

The Historical Aspects of Daniel (chs. 1-6)

I. THE TIMES AND EVENTS THROUGH THE REIGN OF NEBUCHADNEZZAR, (chs. 1-4)

- A. Nebuchadnezzar moves upon God’s nation, (1:1-7)
- B. Daniel resolves not to defile himself, (8-13)
- C. God promotes Daniel and his three friends, (17-21)
- D. Nebuchadnezzar dreams of a great image, (2:1-49)
- E. Nebuchadnezzar sets up a golden image, (3:1-30)

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- F. Nebuchadnezzar beholds a great tree, (4:1-37)
 - 1. *Nebuchadnezzar offers an impressive proclamation prior to the vision, (1-3)*

 INTERPRETATION:

¹ (When Daniel was about forty-five to fifty years old), **Nebuchadnezzar the king** (who may very well be saved at this point – wrote), **To all peoples, nations, and languages that dwell in all the earth** (throughout his kingdom): **Peace** (Shalom, the Hebrew form of greeting), **be multiplied to you.**

² **I thought it good** (that it was my duty, and did well become me, that it was a debt I owed to God and the world), **to declare** (to give a public testimony as to), **the signs** (something that points out [*implying God’s existence and power*]), **and wonders** (that which produces surprise, astonishment, or admiration [*affirming the object of the signs*]), **that the Most High** (supreme), **God has worked for me**, (how that because of my arrogance the Most High God turned me into an animal for seven years as He said He would and how He has now restored me a better and wiser man to my throne).

³ **How great are His signs, and how mighty His wonders** (by which the Most High chooses to make Himself known)! **His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom** (kingdom is described here in a metaphorical sense depicting God’s sovereign, stable, unchanging, eternal, universal rule), **and His dominion is from generation to generation** (it is perpetual – it will not die though man will – though angels will fall – though the earth and the heavens will be consumed – God’s dominion will maintain the same authority, set of rules, equal treatment in judgment and the same rewards and punishments without variation eternally. Now let me tell you why I say this).

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2. Nebuchadnezzar experiences the unexpected vision,(4-8)

INTERPRETATION:

- ⁴ **I, Nebuchadnezzar, was at rest** (free from apprehension and fear), **in my house and flourishing**, (lit., “*growing green*” – enjoying my labor and prosperity), **in my palace**.
- ⁵ (It was in these conditions and surroundings that), **I saw a dream which made me afraid** (as afraid as I was because of my first dream [cp., 2:1, 3]), **and the thoughts** (I was having), **on my bed and** (because of), **the visions of my head**, (the unfolding episode), **troubled me**, (downright terrified me [probably anticipating some awful threat to him or his kingdom]).
- ⁶ **Therefore** (because I was so frightened), **I issued a decree** (because of the immediacy of the situation [cp., 3:29]), **to bring in all the wise men of Babylon before me** (among whom Daniel was not present), **that they might make known to me the interpretation of the dream.**¹
- ⁷ **Then the magicians, the astrologers, the Chaldeans, and the soothsayers** (see 2:2), **came in, and I told them the dream; but** (in spite of this), **they did not make known to me its interpretation**, (they may not have even tried to invent one for fear that Daniel would show up and prove their blundering attempt. Proverbs says that “*Even a fool, when he holdeth his peace, is counted wise: and he that shutteth his lips is esteemed a man of understanding,*” [Pr. 17:28]).
- ⁸ **But at last** (with gladness, relief, expectancy), **Daniel came before me**² (**his name is Belteshazzar, according to the name of my god** (Bel [see 1:7]); **in him** (Daniel), **is the Spirit of the Holy God**),³ **and I told the dream before him, saying:**

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COMMENTARY:

¹ Why does the king not repeat the test of chapter 2 and withhold the content of the dream as well? The answer may well be that his earlier test had settled once for all the difference between Daniel and the other magicians, and he now wanted these magicians to flatter him and soothe his conscience, (Whitcomb, *Daniel*, P. 63).

² Daniel may simply have intentionally stayed behind, possibly because of an undisclosed revelation from God to that end, (Wood, *Daniel*, p. 105).

³ The word “spirit” (ruah), as used here by a person of pagan background, is not a reference to the Holy Spirit, but it is the king’s way of identifying the point of contact within Daniel by which this holy God could make the necessary revelation. Nebuchadnezzar was only saying that Daniel had that within him which made possible the impartation, by the Holy God, of such information as here desired, (Ibid., p. 106).

