

Nebuchadnezzar's Dream of a Great Tree

Our study is an unusual one about a king who worshiped many gods. In years past, we would have called him a pagan because he did not believe in Yahweh God. He was actually a polytheist since he believed in many gods. What is unusual about this man is that three chapters in the Bible are devoted to his story.

What is also unusual is that he is mentioned ninety-one times in nine books of the Bible. That is really incredible for a pagan, who did not worship God, to appear so many times in the pages of Scripture. Nebuchadnezzar was a famous man who accomplished much. He built a huge empire as well as great building projects. We will learn in this study that we are a lot like him. There is a lot of similarity between that king and us.

His name was King Nebuchadnezzar.

I invite you to turn to Daniel 4 for our study. We believe that these events occurred at roughly 571 B.C. We understand from history that this king died in 562 B.C. Based upon testimony from historians, we believe that this occurred roughly nine years before the end of his life. Since he began his reign in 605 B.C., that means he had been king for about thirty-four or thirty-five years, enough time to build an incredible city. He conquered a lot of territory and had a very

large empire. He did not have to worry about Republicans and Democrats—he was the autocrat! He was the monarch and did whatever he wanted to do. He was also a wealthy man who built an incredible city.

Nebuchadnezzar's Greetings. In Daniel 4:1 we read,

*Nebuchadnezzar the king to all the peoples, nations, and men of every language that live in all the earth:
“May your peace abound! Daniel 4:1 (NASB)*



The first thing the king did was to address all of the people. This chapter is his testimony about a very humbling experience. Have you ever had something really bad, really difficult happen to you? Later, someone asks you about it and you start to share with them the difficult

situation that you had? Sometimes I sit with a person and ask them to tell me what God has done in their life. We call that sharing their testimony. That is what Nebuchadnezzar did.

In this chapter the king spoke to the people. The first part of verse one says he spoke to “all the peoples, nations, and men of every language.” I wonder how he distributed his notice. In those days they did not have the Internet. They did not have smart phones. They did not have the printing press. This occurred in the Neo-Babylonian era. They

wrote on clay tablets in cuneiform. I wonder if they created a great quantity of clay tablets and then distributed them? I do not really think so. There were probably heralds that went around announcing to all the citizens what the king had to say. People would stand and listen because that was the means of communication. The king gave them a blessing, saying, “may your peace abound.” The word for “peace” in the Aramaic actually has the idea of great prosperity, so he is wishing for them great prosperity; he was wishing them well.

Verses 2-3 say,

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

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.

Daniel 4:2-3 (NASB)

Nebuchadnezzar began by telling them about God. He was sharing what God had done in his life. Notice what he said, “It seems good to me to declare the signs and the wonders which the Most High God has done for me.” He was talking about himself. This monarch and ruler has been a very proud man. We saw that in chapters 2 and 3. Now he is going to humble himself and tell them what God has done in his life. This is wonderful!

Then he said, “How great are His works, and how mighty are His wonders.” We have already seen some of the great things that God has done in his life. In chapter 2, we saw that God gave him a dream. The king called the wise men to himself. They could not tell him the dream and the interpretation. Then Daniel gave him the interpretation and Nebuchadnezzar was blown away with what God had done! In chapter 3 he saw Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego rescued. What we are going to see in this chapter are some more signs and wonders that God has done in his life. He makes the statement that God has the ultimate incredible kingdom, one that lasts forever—not like his kingdom that is going to come to a short end.

Nebuchadnezzar Was In His House. He began

to actually get into the details of his experience. He said in verse 4,

I, Nebuchadnezzar, was at ease in my house and flourishing in my palace. Daniel 4:4 (NASB)

Notice he said “house” and “palace.” When he said house, “I am at ease in my house,” what he was saying “I enjoy life in my house. I was enjoying life and flourishing in my palace.” Now it is possible that the house was part of the palace. When he said “flourishing,” the Aramaic has the idea of living in luxury. So he said, “I am living in luxury in my palace. Whether he was at home or in the palace, he was living in luxury.

We understand from historians that his palace was exquisite—gold everywhere, all over the place. His palace must have been unbelievable. What I find to be interesting is that he admits that his palace was luxurious. It was that way because he had made it luxurious. He was admitting that he wanted and liked expensive things. This man is like us, in many ways. But he is unusual from the standpoint that he had the wealth and the ability to get what he wanted.

