leave the stump and the roots

Zoanthropy is a form of mental illness that causes such behavior. With it a person imagines himself or herself to be an animal. Perhaps this is what God used to afflict Nebuchadnezzar.

Another possibility is that the king suffered from boanthropy. With this illness a person thinks himself or herself to be an ox (Cf. 5:21). Their outer behavior is irrational, but the inner consciousness remains virtually unchanged. This may account for the statement that at the end of his affliction Nebuchadnezzar "raised his eyes toward heaven" (i.e., repented, v34).

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

24 this is the interpretation, O king, and this is the decree of the Most High, which has come upon my lord the king:

24 "This is the meaning, your majesty, and this is the decree that the Most High has issued against his majesty, the king:

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

- "...this is the interpretation" - we don't need to use our unsanctified imaginations to understand the interpretation of the dream, as Daniel gives it to us directly by way of prophetic utterance

- "...the decree of the Most High" - what was about to transpire in Nebuchadnezzar's life was a decree issued by God Himself; something was about to come into his life of an adversarial nature. He was on the verge of a life-sized trial.

- Nebuchadnezzar had a "me" problem...he was a narcissist, he believed that the world revolved around him and him alone, and that the magnificence of the Babylonian Empire was of his own doing.

- He ignored what Daniel said in 2:37-38; Nebuchadnezzar was in the position he was in because God put him there...it had nothing to do with any merit on his part, his resume, his agenda, his intellect, or any intrinsic value within himself.

- God of course understood this, the angelic realm understood this, probably most of Nebuchadnezzar's subjects understood this, but Nebuchadnezzar did not understand this.

- So God decided to reach into His "toolbox" and use one of the greatest tools He has available: human suffering. There is nothing that empties us of ourselves more than the reality of human suffering. When we walk through a valley, we quickly learn that we don't have control over anything, and that we don't really have anything figured out.

- We have to be reminded about this often because of our innate sinfulness. So the suffering is coming to Nebuchadnezzar to make plain in his life something that by now

should have been obvious to him.

25 that you be driven away from mankind and your dwelling place be with the animals of the field, and you be given grass to eat like cattle and be drenched with the dew of heaven; and **seven periods of time** will pass over you, **until you recognize** that the Most High is ruler over the realm of mankind and bestows it on whomever He wishes.

25 that you be driven away from mankind and your dwelling place be with the beasts of the field, and you be given grass to eat like cattle and be drenched with the dew of heaven; and seven periods of time will pass over you, until you recognize that the Most High is ruler over the realm of mankind and bestows it on whomever He wishes.

25 You'll be driven from people, and you'll live among wild animals of the field. You'll eat grass like cattle and be soaked with the dew of the sky while seven years pass you by—until you realize that the Most High is sovereign over human kingdoms and grants them to whomever he desires.

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.

- "...seven periods of time" - seven years

— God's grace is shown here in that the suffering is finite, it has a limit; all trials that God gives us are finite and time bound because of God's grace.

— The number "seven" in Scripture is often connected with a perfect work of God. Here it suggests that God's judgment on Nebuchadnezzar would be perfect and complete.

- "...until you recognize" - Nebuchadnezzar was going to suffer all that God ordained for him "until he recognized" (Cf. v32)

— "until" - the suffering would exist as long as it took Nebuchadnezzar to learn his lesson; we can never forget the grace of God in the midst of the justice and judgment of God.

— If you're in any passage in Scripture where you're seeing the justice and judgment of God being poured out, but you're not seeing the grace of God at the same time, you're not interpreting the text correctly.

— This tells us a lot about the grace of God. Nebuchadnezzar could've been given a trial that went beyond 7 years, but God, in grace, capped it at seven years, when he would recognize what God was teaching him.

— What a tool God has at His disposal in human suffering that He can use to wake us up to reality. This doesn't imply that every trial is designed to achieve this result because as you study the doctrine of trials and suffering in Scripture, you see that God ordains trials in our lives for many reasons. We have trials of correction (Jonah) and trials of perfection (where God takes us to the next level in our spiritual growth).



— Not every trial we have deals with the issue of overt sin...Job had a huge trial, and the mistake of his three friends (Eliphaz, Bildad, Zophar) was blaming Job's trial on some secret sin that he had committed. Elihu came along later and thought he knew the reason for Job's trials...the fact is, all of them were wrong. Job is a lesson on the finite understanding of man when it comes to the workings of God.