F APPLICATION:

(6-7, 18) The wise men, magicians, the astrologers, the Chaldeans and the soothsayers could

not interpret Nebuchadnezzar’s dream.

Nebuchadnezzar looks for answers from the world and finds no peace or relief from his fears and troubles. The wisest philosophers, magicians, astrologers, scientists, mediums, politicians, and charlatans that Babylon could produce did not know where to find, how to produce, nor how to fabricate the means by which to satisfy the king’s heart. For that which the king desires can not be found, fabricated, or conjured up by any man, nor in any created thing. One must submit the password (I am finite), humble himself before his Creator (only You are infinite), and beseech the Most High God concerning matters that only He can address. Only God can save, comfort, guide, etc., the human heart to the place of genuine, consistent, and continual peace and contentment/satisfaction. Daniel knows and follows these principles. There is nothing special in Daniel as a person, or in his methods, but there is something very special about His beliefs and values. Believers do not need to find a Daniel before we can find the peace and contentment that King Nebuchadnezzar sought and found. Believers need only adopt Daniel’s beliefs and values. That is something all of us have not only the *ability to do*, but *the duty to do*. We can and are to, “*come boldly to the throne of Grace.*”

(8-9) Daniel again sticks out in a crowd.

Men and women of God ought to be noted for and be identifiable by:

- The *presence* of the Spirit of God, (in their lives).
- The *ability* to interpret the Word of God
- The *discernment* to know the will of God
- The *determination* to speak the whole counsel of God
- The *avowal* to live and die to the glory of God

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3. Nebuchadnezzar procures a necessary interpreter for the vision,(9-18)

 **INTERPRETATION:**

⁹ “**Beltshazzar, chief of the magicians (2:48), because I know (experientially and intellectually), that the Spirit of the Holy God is in you, and no secret (dream/vision), troubles you (in that you cannot explain it), explain to me the visions of my dream that I have seen, and its interpretation.**

¹⁰ “**These were the visions of my head while on my bed: “I was looking (looking very carefully), and behold, A tree in the midst of the earth, ⁴ and its height was great.**

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 **COMMENTARY:**

⁴ The center of the dream was a tree. That it stood “in the midst of the earth” suggests that it stood alone and that it was important to all the earth, (Wood, *Daniel*, p. 108).

¹¹ **The tree grew** (it continued to grow even as immense as it already was), **and became strong** (bigger and stronger, more impressive until); **its**

height reached to the heavens (it was visible from great distances [far bigger than that of his image in chapter 3]), **and it could be seen to the ends of all the earth**, (from the far reaches of my kingdom).

¹² **Its leaves were lovely** (healthy and beautiful), **its fruit abundant, and in it was food for all**, (suggesting great prosperity). **The beasts of the field found shade under it** (its limbs stretched out far enough to shelter and rejuvenate all in the kingdom from the elements), **the birds of the heavens dwelt in its branches** (finding lodging and protection in its great height and expanse), **and all flesh was fed from it**, (man and beast were provided not only protection by this great tree, but it provided their sustenance as well).

¹³ (Next), **“I saw in the visions of my head while on my bed, and there was a watcher** (a supernatural being [an angel and ministering servant of the Most High God]), **a holy one** (an un-fallen angel), **coming down from heaven**, (coming down from the abode of his Master).

¹⁴ **He cried aloud** (lit., *“cried in strength”* – lending importance to what he had to say [possibly to another angel or angels {v. 17}]), **and said thus: ‘Chop down the tree and cut off its branches, strip off its leaves and scatter its fruit**, (completely remove the tree, limbs and leaves from their place of influence, with even its fruit scattered so that nothing would be available as a benefit to any [this is probably what was so terrifying to Nebuchadnezzar]). **Let the beasts get out from under it, and the birds from its branches** (those who were benefiting from the tree would now have to flee from it).

¹⁵ **Nevertheless leave the stump and** (its life giving), **roots** (alone, undisturbed), **in the earth, bound with a band of iron and bronze** (in order to preserve the stump), **in the tender grass of the field**, (while enduring nature’s elements). **Let it be wet with the dew of heaven** (let the elements fall upon it), **and let him** (him who is represented by the fallen tree, even though he be a man), **graze with** (as one of), **the beasts on the grass of the earth**.