Nebuchadnezzar Called The Wise Men. Verse 5 begins a description of the king’s dream.

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. Daniel 4:5 (NASB)

He said he had a dream while, “I was on my bed.” When it says “visions,” do not confuse this with dreams and visions. The Aramaic word for “visions” just means “appearances.” So he had the dream and saw things happen. Appearances are taking place in his dream, —individuals and trees, and we do not know what else. He only focused on trees and the “watchers” as he calls them later in this description. The dream is like a picture that he is watching.

Verse 6 describes how the king responded.

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. Daniel 4:6 (NASB)

He brought in his advisors. I am sure on some occasions they gave good advice.

Verse 7 tells us who appeared before him.

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. Daniel 4:7 (NASB)

He told these men the dream. Just as in chapter 2, they could not tell him what the meaning was. They could not even tell him what the dream was, so they could not give him the interpretation. We pointed out in chapter 2 that archaeological evidence reveals they used books that gave them guidelines for interpreting dreams.

Verse 8 tells us that Daniel finally came in before the king.

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 . . . Daniel 4:8 (NASB)

So Nebuchadnezzar was finally relieved. Daniel showed up! To date, the king has had good experience with Daniel. In fact, he told us that Daniel's name is Belteshazzar. We are told that the Spirit of the Holy God was in him. You can imagine at this point the king was really looking forward to Daniel being able to tell him the meaning of the dream. This is important because the Babylonians thought that gods spoke to individuals through dreams. If an individual had a dream, they believed God was speaking through the dream. So when Daniel walked in and he said that the Spirit of the Holy God is in him, Nebuchadnezzar was probably thinking, "I am finally going to find out what God is trying to tell me."

Notice an important phrase in the middle of this verse: "the name of my god." It is interesting that he does not refer to Yahweh. He says, "My god." He is speaking of Marduk, not to Yahweh. He was not a believer at this point. He was not a follower of Yahweh, Daniel's God. Daniel 2 was God's

introduction of Himself to King Nebuchadnezzar. When the king's wise men could not tell the king of the dream or the interpretation, Daniel could when empowered by God to do so.

In chapter 3, God displayed His power with Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. That was a stunning chapter. Now in this chapter, God humbled the king. Do you realize what God has done? God is drawing this king to Himself. That is my belief. I cannot prove it. Scripture does not precisely tell us that; but I believe at the end of chapter 4 Nebuchadnezzar is a follower of Yahweh.

In verse 9, Daniel was praised.

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. Daniel 4:9 (NASB)

The king said, "Okay, Belteshazzar, I am going to give you the dream, and I want you to give me the interpretation." Notice the word "magicians" here. The literal Aramaic means "chief of the scratchers" or "chief of the writers." If you think about the fact that they communicated through cuneiform, that would mean that he is scratching or writing on clay tablets. That is why I changed the meaning from "scratchers" to "writers." Daniel was the chief of the writers. We believe the primary responsibility of the Babylonian magicians was to track the movement of the stars. Apparently Daniel was the chief of the magicians or chief of the writers. Daniel had a very important position in the kingdom. So he said, "Hey, I am really glad you are here, because now you can tell me the meaning of my dream."

King Nebuchadnezzar's Dream. Verse 10 begins a description of the king's dream.

And these are the visions that were in my head as I was laying on my bed, and I was looking. Daniel 4:10 (NASB)

The Aramaic word for "looking" is a participle. It means he

was watching. He was on his bed and had a vision. He said he was looking. It was similar to watching a movie. You listen and pay attention to the story line; but at the same time, you are watching all around at the action that is taking place. That is similar to what the king seems to be describing. It is a participle, and it implies that he is constantly watching everywhere, like a dream, a movie, or a video. He said,

I was looking, and behold, there was a tree in the midst of the earth and its height was great.

**‘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.
‘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.
Daniel 4:10b-12 (NASB)**

This is a very interesting description! It is quite a fabulous big tree. The tree grew very large, and in the end provided food for all - the animals, birds, all living creatures. I was thinking about what nation today is like the Babylonian Empire? Perhaps the United States is somewhat like that. We provide food, and protection for many people. If we did a survey, we would find that the United States seems to be the number one country to which many people in our world wish to emigrate. That is like the Babylonian Empire. The Babylonian Empire provided for many people. That is the picture.

Verse 13 says an angelic watcher appeared in the dream.

