



DANIEL 4:1-37

By Louis Powell

FIRST FACTS

Babylon was built originally by Nimrod, the first world dictator (Gen 10:8-10). Recent excavations report Babylon had double sets of walls, an outer wall and an inner wall. The walls were 120 feet high and 65 feet thick. They had chariot races on top of the walls! Herodotus reported the city proper was 15 miles square.

The connection between chapter 3 and chapter 4 is the _____. If we review the organization of the book of Daniel, we notice the first six chapters are historical or filled with stories. Chapters 2-7 are written in the Aramaic language because these chapters focus on Gentile history. Chapter 4 is written by a Gentile king giving his conversion testimony! Chapters 7-12 are visions, with chapters 8-12 focusing on Israel.

VERSES 1-3

Some believe verses 1-3 should end the chapter because we see the end result of seven years with Nebuchadnezzar being like a beast before we know the dream and judgement against the king. King Nebuchadnezzar gave his official statement posted throughout the world with a warning he learned from the Most High God: "Those that walk in pride, God is able to abase" (v. 37).

VERSE 4

Some believe that twenty or thirty years may have elapsed between the episode of the fiery furnace and his dream described in chapter four. Nebuchadnezzar was enjoying peace and

safety within his kingdom. All his enemies were conquered, and he had completed amazing projects. Finally, he could rest and enjoy what he had done. Nebuchadnezzar thought that "he" had built Babylon with all its beauty, but he was about to find out he was _____. It was the Most High God Who had accomplished building Babylon.

VERSES 5-9

Daniel is the MASTER OF THE MAGICIANS. He is the leader and top advisor to the king. Wow!

VERSES 10-18

In this dream he sees a huge tree reaching up to heaven and sheltering animals and birds. An angel commanded the tree to be cut down and all its branches and leaves removed, and its fruit scattered. The only thing left was the stump of the tree, and a band of iron and brass was placed on it to secure the Babylonian Kingdom would wait for Nebuchadnezzar to recover. The angel shouts for someone to live like a beast for "seven times." The king was _____. He called for all his wise advisors for the dream's interpretation, but they had no answer. The king called for Daniel to come to him.

Daniel had extraordinary comprehension and knowledge from God. God's lesson to Nebuchadnezzar and the reader is: God is sovereign over every kingdom and every individual. He gives or takes away as he wishes. (v. 17). God decided to deal with the pride in Nebuchadnezzar's heart.



VERSES 19-25

Daniel was shocked by the dream and the king could see Daniel was distressed. Daniel wished the dream was for the king's enemies and not Nebuchadnezzar. Daniel had worked with the king and tried to introduce him to the true God. Now Daniel realizes a seven-year punishment is coming on the king. Daniel now says, "The tree is you, O king." Nebuchadnezzar had witnessed the miracle of the three faithful Hebrew men in the burning fiery furnace. He gave a warning against anyone speaking amiss of the Most High God (3:29). Now Nebuchadnezzar was not going to know a little about God, but he was going to _____ the Most High God through harsh punishment.

VERSES 26-27

Nebuchadnezzar's disgrace and removal from the throne is symbolized by the branches and leaves being removed. The stump and roots remain showing the kingdom will not fall in the seven years. For seven years the king will live like a beast, but his kingdom is protected. What is the last world leader called? He is called "the beast" (Rev 11:7; 13:1ff.; 14:9,11).

Daniel was aware the king had a furious temper (Da 2:12; 3:19) and that he was taking a risky path to confront him about his pride. Yet the faithful prophet spoke in truthfulness and waited for the consequences. Daniel wanted the king to _____, acknowledge all his sins, and have faith in the true God. He would have had a new beginning, but he did not make the right decision.

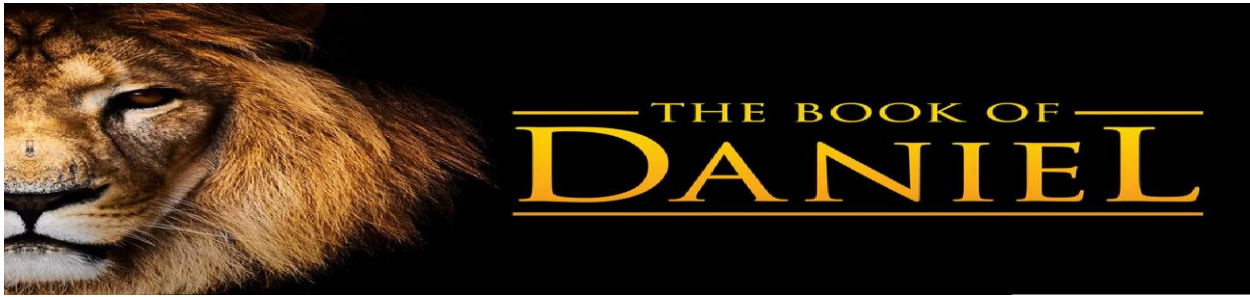
VERSES 28-33

God, in His grace and mercy, gave the king a year to repent of his sinful pride. The king refused to submit to the Most High God. God gave the people in the days of Noah 120 years to repent and they refused too (1Pe 3:20; Ge 6:3). Nebuchadnezzar was probably looking out over the great city of Babylon when he spoke those prideful words recorded in Da 4:30. God hates pride (Pr 6:16). A single voice from heaven told the king judgement was falling on him now. "No man knows when his hour will come" (Ec 9:12). God waits a long time for sinners to repent. But the time comes when _____ falls without repentance. His mind and his body became beastly for seven years and he "did eat grass as oxen." Boanthropy: an ox.