¹⁶ **Let his heart** (the seat of his reasoning), **be changed** (altered), **from that of a man, let him be given the heart** (the reasoning), **of a beast, and let seven times** (seven years [see 7:25]), **pass over him**, (pass by).

¹⁷ **‘This decision is by the decree of the watchers** (these supernatural beings [delivered by angels at the request of the Most High God {v. 24}]), **and the sentence by the word of the holy ones** (meaning that this matter, or this business, was in accordance with the direction of the holy ones [the un-fallen angels]),

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in order that (for the purpose that), **the living** (all human beings in general and Nebuchadnezzar specifically), **may know that the Most High rules** (reigns supreme in power and authority [see Eph. 1:15-23]), **in**

the kingdom of men,⁵ and gives it (the earthly rule or kingdom), **to whomever He will, and sets over it the lowest of men,**' (meaning it is not one's talents, greatness or noble birth, but God's will, which elevates one to the throne).

¹⁸ **"This dream I, King Nebuchadnezzar, have seen. Now you, Belteshazzar, declare its interpretation, since all the (other), wise men of my kingdom are not able to make known to me the interpretation; but you are able** (capable), **for the Spirit of the Holy God is in you,"** (enabling you to do such things that are impossible for others).

F APPLICATION:

(17) **The dream is clearly to verify God's sovereignty over man and his kingdoms**

- Men of the lowest character to the highest, are all in the positions that they are because of God's directive or permissive will only. In these positions, God promotes and frustrates, and takes and gives, at will.
- No matter how big or small a kingdom, position, business, special interest's group, board or committee may be or become; it is all a result of God's permissive or directive will, not man's independent labors.
- Security, affluence and power is not *found* in a man or a nation, it is *derived* from God.

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4. *Nebuchadnezzar listens to the interpretation of the vision, (19-27)*

INTERPRETATION:

¹⁹ **Then Daniel, whose name was Belteshazzar, was astonished** (dumbfounded, overwhelmed, appalled⁶), **for a time** (could be from anywhere from a minute to an hour [the implication being that an obvious and disconcerting pause took place]), **and his**

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COMMENTARY:

⁵ 'The living,' not as distinguished from the dead, but from the inhabitants of heaven, who 'know' that which the men of the world need to be taught (Psa. 9:16); the ungodly confess there is a God, but would gladly confine Him to heaven. But, saith Daniel, God ruleth not merely there, but 'in the kingdom of men,' (Jamieson, Fausset and Brown, *A Commentary*, Vol. II, p. 403).

⁶ Not because the dream was unintelligible to him, but because of his reluctance to announce God's judgment to the king, whom he apparently had grown to love, (Ryrie, *The Ryrie Study Bible*, p. 1315).

thoughts troubled (distressed), **him. So the king** (seeing Daniel's expression of anxiety), **spoke** (breaking the silence to encourage Daniel), **and said,**

“Belteshazzar, do not let the dream or its interpretation trouble (frighten, alarm, dismay), **you.” Belteshazzar answered** (answered in response), **and said, “My lord, may** (or I would that), **the dream concern** (pertain to and impart its calamity upon), **those who hate you, and its interpretation concern your enemies!**

F APPLICATION:

(19) Daniel dreaded to tell the king the interpretation of the dream

Sometimes the Lord calls us to perform some tasks that are not very savory. In fact, they are down right dreadful, fearful, full of unpleasant possibilities; even probabilities. Never the less, the task must be promptly performed to the full without procrastination.

²⁰ **The tree** (commonly a symbol of a great king [e.g., Eze. 17:22; 19:10; 31:3-14; Amos 2:9]), **that you saw** (is you and your kingdom, O king [v. 22]), **which grew** (to be immense), **and became strong** (powerful and influential), **whose height reached to the heavens and which could be seen by all the earth** (you and your kingdom have become the talk and envy of the nations),

²¹ **whose leaves were lovely** (denoting the pomp and splendor of your court, which is the wonder of strangers and the glory of your own subjects), **and its fruit abundant, in which was food for all** (you are not only great, but you have done well in that you did not impoverish, but enrich your country, and by your power and interest abroad brought wealth and trade to it), **under which the beasts of the field dwelt, and in whose branches the birds of the heaven had their home**—(you have provided comfort and protection for all; peace and prosperity),

