

# Studies in the Book of Daniel

Topic: The Testimony of Nebuchadnezzar

Scripture: Daniel 4

Memory Verse: Daniel 4:3

Lesson 4

Daniel 4

**INTRODUCTION:** About ten years have passed since the events took place that we were told about in chapter 3. The Babylonian empire under Nebuchadnezzar's rule has prospered, and grown into the most lavish kingdom the world had ever seen up to that time. Nebuchadnezzar is filled with pride, but God was about to humble him. This chapter is actually a Babylonian State Document which Nebuchadnezzar sent out into his great empire. In it, he testified how the true God brought him to his knees. In this chapter we find recorded **THE TESTIMONY OF NEBUCHADNEZZAR.**

## I THE PROCLAMATION OF THE TREE DREAM BY NEBUCHADNEZZAR

v 1-18

- A. Nebuchadnezzar sent out a greeting to everyone in his world empire  
v 1-3

There was a definite difference in the tone of the king's greeting and other things he had said. (Daniel 2:12-13; 3:2-6) The greeting "*peace be multiplied unto you*" (v 1) is a Christian greeting and sounds strange coming from the lips of a heathen king who had been used to destroy many of God's people. (I Peter 1:2; II Peter 1:2; Jude 2) This greeting from Nebuchadnezzar showed there had been a tremendous change in his heart. (II Corinthians 5:17)

- B. Nebuchadnezzar recalled his dream concerning the tree which grew in the midst of the earth v 4-18

King Nebuchadnezzar was much like the proud rich man who "*fared sumptuously every day,*" and cared little for the needs of others. (Luke 16:19) Notice how many times Nebuchadnezzar spoke of himself in verses 4-10. His thoughts were all self-centered and concerned only with his own greatness. However, God gave him a dream concerning a huge "*tree*" which grew in the earth and became very great. A "*watcher*" or "*holy one*" (v 13) (probably an angel) came down from Heaven and gave the order to cut the great tree down. The stump of the tree was to be given a "*beast's heart*" (v 16) for a period of "*seven times*" (v 16). The purpose of this dream (v 17) was to teach the

people of the earth that it is God Who is in control of the kingdoms of this world. (Proverbs 21:1; Psalm 83:18)

## II THE INTERPRETATION OF THE TREE DREAM v 19-27

- A. Daniel tells King Nebuchadnezzar the meaning of his strange dream v 19-26  
When God revealed the dream to Daniel, he was shocked and troubled. Nebuchadnezzar by now had become his friend, and Daniel was reluctant to reveal the bad news to him. The king seemed to realize Daniel's sorrow and assured him that he need not fear to tell the meaning of the dream. Daniel began by wishing this dream would happen to all the king's enemies, and then gave Nebuchadnezzar the interpretation of his dream:
- 1) "THE TREE THAT THOU SAWEST" (v 20) - the "tree" represents Nebuchadnezzar (v 22)
  - 2) "HEW THE TREE DOWN" (v 23) - proud Nebuchadnezzar would be cut down and humbled (Proverbs 16:5)
  - 3) "LET HIS PORTION BE WITH THE BEASTS" (v 23) - Nebuchadnezzar would lose his mind and live with the animals
  - 4) "TILL SEVEN TIMES PASS OVER" (v 23) - a "time" is the period of one year (Revelation 12:14)
  - 5) "LEAVE THE STUMP OF THE TREE ROOTS" (v 26) - Nebuchadnezzar would be restored to his throne after the seven years of living as an ox
- B. Daniel pleaded with Nebuchadnezzar to repent of his sinful ways v 27  
Daniel took advantage of this opportunity to talk to the king about forsaking his sin. He advised the king to repent for it just might stall the coming judgment. (Jeremiah 18:8; 26:13; Proverbs 28:13)

## III THE FULFILLMENT OF THE TREE DREAM BY GOD v 28-37

- A. Nebuchadnezzar lost his mind just as Daniel had prophesied v 28-33  
The king did not heed the warning from Daniel to repent. God gave him a year's grace period in which to repent. (v 29) Since God's judgment upon Nebuchadnezzar did not happen immediately, the king may have doubted Daniel's prophecy. However, the grace period finally ended, and while Nebuchadnezzar was arrogantly taking the credit for the greatness of Babylon - JUDGMENT CAME UPON HIM. (Jeremiah 9:23-24; Proverbs 6:16-19) The king had a type of insanity which caused him to imagine he was an ox. The insane of that day were driven out of the city rather than being placed in an institution for

treatment. Thus, the great king of the world lived like an ox in the field for seven long years. (I Samuel 21:13-15)

- B. Nebuchadnezzar regained his right mind and praised the Lord v 34-37  
At the end of the seven years of insanity living as an ox, Nebuchadnezzar at last lifted up his eyes to Heaven. A beast, such as an ox, does not do that. The king had been humbled, and now realized that God was in control of His universe. Nebuchadnezzar would only live for about a year after he was restored to his throne, but it would be a year in which great honors were heaped upon him, and in which he glorified the true God which he now served. This is the last time we read in the scriptures about Nebuchadnezzar. After his death, his son Evil-Merodach ruled over Babylon. (II Kings 25:27)

**TEACHERS' TIP:** The reward for work well done is the opportunity to do more.

**NEXT MEMORY VERSE:** Daniel 5:30

# Study Guide Sheet

## Chapter 4

1. Nebuchadnezzar began to be filled with \_\_\_\_\_ because of the prosperity of Babylon.
2. Daniel chapter 4 is actually a Babylon State \_\_\_\_\_ which Nebuchadnezzar sent out to his empire.
3. Nebuchadnezzar's greeting is a \_\_\_\_\_ greeting showing the change that had come in the king's heart.
4. Nebuchadnezzar had a dream concerning a \_\_\_\_\_ which grew in the midst of the earth.
5. God revealed the meaning of the king's dream to \_\_\_\_\_.
6. The tree represented \_\_\_\_\_.
7. Proud Nebuchadnezzar would be cut down and \_\_\_\_\_.
8. Nebuchadnezzar would lose his mind and live with the \_\_\_\_\_.
9. The king would be insane for a period of \_\_\_\_\_ years.
10. God gave Nebuchadnezzar a grace period of \_\_\_\_\_ to repent.
11. The king did not repent and lived insane as an \_\_\_\_\_ for seven years.
12. Nebuchadnezzar lived for about a \_\_\_\_\_ after he was restored to his throne, but he spent the time glorifying God.

# Study Guide Sheet KEY

## Chapter 4

1. Nebuchadnezzar began to be filled with Pride because of the prosperity of Babylon.
2. Daniel chapter 4 is actually a Babylon State document which Nebuchadnezzar sent out to his empire.
3. Nebuchadnezzar's greeting is a Christian greeting showing the change that had come in the king's heart.
4. Nebuchadnezzar had a dream concerning a tree which grew in the midst of the earth.
5. God revealed the meaning of the king's dream to Daniel.
6. The tree represented Nebuchadnezzar.
7. Proud Nebuchadnezzar would be cut down and humbled.
8. Nebuchadnezzar would lose his mind and live with the animals.
9. The king would be insane for a period of 7 years.
10. God gave Nebuchadnezzar a grace period of Year to repent.
11. The king did not repent and lived insane as an Ox for seven years.
12. Nebuchadnezzar lived for about a Year after he was restored to his throne, but he spent the time glorifying God.