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. Daniel 4:13 (NASB)

Now, he says “a holy one, a watcher.” When he says “watcher” or “a holy one,” it is the king’s best description. We cannot say this is Jesus because it is just a dream. The term “watcher” was a common term the Babylonians and Medo-Persians used. The word will occur again in the book of Daniel. So

the king just calls it a watcher. It is was like an angel. A holy one descends from heaven.

Verses 14-15 describe the command the angelic watcher gave to the king.

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.
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.” Daniel 4:14-15 (NASB)**

The picture is that the watcher descended. The decree was given to chop the tree down, strip off the foliage, take the fruit, leave the stump, and then apparently put a fence around it. For the dream said “put a band of iron and bronze around it.” Notice it said “new grass.” Is it not interesting it does not say “old grass”? It said “new grass” as opposed to “old grass.” It appears that what was being commanded is that new grass be laid and a fence put around the grass. The king will end up in this area where he can roam and wander and do whatever he wants.

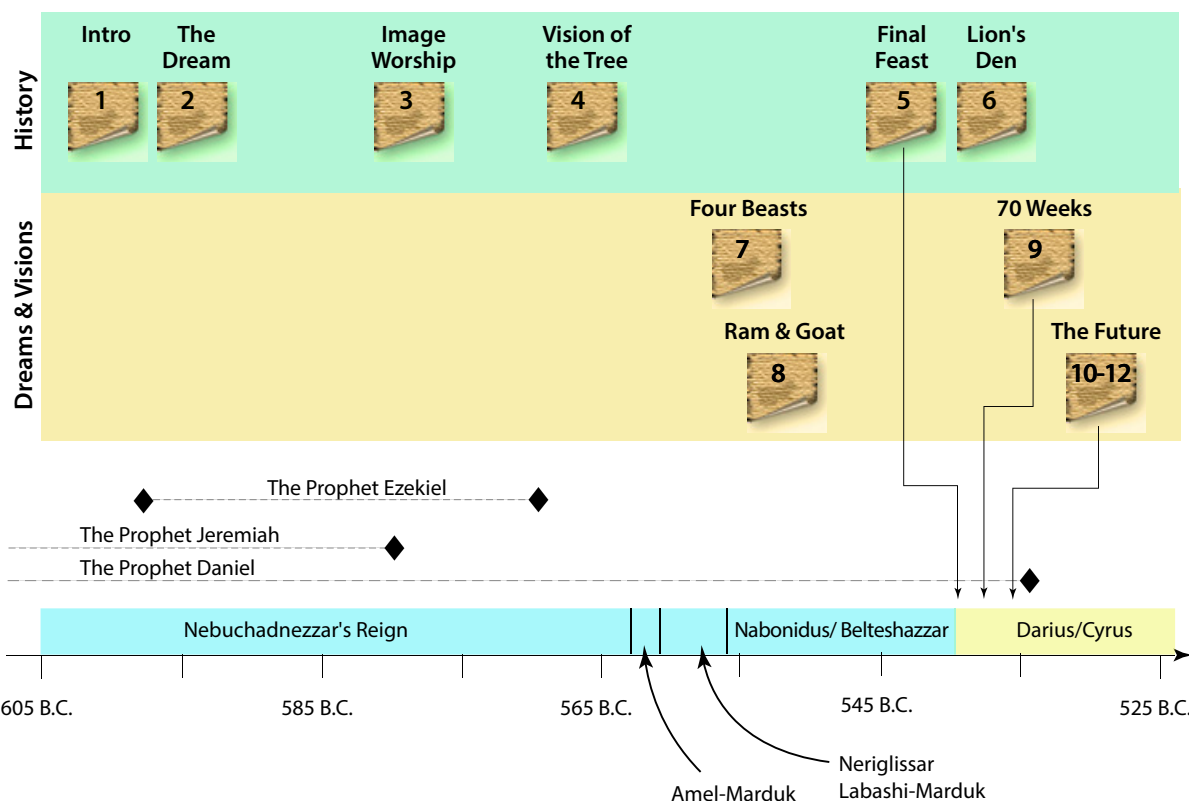
The stump was not to be pulled out of the ground. What does that mean? That means the tree could grow back. If you leave the roots in the ground, it can grow back. So the idea is that the king could come back. We will see later on that is the meaning.

Verse 16 describes the dream about the king.