²² (indeed), **it is you, O king, who have grown and become strong; for your greatness has grown and reaches to the heavens, and your dominion to the end of the earth.**

²³ **And inasmuch as the king saw a watcher**, (a supernatural being [an angel and ministering servant of the Most High God]), **a holy one** (an unfallen angel), **coming down from heaven and saying, ‘Chop down the tree and destroy it** (remove Nebuchadnezzar from his throne and thus his people from his care), **but leave its stump and roots in the earth** (don’t take his life), **bound with a band of iron and bronze** (preserve him and the kingdom), **in the tender grass of the field** (though they be exposed to the forces of nature); **let it be wet with the dew of heaven, and let him graze with the beasts of the field**

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(Nebuchadnezzar is to dwell in the field, where he will be wet with dew and will find his nourishment in the plant growth as do the beasts), **till seven times**

pass over him' (until seven years go by);

(20-23) The dream represents the Babylonian Empire

There is no question here as to Babylon and Nebuchadnezzar's present genuine greatness, but there is also no question as to their future genuine degeneration. All of this points to a statement that God wants to make, (v. 17). Man can no more escape his depraved humanity than God can His divine sovereignty.

²⁴ **this is the interpretation, O king, and this is the decree of the Most High** (who rules over all in heaven as well as on earth), **which has come upon my lord the king** (who has addressed you now my king, by this dream):

(24-26) Emphasis on the Most High and His sovereign rule –
(another re-emphasis of vs. 17 in vs. 25)

Even God calling Himself the Most High here emphasizes the recognition of His authority and sovereignty.

²⁵ **They shall drive you from** (the habitations of), **men, your dwelling shall be with the beasts of the field, and they shall make you eat** (provide for you vegetables and), **grass like oxen. They shall wet you with the dew of heaven** (leave you out in the elements with the beasts), **and seven times** (seven years), **shall pass over you, till you know that the Most High rules in the kingdom of men, and gives it to whomever He chooses**, (until you have learned the intended lesson concerning the supremacy of the Most High God over all things, including human government [cp., Psa. 83:17, 18; Jer. 27:5]).

²⁶ **And inasmuch as they gave the command to leave the stump and roots of the tree** (that your life and the kingdom were to be spared and preserved), **your kingdom** (which includes your royal throne), **shall be assured to you** (returned to you, but only), **after you come to know that Heaven⁷ (God), rules.**

²⁷ **Therefore** (in light of this interpretation), **O king, let my advice be acceptable to you** (lit., *"be pleasing upon you"*); **break off your sins by being righteous** (as you have provoked God's

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 **COMMENTARY:**

⁷ This is an unusual employment for "heaven," here meaning God. Daniel likely used it because a basic distinction between the true God and Babylonian deities concerned their respective places of abode: heaven versus earth. To employ it provided a short way of referring unmistakably to the Judean God, (Wood, *Daniel*, p. 116).

judgment by sin, so you might avert it by repenting and giving the Most High the glory due unto Him and worshiping Him in the beauty of holiness [cp., Psa.

29:1, 2; *Hezekiah*, Isa. 38:1-5; *Nineveh*, Jonah 3:5-10]), **and your iniquities by showing mercy to the poor** (show greater concern for the afflicted). **Perhaps there may be a lengthening of your prosperity,**” (if you can avert the threatened judgment by learning the intended lesson by understanding the dream alone and not by the fulfillment of the dream).

(27) Nebuchadnezzar is now called upon to respond to God’s counsel.

- When God reveals sin in our lives, we are to repent of it and replace it with what is proper, (putting off what is wrong and putting on what is right). *“Whom the Lord loves He chastens,” . . . and “if we say that we have fellowship with Him, and walk, in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth. But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin,”* (Heb. 12:6; I Jn. 1:6, 7; cp., Ezra 10:11)
- We reveal our value system by what we do or don’t do and what we say or don’t say in our daily lives. Everyone has a value system of one kind or another and in time, it becomes obvious to all what kind it is.
- A longer and richer life is the result of an obedient, submissive life. God has said that He has even taken some home prematurely because of their persistence in sin, (e.g., 1 Cor. 11:29, 30; cp., Eph. 6:1-3).
- Children, learn by your parents counsel. You don’t have to experience tragedy for yourself. Learn from the counsel of others.