— God ordained this suffering for Nebuchadnezzar to wake him up to the reality of Dan 2:37-38...that Nebuchadnezzar was in his position and had what he had because God put him there.

26 And in that it was commanded to leave the stump with the roots of the tree, your kingdom will remain as yours after you recognize that ***it is Heaven that rules***.

26 And in that it was commanded to leave the stump with the roots of the tree, your kingdom will be assured to you after you recognize that *it is Heaven that rules*.

26 Just as it was ordered to leave the stump of the tree in the ground along with its roots, so your kingdom will be restored to you when you realize that Heaven rules over everything.

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.

- Nebuchadnezzar's problem was pride

— He would be restored to his position of authority after this trial of seven years had passed

— The trial would not go on forever...it went on long enough to achieve a pedagogical point, then the trial ceased

- Nebuchadnezzar would be out of commission for seven years, but he wouldn't lose his kingdom. He would receive back both his senses and his kingdom after the judgment was complete.

— The whole lesson is to get Nebuchadnezzar to recognize that God is in charge, not him

- "...*it is Heaven that rules*" - a figure of speech (metonymy) for "God ruling" since God lives in heaven

— The Jews often substituted "heaven" for God's name out of respect

— This is especially common in Matthew's Gospel, which was written primarily to Jews, where "the kingdom of heaven" usually replaces the more common "kingdom of God" in the other Gospels

— This is the only place in the OT where this substitution takes place

### (iii) Concluding exhortation (4:27)

27 Therefore, O king, may my advice be pleasing to you: wipe away your sin by *doing* righteousness, and your wrongdoings by showing mercy to *the* poor, in case there may be

a prolonging of your prosperity.'

27 Therefore, O king, may my advice be pleasing to you: break away now from your sins by *doing* righteousness and from your iniquities by showing mercy to *the* poor, in case there may be a prolonging of your prosperity.'

27 Therefore, your majesty, may my advice be acceptable to you: Stop your sinning, do what's right, and put a stop to your wickedness by showing kindness to the oppressed. Perhaps your tranquility will continue."

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.

- Translation: this trial is avoidable, and the power of choice and destiny is in Nebuchadnezzar's hand. But Nebuchadnezzar did not heed Daniel's advice.

— One of God's principles is that judgment may be averted if there is repentance (Cf. Jonah, Nineveh)

— The Bible is not a book of "Don't" it's a book of "Better"

- Daniel gives Nebuchadnezzar a warning...

— Before God moves His hand in either judgment or discipline, God always gives us a warning. The problem is, many times we're not paying attention to the warning.

— Before the Flood, God gave them a warning for 120 years (Gen 6:3). The Corinthian church was warned about disrespecting communion (1 Cor 11:31-32). The church at Thyatira was given a warning (Rev 2:21).

What warnings have you received that you're not listening to? We need to listen to the voice of God or the Word of God. If God is telling you that something in your life needs to change, follow the promptings of the Holy Spirit. Many of the struggles believers go through today are avoidable. We bring circumstances on ourselves through our own bad choices.

(e) Fulfillment of the dream (4:28-37)

(i) Pride (4:28-30)

28 "All of *this* happened to Nebuchadnezzar the king.

28 "All *this* happened to Nebuchadnezzar the king.

28 All of this happened to King Nebuchadnezzar.

28 All this came upon the king Nebuchadnezzar.

- Nebuchadnezzar did not heed Daniel's warning, so everything described in this chapter happened to him (beginning just 12 months later, v29)

29 Twelve months later he was walking on the *roof* of the royal palace of Babylon.

29 Twelve months later he was walking on the *roof of* the royal palace of Babylon.

29 About a year later, as the king was walking on the roof of the royal palace of Babylon,

29 At the end of twelve months he walked in the palace of the kingdom of Babylon.

- God gave Nebuchadnezzar one year to heed the warning; the process of discipline manifested in his life one year after the warning was given

— When God says something, it's going to happen (Heb 6:18). When God speaks, it's just a matter of time before it comes to pass.

30 The king began speaking and was saying, 'Is this not **Babylon the great**, which I myself have built as a royal residence **by the might of my power** and **for the honor of my majesty**?'

30 The king reflected and said, 'Is this not Babylon the great, which I myself have built as a royal residence by the might of my power and for the glory of my majesty?'

30 he commented to himself, "Isn't Babylon great? I've built a royal palace in it by my own might and power, for the sake of my majesty."