**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.
Daniel 4:16 (NASB)**

When it says, “seven periods of time,” some people think that means seven years. That could be true, but we do not know if

Outline of Daniel



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it means days or weeks or months or years. The Hebrew word just means “sevens.” The reason we believe it is years is due to some historical records and also to the context. If you check the footnotes, it actually says seven years, but that is not a true translation. The Aramaic just says “sevens.”

Verse 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 man-
kind,
And bestows it on whom He wishes
And sets over it the lowliest of men.”
Daniel 4:17 (NASB)*

This verse reveals that God is totally in charge. “The living may know that the Most High is ruler over mankind” is the reason for what is going to happen, and the king has not yet figured that out.

Some years ago, I was teaching about the sovereignty of God. A man came to me after the worship service. He was furious! He was so angry with me he was almost bouncing up and down. You could see the anger all over him. He rejected the idea that God is sovereign. I would never have thought that anybody who was a Christian would struggle with the idea that God is sovereign. It is unbelievable sometimes what people think. They show up in church and try to push their agenda. Verse 17 then said, “He sets over the lowest of men.” Now, most of us think that if we had pursued an education in order to get a good job, that our efforts will result in a great job, in success. Our daughter has just

finished studying hard to become a registered nurse. It has worked out that she has a good job. But you know, it might not always work out that way. It is possible that what might happen is that you go through all of the work, apply for the job that you really, really, want, and God might choose to select someone else who is less qualified than you and give the job to them. What does this verse say? “And He sets over it the lowest of men” - not necessarily the most educated, the most qualified.

We often think that if we just do all the right things, everything will work out okay. We try so hard and think that God is surely going to bless our effort. The message in this verse is that it may not work out our way. Why? Because it may not be God’s will. Nebuchadnezzar had achieved great things because God had allowed him to do so.

Think for a moment about churches that strive to increase attendance. There are some that think a small church is a sign of a lack of success. According to this verse, God determines if a church is small or large. God determines how much money is given to the church. It is God who determines if the church is popular or well known. The message here is that God is ruler over mankind and He does whatever He wants.

Verse 18 describes the king’s request of Daniel.

“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.”
Daniel 4:18 (NASB)

The king believed that Daniel was empowered by God to give him what he wanted to know.

Verse 19 describes Daniel’s response to the king.

Then Daniel, whose name is Belteshazzar, was appalled for a while as his thoughts alarmed him. Daniel 4:18 (NASB)

Daniel was appalled. Daniel was thinking about this dream, understood the message, and was appalled. He could not

believe it. Belteshazzar said,

“... do not let the dream or its interpretation alarm you.” Daniel 4:19b (NASB)

That is the right idea of the word “appalled.”

“Belteshazzar replied, ‘My lord, if only the dream applied to those who hate you and its interpretation to your adversaries!’” Daniel 4:19 (NASB)

Daniel said, “It would be a lot better if it applied to your enemies, not to you, O King.”

Verses 20-23 read,

The tree that you saw, which became large and grew strong, whose height reached to the sky and was visible to all the earth 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 Daniel 4:20-23 (NASB)

The message was that the tree represented the King, who had become great and grown strong. His majesty had grown strong and reached to the sky and his dominion to the end of the earth.

Interpretation of the Dream. Verse 23 states,

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,” this is the interpretation, O king, and this is the decree of the Most High, which has come upon my lord the king: that you be driven . . . Daniel 4:23-25a (NASB)

Now, here is the meaning.

“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. 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.” Daniel 4:25-26 (NASB)

At the end of verse 26, God said, “You are going to be restored. You will understand again. I have tailor made this trial for you. It is designed to send you a message.

In verse 27, Daniel encouraged the king to repent.

“Therefore, O king, may my advice be pleasing to you: break away now from your sins by doing righteousness . . .” Daniel 4:27a (NASB)

Daniel made a negative-positive statement. First, he said to break off from your iniquities. That is the negative part. Then the positive statement is that he urged him to show mercy to the poor.

“From your iniquities by showing mercy to the poor, in case there may be a prolonging of your prosperity.” Daniel 4:27b (NASB)

It is interesting that Daniel added this phrase about mercy to the poor. Maybe Nebuchadnezzar was not kind to the poor. Maybe he was not merciful. Maybe he took advantage of people. If you were a rich king, and had a gorgeous, luxurious palace, you had to take the wealth from somebody. Perhaps that is why Daniel added admonition to show mercy. I think it also speaks to the monarch’s pride that he did not mind hurting the poor. Proud people often do not bother to help the poor.