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5. Nebuchadnezzar displays his depravity one year after the vision,(28-30)

 **INTERPRETATION:**

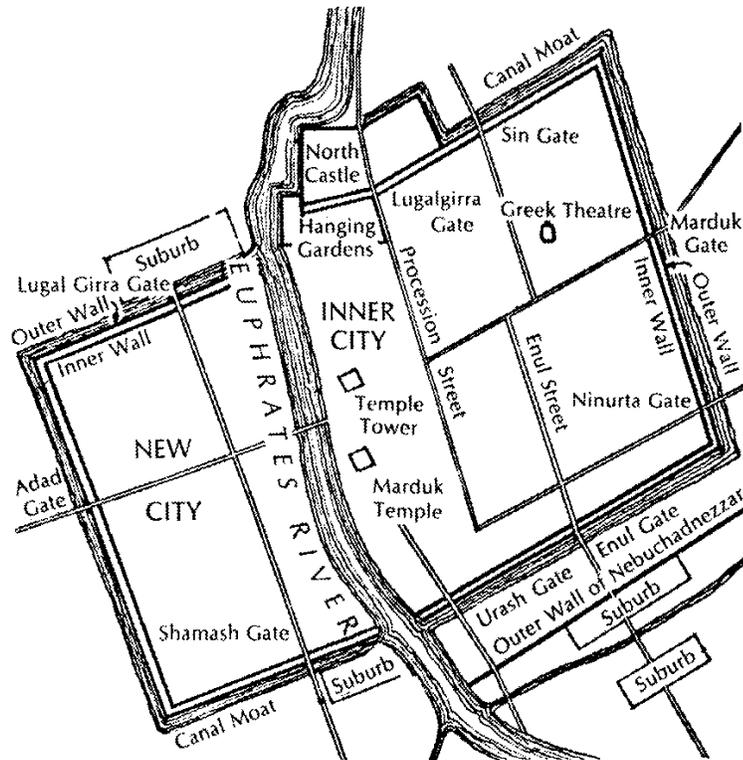
²⁸ (Now Nebuchadnezzar [as he continues to give his testimony concerning this matter {vv. 1-3}], picks the story up one year after Daniel’s interpretation) **All this** (this being the threatened judgment, as it was predicted), **came upon** (was fulfilled concerning), **King Nebuchadnezzar.**

²⁹ (This is how it happened), **At the end of the twelve months** (just one year following Daniel’s interpretation), **he** (Nebuchadnezzar) **was walking about the royal palace of Babylon,** (the language suggests that Nebuchadnezzar may have been walking upon the palace roof like David did [2 Sam. 11:2]).

³⁰ **The king spoke,** (as he gazed over his kingdom), **saying, “Is**

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not this great Babylon,⁸ that [I] have built for a royal dwelling by [my] mighty power and for the honor of [my] majesty?”⁹



City plan of Ancient Babylon's inner walls, (The Zondervan Pictorial Encyclopedia of the Bible, Vol. 1, Merrill C. Tenney, Gen. Ed., [MI: Zondervan, 1975, 1976,] p. 442).

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COMMENTARY:

⁸ In the time of Nebuchadnezzar, the city of Babylon was at its height of glory, being one of the largest and finest cities of the world. It was surrounded by a system of double walls, the outer one of which was seventeen miles long and wide enough for chariots to pass on its top. Of the cities' eight gates, the most celebrated was the Ishtar Gate. It gave access from the north to the sacred processional way, which led to the citadel of Esagila, where was the grand temple of Marduk and the imposing ziggurat Ene-menanki. The processional street was about 1000 yards long, and it was decorated on either side by enameled bricks, showing 120 lions (Ishtar symbol) and 575 dragons and bulls (Marduk and Bel symbols). More than fifty temples crowded within the city walls at the time. The Greeks considered the "hanging gardens" within the city one of the seven wonders of the world. These were elevated gardens, high enough to be seen beyond the city walls. They boasted many different kinds of plants and palm trees. Ingenious hoists had been contrived by which to raise water to the high terraces from the Euphrates River. It is believed that the gardens were made by the king especially for the enjoyment of his wife, who had been raised in the mountains of Media, (Wood, *Daniel*, p. 119).

⁹ As Nebuchadnezzar looked out over the city of Babylon his heart swelled with pride. He boasted that he himself had made Babylon the greatest city on earth by the might of his own power. He declared that he had made Babylon so magnificent in order to glorify himself. The king was on an ego trip. He was a classic illustration of man exalting over what he can do himself apart from God, (Showers, *The Most High God*, p. 45).