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?

- "...Babylon the great" - Cf. Rev 17:5,18; 18:2,10,18-19,21

— Archaeologists have discovered ancient documents in which Nebuchadnezzar boasted of the glory and splendor of Babylon

- After Daniel interpreted the prophetic dream, a year went by and nothing had happened to Nebuchadnezzar yet. So Nebuchadnezzar begins to shoot his mouth off in pride.

- "...by the might of my power...for the honor of my majesty" - Nebuchadnezzar obviously hadn't learned his lesson on pride simply from Daniel's prophecy interpretation...he had to go through the trial itself to learn the lesson

— Often it takes a fall to allow God to use us

— Nebuchadnezzar took credit for something God did, and it was at that point that God's discipline took effect

— Many leaders in Scripture have to be brought to their knees, or go to the backside of the desert for 40 years, before they are suitable to be used by God

— During times of extreme prosperity and comfort, as Nebuchadnezzar was in at this time, it's easy for us to forget God and narcissistically take credit for ourselves

— A person becomes ripe for discipline when they begin to take credit for what God alone has done (Cf. Is 42:8)

— There are three things that tear down ministries: Girls, Gold, Glory

[John 19:10-11; Rom 13:1]

(ii) Fall (4:31-33)

31 *While* the word *was* still in the king's mouth, a voice came from heaven, *saying*, 'King Nebuchadnezzar, to you it is declared: sovereignty has been removed from you,

31 *While* the word *was* in the king's mouth, a voice came from heaven, *saying*, 'King Nebuchadnezzar, to you it is declared: sovereignty has been removed from you,

31 As these words were being spoken by the king, a voice came out of heaven: "King Nebuchadnezzar, this is declared to you:

'The kingdom has been taken from you!

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.

- No sooner had the king articulated his pride than he heard a voice from heaven pronouncing the punishment that Daniel had warned him about

32 and you will be driven away from mankind, and your dwelling place *will be* with the animals of the field. You will be given grass to eat like cattle, and seven periods of time will pass over you until you recognize that the Most High is ruler over the realm of mankind and bestows it on whomever He wishes.'

32 and you will be driven away from mankind, and your dwelling place *will be* with the beasts of the field. You will be given grass to eat like cattle, and seven periods of time will pass over you until you recognize that the Most High is ruler over the realm of mankind and bestows it on whomever He wishes.'

32 You're to be driven away from people. You're to live with the wild animals of the field. You are to be made to eat grass like cattle, and seven years will pass you by until you realize that the Most High is sovereign over human kingdoms and grants them to whomever he desires.'"

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.

- A restatement of v25...God means what He says and says what He means

33 Immediately the word concerning Nebuchadnezzar was fulfilled; and he was driven away from mankind and began eating grass like cattle, and his body was drenched with the dew of heaven until his hair had grown like eagles' *feathers* and his nails like birds' *claws*.

33 Immediately the word concerning Nebuchadnezzar was fulfilled; and he was driven away from mankind and began eating grass like cattle, and his body was drenched with the dew of heaven until his hair had grown like eagles' *feathers* and his nails like birds' *claws*.

33 The decree was fulfilled against Nebuchadnezzar immediately. He was driven away from people to eat grass like cattle, and his body was drenched with dew from the sky, until his hair grew like eagles' feathers and his nails like birds' claws.

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.

- God's judgment is a sobering reminder that we are all but a breath or heartbeat from insanity or death, but for His grace (Cf. Luke 12:16-20)

— It is God who sustains us moment by moment (John 15:5; Col 1:17)

— The humbling of proud rulers is a common theme in Scripture (Cf. Deut 17:14-20; Ps 92; Prov 16:5-7,12; Is 10:5-11:10; 14:4-23; Ezek 17:23-24; 19:10-14; 28; 31:5-6,12-13; Acts 12:23)

It would not have been abnormal for Nebuchadnezzar's enemies in Babylon to kill him and take his place. The fact that this did not happen during the time of the king's breakdown is another tribute to God's sovereignty. He kept affairs under control, so that when Nebuchadnezzar recovered, he could continue to rule. One wonders what role Daniel might have played in protecting the king, and encouraging the other royal officials to expect and plan for Nebuchadnezzar's restoration.