May I ask, when is the last time you helped the poor? And if you did not help the poor—why? Daniel connects not

helping the poor with sin.

Daniel was sharing that he cared about this king. It is fabulous that Daniel was trying to help the king. He did not just condemn the king. He did not say, “Oh, good, you are finally going to get it!” Some of us would like to give it to the president, or the past president, or another politician. Daniel really cared about this pagan king.

Nebuchadnezzar’s Dream Is Fulfilled. Verses 28-29 say:

All this happened to Nebuchadnezzar the king. Twelve months later he was walking on the roof of the royal palace of Babylon. Daniel 4:28-29 (NASB)

The palace must have been gorgeous. He was walking, and the king said to himself in verse 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?’” Daniel 4:30 (NASB)

The king was not very humble. He said, “Look at this great place I have built! What a fabulous place! Look at my royal residence! I am really enjoying this!” Have you ever built something or done something that you really enjoyed? Maybe you wanted everybody to know what you had accomplished? King Nebuchadnezzar said, “Wow, I really have great accomplishments.”

In verse 29, notice the first three words, “twelve months later.” Some people teach that God is eager to punish us. But God gave him a dream, a warning to stop sinning, and then waited for twelve months. God was merciful, and gave him time to repent. God was not eager to discipline this man. If any of us are habitually committing sin, we do not understand that God is giving us time to repent. Sometimes we think we are getting away with sin.

God limited how long He would allow the king to continue sinning. For King Nebuchadnezzar, the limit was twelve months. For you it might be 15 months, 24 months, 6 months, 3 months, or it could be today. King Nebuchadnezzar

zar apparently thought he was getting away with his sin. But he was not successful.

When the king said that Babylon was great, some historians would agree. Some state that the city of Babylon was truly magnificent. Herodotus in his *Histories*, Borassus who was a 3rd century Babylonian priest, and Diodorus of Sicily give us the picture that Babylon was a magnificent city. The city was built on both sides of the Euphrates River. It had a bridge over the river, and a tunnel under the river. There was a triple wall around the city, one hundred feet tall. The city had eight gates. One of the gates was the magnificent Ishtar Gate. It has been restored and is in a London museum. It is 80 feet tall and has lions all over it. The Hanging Gardens was one of the seven Wonders of the World and was built for his wife. The city had 50 temples! Gold statues were everywhere. One hundred and twenty of them were enameled with multi-colored lions. There were five hundred and seventy-five bulls and dragons in the city. The palace was extremely large. The streets of the city were straight. That implies detailed planning. One of the streets is referred to as a processional street 1,000 yards long. It was over half a mile long. Therefore, we should not be surprised that he was proud. No wonder the king was congratulating himself.

Verse 31 adds,

And 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, and you will be driven away from mankind, and your dwelling place will be with the beasts of the field, and you will be given grass to eat like cattle, and seven periods of time ... Daniel 4:31-32a (NASB)

Or seven years.

“... 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.’ 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.” Daniel 4:32b-33 (NASB)

This week I did some research into the disorder the king had. The Lord led me to an article in the *American Journal of Psychiatry*, October 1977, volume 134. It was written by two men, Harvey Rostenstock, M.D. and Kenneth R. Vincent. Dr. Rostenstock in this article states that one of the cases he had was someone who thought they were an animal. They showed evidence of growing thicker fingernails, and longer hair. He talked about the different types of tests that he ran. He said King Nebuchadnezzar had lycanthropy.

Leon Wood indicates that Berossus wrote three books on Chaldean history. In them he referred to Nebuchadnezzar's illness.¹ Flavius Josephus quotes Berossus in his book *Against Apion*.

... Berossus adds further upon that head; for thus he says in his third book: “Nabuchodonosor, after he had begun to build the forementioned wall, fell sick, and departed this life, when he had reigned forty-three years; whereupon his son Evilmerodach obtained the kingdom ...”²

Note that Berossus stated Nabuchodonosor reigned forty-three years. That is significant because Nebuchadnezzar reigned that many years. In addition, we should note that he said Nebuchadnezzar was sick. Last, Evilmerodach or Amel-Marduk was Nebuchadnezzar's son. So, Berossus referred to Nebuchadnezzar's illness. Wood indicates references to this also exist in the writings of Eusebius, Cyrill, and Syncellus.³

At the end of the article, he writes that there have been only three cases of lycanthropy in modern history. Then he described them. The king experienced a real disorder, a real illness. This was not something the writer of Scripture imagined or made up. God made the king think that he was an

¹ Leon Wood. *A Commentary on Daniel*. Zondervan Publishing. 1983. p. 122.