God could have killed the king and devastated the kingdom, but God still had planned intentions for Nebuchadnezzar, His people and Daniel. God wanted the king to tell the whole kingdom what the Most High God had done for him to glorify Him among all the nations. Israel was supposed to give witness of God to the Gentiles (Isa 42:6; 49:6), but they failed. Israel fell into the darkness of the pagan nations. God used a _____, to glorify His name. God's will is always done. He rules over everything from a young child to the most ruthless dictator.

VERSES 34-37

The king lifted up his eyes to heaven, to God, and surrendered through faith to the Most High God. There is little doubt in my mind that



Nebuchadnezzar requested and received sincere conversion. In Daniel chapter 3, Nebuchadnezzar had called God the Most High God as if all the other gods still existed but with less power. Now he knows the Most High is the only God. Nebuchadnezzar's kingdom was not eternal, but God's kingdom will remain forever. Babylon one day would fall to another empire. Nothing can destroy God's kingdom or defeat His purposes. Seven years before, the king considered himself a great man and his kingdom a great kingdom, but now he had a different viewpoint. "All the peoples of the earth are regarded as nothing" (Da 4:35) including Nebuchadnezzar. Isaiah puts it a different way: "Behold, the nations are as a drop in a bucket, and are counted as the small dust on the scales.... It is He who sits above the circle of the earth, and its inhabitants are like grasshoppers" (Isa 40:15,22). We are all _____ to the Most High God.

A truly free person is a believer who surrenders to God's will and takes responsibility for fulfilling his/her purpose balanced with accountability based on God's Word.

LAST FACTS

The Bible expects us to exalt God in whatever circumstances we might find ourselves (Ac 4:23-31; Ro 8:31-39). Because God is sovereign, He can do as He pleases. He is the only One to hold Himself accountable (Ro 9:14-23). The Most High God allows His creation to have the freedom to make decisions and to even not obey Him. But God will still accomplish his will. Mankind has freewill because God allows

this. Nebuchadnezzar did not become any less of a man by recognizing God's sovereignty. The king confidently declared that God had done great things on his behalf. When we think we can limit God, He overrides us and finishes His divine purposes for His glory anyway. God does not need our _____ in anything. He rules the world. What was the result of Nebuchadnezzar's conversion? His reasoning was restored by God and He also gave the king's respect and excellence back with his throne! He "became even greater than before" (Da 4:36). Where sin had abounded, grace abounded even more (Ro 5:20). Instead of bragging about his own successes, Nebuchadnezzar said, "Now I Nebuchadnezzar praise and extol and honor the King of heaven" (Da 4:37).

Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.

Philippians 2:5-8

(Ref.: Adam Clarke, Karl Keil, Warren Wiersbe, J. Vernon McGee, Chuck Missler, Finis Dake, David Stern, Ancient Christian Commentary, Matthew Henry)

Answers: Most High God, wrong, horrified, meet, repent, judgement, pagan king, grasshoppers, permission



Pride - Proverbs 6:16-19

These six things doth the LORD hate: yea, seven **are an abomination** unto him:

1. A proud look (Pride)
2. a lying tongue
3. and hands that shed innocent blood
4. An heart that deviseth wicked imaginations
5. feet that be swift in running to mischief
6. A false witness that speaketh lies
7. and he that soweth discord among brethren

Every one that is proud in heart is an abomination to the LORD... **Proverbs 16:5**

Pride goeth before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall. **Proverbs 16:18**

Seest thou a man wise in his own conceit? there is more hope of a fool than of him. **Proverbs 26:12**

A man's pride shall bring him low: but honour shall uphold the humble in spirit. **Proverbs 29:23**

The chapters of Daniel are not all in chronological order.

Chronological Order

- 1 Babylonian Captivity 606 B.C.
- 2 Nebuchadnezzar's Dream 602 B.C.
- 3 Nebuchadnezzar's Image
- 4 Nebuchadnezzar's Pride
- 7 The vision of the 4 beasts 556 B.C.
- 8 Ram and He-goat vision 554 B.C.
- 5 Babylon falls to Persians 539 B.C.
- 9 Vision of seventy weeks 538 B.C.
- 6 The Lions' Den
- 10 -12 Closing visions

Key Dates

- 726 Assyrians conquer and take captive Northern Israel
- 612 B.C.: Nineveh (Assyrian) falls to an alliance of Babylon and Media.
- 609 B.C.: Pharaoh Necho leads army against Assyria. Josiah fights Necho and gets killed (2 Chr 35:20-24).
- 606 B.C.: Battle of Carchemesh: Nebuchadnezzar vs. Pharaoh Necho W bank of Euphrates (Jer 46:1-6). Jehoikim is captured (2 Chr 36:5-8).

Siege #1

- 603 B.C.: 1st Siege of Jerusalem: Jehoikim released as a vassal; Daniel and 3 friends taken as hostages.

Siege #2

- 598 B.C.: Jehoikim dies after 5 year battle (Jer 22:17-19). His son, Jehiachin ("Jeconiah"), reigns until the siege is over (Jer 22:24-30).
- Jeconiah is captured along with 10,000 captives, including Ezekiel (Ezek 1:1-3; 2 Kgs 24:8-20; 2 Chr 36:6-10), 1000 skilled artisans; etc. (2 Kgs 24:1-4).
- 597 B.C.: Zedekiah, Jehoikim's uncle, installed as vassal king at Jerusalem.
- 586 B.C.: Jerusalem temple destroyed; Zedekiah blinded and taken to Babylon.