### Scripture and Pride

- Prov 16:18
- Is 14:12-15; Ezek 28:12-17 - Satan's fall
- Acts 12:20-23 - King Herod
- 2 Cor 12:7-10 - thorn in the flesh
- 1 Tim 3:6
- 1 Peter 5:5-6 - God works against the proud

### Hall of the Humbled

- Satan (Is 14:12-15; Ezek 28:12-17; 1 Tim 3:6)
- Uzziah (2 Chr 26:16)
- Herod (Acts 12:20-23)
- Paul (2 Cor 12:1-10)

(iii) Repentance (4:34-35)

34 "But at the end of that period, I, Nebuchadnezzar, **raised my eyes toward heaven** and **my reason returned to me**, and I blessed the Most High and praised and honored Him

who lives forever; For His dominion is an everlasting dominion, And His kingdom *endures* from generation to generation.

34 "But at the end of that period, I, Nebuchadnezzar, raised my eyes toward heaven and my reason returned to me, and I blessed the Most High and praised and honored Him who lives forever; For His dominion is an everlasting dominion, And His kingdom *endures* from generation to generation.

34 "When that period of time was over, I, Nebuchadnezzar, lifted my eyes to heaven and my sanity returned to me. I blessed the Most High, praising and honoring the one who lives forever: For his sovereignty is eternal, and his kingdom continues from generation to generation.

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:

- The narrative now returns to the first person, adding the force of the king's testimony to the story that the king had been telling

- "...raised my eyes toward heaven" - implies that the king finally came to the end of himself and sought divine help from Yahweh

- "...my reason returned to me" - a person's reason returns to them when they turn back to God; notice his reason returned after Nebuchadnezzar "raised his eyes toward heaven"

- We make the worst decisions in our lives when we're furthest away from God

- Rom 1:18-23 is a description of what happens to the mind of a person who chooses to reject the revelation of God in creation

- Eccl 9:3: "...the hearts of the sons of mankind are full of evil, and insanity is in their hearts throughout their lives."

- Through this ordeal, Nebuchadnezzar learned that he was not God, but he didn't learn this until God put him through divine discipline, until he went through some suffering (Cf. Jonah 2:7).

- One of the best tools God has in His toolbox to right the minds of sinful man that we're not in control, and He is, is suffering

The ability to recognize God is the fundamental difference between beasts and men. In any age, the glory of man is to recognize God and to take his place relative to the Sovereign of the universe. [Feinberg]

35 "All the inhabitants of the earth are of no account, But He does according to His will among the army of heaven And *among* the inhabitants of earth; And no one can fend off His hand Or say to Him, 'What have You done?'

35 "All the inhabitants of the earth are accounted as nothing, But He does according to His will in the host of heaven And *among* the inhabitants of earth; And no one can ward off His hand Or say to Him, 'What have You done?'

35 All who live on the earth are nothing compared to him. He does what he wishes with the heavenly armies and with those who live on earth. No one can hold back his power or say to him, 'What did you do?'

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?

- It is difficult to determine from the text if the king placed saving faith in *Yahweh*, but that is a good possibility in view of the titles and his praise

— Prior to this confession, his confessions were from a pagan whose polytheism permitted the addition of new gods (Cf. 2:47; 3:28-29)

— Here, the king appears to worship the King of heaven only

— At the very least, after his seven years of insanity, Nebuchadnezzar moved from acknowledging the sovereignty of no one but himself to acknowledging *Yahweh's* sovereignty over him

#### (iv) Restoration (4:36-37)

36 At that time my reason returned to me. And my majesty and splendor were restored to me for the honor of my kingdom, and my state counselors and my nobles began seeking me out; so I was reestablished in my sovereignty, and **surpassing greatness was added to me.**

36 At that time my reason returned to me. And my majesty and splendor were restored to me for the glory of my kingdom, and my counselors and my nobles began seeking me out; so I was reestablished in my sovereignty, and surpassing greatness was added to me.

36 At that moment I recovered my sanity, and my honor and majesty returned to me, for the sake of my kingdom. My advisors and officials sought me out, my throne was restored, and even more greatness than I had before was added to me.

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.

- Once Nebuchadnezzar turned back to God and recognized God's rightful place, as well as his own, his mind returned to him. He was no longer insane.

— And after that, God did not demote or punish Nebuchadnezzar...his majesty and splendor were restored to him. God didn't take away what He had given him, now He just allowed Nebuchadnezzar to enjoy it.

