

DANIEL

In this lesson we will be studying Daniel Chapter 4 and examining another of King Nebuchadnezzar's dreams: the "Tree Dream". Having returned from the Plain of Dura and the miracle with Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, it is now some time later. We find that the King is suddenly interested in telling his empire about God and His "miraculous signs and wonders". What could have caused this excitement? Let's have a look at Chapter 4 to find out about the apparent rebirth of the king.

Read Daniel Chapter 4, then answer the following:

1. As identified in Daniel 4:1, who was the king addressing his great announcement to?
 - a. ANSWER: The passage describes his audience as the entire known world, i.e., "the peoples...who live in all the world" [NIV].
2. In Daniel 4:5 we read that the king asserts that his dream made him "afraid". Immediately before having this dream, as recounted in Daniel 4:4, he says that he was "contented and prosperous". What a turn of events! What could he possibly be afraid of?
 - a. ANSWER: He was afraid regarding the implications of a dream he had about a great and prosperous tree that was cut down. Being a believer in prophetic significance of dreams, he saw this as a bad omen no doubt, which is why he was anxious to learn of its interpretation.
3. What was different about the king's approach to having Daniel interpret this dream, versus the approach he took regarding the dream described in Daniel Chapter 1?
 - a. ANSWER: This time he described the actual dream first, before asking for its interpretation. You will recall that previously, he would not reveal his dream; rather he insisted that the events in the dream be divined by Daniel first, before the meaning of these events was interpreted.
4. Who did the king call initially to interpret the dream? Was it Daniel?
 - a. ANSWER: No, he called the "wise men of Babylon, the magicians, enchanters, astrologers and diviners".
5. What was the title that Nebuchadnezzar used when he saw Daniel/Belteshazzar?
 - a. ANSWER: The king referred to him as "chief of the magicians". This was not Daniel's real title, but was rather the king's way of indicating that Daniel was the best of all of his advisers.
6. We learned Daniel Chapter 1 that Daniel's Babylonian name was Belteshazzar. In this chapter, we learn the origin of the name. Who had the king named Daniel after?
 - a. ANSWER: Belteshazzar was the name of the king's god. He named Daniel after him because the king believed that the "spirit of the holy gods is in him" (i.e., in Daniel).
7. Why do you suppose that Daniel ended up being the last person asked to consider the king's dream?
 - a. ANSWER: It allowed God the time to show the king that no one but Daniel could interpret it, and that the interpretation was coming straight from God.
8. Even though the dream is about a tree, the "messenger" in the dream has a message for "him" (i.e., the king). What is this message?
 - a. ANSWER: That he would become drenched with dew and live with the animals, i.e., the king will lose his mind and his kingdom. No wonder he was afraid.

9. What does Daniel indicate that the Lord is calling the king to do?
- a. ANSWER: Just as Christ calls us to repentance, so too God called Nebuchadnezzar to do the same.
10. How much time transpired between the time that Daniel warned the king to repent and when God brought judgment?
- a. ANSWER: One year, 12 months later. God granted him an entire year to repent before bringing judgment.
11. What did the king do once his time of punishment had been fulfilled?
- a. ANSWER: He acknowledged God, and honored and glorified Him; and his kingdom was restored. In this way, King Nebuchadnezzar knew that his kingdom came from God.
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So, by the end of our Chapter 4 study, we see a repentant king who acknowledges that all that he is and all that he has comes from God; and that God indeed is sovereign over all the earth. It took many miracles for Nebuchadnezzar to finally realize there is only one true God.

In our next lesson, Daniel encounters another leader and a new situation.

Thanks for studying with us.

In Christ,

Wes