² Flavius Josephus. *Against Apion* Book 1. section 20. William Winston. Josephus. Kregel Publication. 1974. p. 613-614.

³ Wood. *Ibid*.

animal. He acted like an animal. This is an incredible passage. God humbled the man. When God wants to humble somebody, He knows how to humble us.

Verses 34-35 state,

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.

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?’”

Daniel 4:34-35 (NASB)

His message is that God does as He desires. It does not matter what you want or who you are. God does what He wants.

Verse 36 continues,

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.

Daniel 4:36 (NASB)

The message is that God was in control.

Conclusion. Verse 37 is Nebuchadnezzar’s summary. He said,

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.” Daniel 4:37 (NASB)

The king said God is just. God is just, and God is right, when

He chooses to humble proud people. I have a question for you: Are you a proud person? Proud people have an “I” problem. Not E-Y-E, but capital “I.” We have an “I” problem - we put ourselves first. Proud people fail to recognize that God is in control, and they do not want to submit.

Psalm 127:1 is one of my favorite verses. It says,

Unless the LORD builds the house,

They labor in vain who build it;

Psalm 127:1 (NASB)

In other words, unless God builds the house, you can try all you want but you will not succeed. Unless God is at work, you will not succeed.

In Deuteronomy 32:39, we are told,

And there is no god besides Me;

It is I who put to death and give life.

I have wounded and it is I who heal,

Deuteronomy 32:39 (NASB)

Somehow we tend to think it is the doctors or nurses who heal. We get sick and the last thing we think about is prayer. The first thing we do is head for the E.R. Why? Because that is our cultural mind set. We tend to leave God out of the picture. Over the years I have taught that one responsibility God has given to elders in the church is to pray for healing for the ill. I have always been amazed at James 5:14 that asks,

Is anyone among you sick? James 5:14a (NASB)

What does God say to do? “Call the doctor”? “Call a nurse”? “Call the E.R.”? No! He says,

Then he must call for the elders of the church. James 5:14b (NASB)

That is God’s solution. That is God’s approach. We do not do that. We do not think to turn to God first, so we tend to go to the doctor, the E.R., talk to a nurse, or grab something out of the medicine cabinet. Now maybe that is necessary,

but God's first instruction is to go to your elders. You might be surprised at what might happen.

1 Samuel 2:7 says,

The LORD makes poor and rich. 1 Samuel 2:7 (NASB)

Do you want to be rich? That is God's decision. You might think, "Oh, I have to work really hard to get the money!" How about depending upon God?

In Philippians 2:12-13 we are told,

Work out your salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God who is at work in you, both to will and to work for His good pleasure. Philippians 2:12-13 (NASB)

What is the message of Scripture? We know that King Nebuchadnezzar built the city of Babylon. He made his plans. He had the people do the work of building, but who made it possible for the building to happen? God did. That is the message of Daniel 4. We may have a wrong view as to how important we are. In Habakkuk 2:4, it says,

**Behold, as for the proud one,
His soul is not right within him;
But the righteous will live by his faith. Habakkuk 2:4 (NASB)**

Now I want you to see two things in this verse. The first part of the verse speaks of proud people. The last part of the verse is a statement that is repeated multiple times in the New Testament. It says, "But the righteous will live by faith." This verse is saying that proud people do not live by faith. Proud people depend upon themselves. Did you know that you can be a perfectionist planner? I used to be one. The idea was that if I just planned, and planned, and planned, and I really was faithful in doing all this planning, that everything would work out right and be successful. When it did not, I became agitated. I did not trust God—I trusted my planning. Some of us reveal that we do not trust God. We are really proud people who think we can handle everything ourselves, and then we worry and worry. If you are a worrier, you struggle

with the issue of pride because you are depending upon yourself instead of trusting God. Nebuchadnezzar did not understand that God is the one who makes things happen. God is the one who is in control. God is the one who exalts. God is the one who humbles us. He humbles the proud. What an incredible and important passage of Scripture for us all!