— And immediately his state counselors and nobles began "seeking him out" get get his opinion on things. He went from temporary insanity, walking around the park like an animal, to back to ruler of the kingdom...once he rightfully recognized God's control and sovereignty.

— He went from being insane to being sought out for counsel! God's grace is bottomless.

— The tree had been chopped down, but the stump and roots were never to be touched (v15), speaking of the day when God would take Nebuchadnezzar and restore him to his place of honor and glory after this ordeal was over.

- "...surpassing greatness was added to me" - God didn't just restore Nebuchadnezzar just the way he was, but rather God improved upon Nebuchadnezzar's personal situation by blessing him with "surpassing greatness" that he did not have before ("added").

— In Eph 3:17-18, Paul prays that the Ephesians would be able to grasp the love of God for believers and the deep and wide grace that He shows them

- The Babylonian Talmud records that during these seven years, Daniel provided care for Nebuchadnezzar. This is consistent with the relationship we see between them in the Scripture.

There seems to be prophetic significance in this incident as well as in the one in Dan 3. Even though God has appointed Gentiles to a place of prominence in His program during the "Times of the Gentiles," most nations and people walk in rebellion against God. God's judgment on Nebuchadnezzar, designed to subject him to God's authority, seems to prefigure God's judgment on the nations to subject them to the authority of the One who has been given the right to rule.

37 Now I, Nebuchadnezzar, praise, exalt, and honor the King of heaven, for **all His works are true and His ways just**; and He is able to humble those who walk in pride."

37 Now I, Nebuchadnezzar, praise, exalt and honor the King of heaven, for all His works are true and His ways just, and He is able to humble those who walk in pride."

37 In conclusion, I, Nebuchadnezzar, praise, exalt, and give glory to the King of heaven: For everything he does is true, his ways are just, and he is able to humble those who walk in pride."

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.

- Nebuchadnezzar went from taking credit for everything (v30) to one of the greatest glorifiers of God in human history

— Through this trial Nebuchadnezzar learned the purpose of his life: to glorify God. This is the purpose of life for every person.



— We all exist because God had in mind a purpose for your life that in some way you would radiate glory to God in a special and unique way. Every person is used in a different way, but the overarching purpose is always for the glory of God.

— Everything we do must be subsumed under the overarching purpose of life: to glorify God. This is how God wants to work in our lives.

— We can make many decisions in life that the Bible does not specifically promote or prohibit simply by asking: does doing this, saying this, or going here glorify God? If your ultimate purpose is to glorify God, then you can ask yourself this simple question and understand God's will in these areas.

— At this point in Nebuchadnezzar's life, he understands his doxological purpose: to glorify God

— There is little doubt that Nebuchadnezzar is saved at this point...it's difficult to believe that he is not saved after the words and names that he uses to describe and praise God, and the sophisticated theological understanding that he demonstrates.

- "...all His works are true and His ways just" - Nebuchadnezzar describes God the way Scripture describes Jesus at the Second Coming (Rev 19:11). At the end of the day, God is true and just.

- So this was a statutory edict communicated throughout the world, posted in 562 BC

- After his restoration, Nebuchadnezzar lived about one more year

— This is the last we hear about Nebuchadnezzar in Scripture. His son Evil-Merodach succeeded him (Jer 9:23-24). The Babylonian Empire gradually weakened after Nebuchadnezzar's death.

1 Cor 10:31: Therefore, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all things for the glory of God.

The Westminster Confession puts this perfectly: What is the chief end of man? Man's chief end is to glorify God and enjoy Him forever.

If this is what God wants to do, then this starts to control the way I think and the choices I make. David (1 Sam 17:26) was angry at Goliath because Goliath was diminishing God's glory, detracting from the glory of God.

### **Application**

- Immediate: Nebuchadnezzar and pride
  - God puts some of us through tough schooling
  - Sometimes that schooling is because of our own issues or disobedience, as in the case with Nebuchadnezzar
  - But it's always to prepare us as training for His mission in our lives...we should pray that these times aren't wasted
  - God only does this to His children...those He loves

- Thinking about this story...did God give Nebuchadnezzar his trial because of His love for Him?
- Sometimes it's as a consequence for sin...God forgives us, but we still have to deal with the consequences
- Prophetic?
  - Ecumenical outreach of Babylonianism and Gentile power in the last days and final overthrow?
  - Seven years of insanity and confusion
  - Conversion took place after the 7 years of madness
  - The tree did not sprout again until after it had been cut down...