F APPLICATION:

(28-30) Nebuchadnezzar never settled the issue of who is in control.

- When God tells us one thing and we keep looking for loopholes, or constantly wrestle with whether we are going to submit to God or not, we walk upon slippery ground. When God speaks we must take three decisive actions:
 1. **Determine** what we are going to do about it
 2. **Commit** ourselves to it
 3. **Discipline** ourselves to do whatever is needful/necessary to keep our hands on the plow and our eyes off of all other options.
- When Jesus was tempted by Satan, Jesus told him, **“Thou shalt not put the Lord thy God to the test”** When we decide not to follow God’s leading or heed His warnings, we are in a very real way saying, “No God, and I dare you to do anything about it,” or “No God, now butt out of my life in this matter.” You may say, “I’d never say that to God,” but think about it. God has instructed you to do or stop something and you have at least in part (if not in whole), rejected His counsel. As a result of that decision you have created a power struggle or contest with the Creator of the universe! You have in a very real sense, challenged God to a duel. A duel concerning, not a young maiden or one’s honor, but a duel concerning who has power and authority over what and whom.

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6. Nebuchadnezzar undergoes God’s retribution just prior to the implementation of the vision,(31-33)

 **INTERPRETATION:**

³¹ **While the word was still in the king’s mouth** (while he was still speaking, so that there could be no doubt as to the connection between the crime and the punishment [cp., Acts 5; 12:21-23; Lk. 12:19, 20]), **a voice fell from heaven:** (by supernatural means), **“King Nebuchadnezzar, to you it is spoken:** (declared), **the kingdom** (sovereignty), **has departed from you** (in other words, you are no longer able to fill the office of head ruler because of your mental incapacity)!¹⁰

³² **And they shall drive you from men and your dwelling shall be with the beasts of the field. They shall make you eat grass like oxen; and seven times shall pass over you, until you know that the Most High rules in the king-**

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 **COMMENTARY:**

¹⁰ The illness with which Nebuchadnezzar was stricken is called *lycanthropy*. Although this insanity causes a person to act like a wild beast, the victim still retains an inner consciousness. This would explain the king’s ability to change his attitude while suffering this madness, (Showers, *The Most High God*, p. 46, 47). Others call it *boanthropy* (ox-man).

dom of men, and gives it to whomever He chooses,” (reminding Nebuchadnezzar of the punishment that was predicted by Daniel of him twelve

months earlier because of his pride [v. 25]).

³³ **That very hour** (probably while he was still on the roof), **the word was fulfilled** (came to pass), **concerning Nebuchadnezzar**; (and imagining himself to be a beast), **he was driven from men** (not only removed from office), **and ate grass like oxen**; **his body was wet with the dew of heaven till his hair had grown like eagles' feathers and his nails like birds' claws**.

F APPLICATION:

(31-33) Nebuchadnezzar is overthrown simply by a spoken word. God always remains consistently the same, perfect and sovereign. In the very first chapter of the very first book of God's Word we find the same principle taking place as we see here in Daniel 4:31, **"and God said,"** and it was. **"If anyone thinks himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceives himself,"** (Gal. 6:3). Man must, **"not be deceived, God is not mocked. . .,"** (Gal. 6:7a). God tells us to, **"Be still, and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth,"** (Psalm 46:10)! It is interesting that the two witnesses in Revelation 11 are given power to bless, curse or destroy with their spoken word. It is also interesting that when Christ returns to the earth He destroys all who are in opposition to Him by His spoken word in Revelation 19. Any who set themselves above God are as much a fool as the devil and can only expect the same opposition and disastrous consequence. There is really no power struggle or contest at all. Only a fool standing in a long line waiting his or her turn to be devastated.

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7. *Nebuchadnezzar offers an impressive proclamation following the fulfillment of the vision,(34-37)*

 INTERPRETATION:

³⁴ **And at the end of the time**¹¹(the designated seven years [vv. 16, 25]), **I, Nebuchadnezzar, lifted my eyes to heaven** (God didn't say, "Look at Me!" Making me look up, I desired to look

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 COMMENTARY:

¹¹ It is possible to see Nebuchadnezzar's seven years of tribulation as being symbolic of the final seven years of the **great tribulation** described in Daniel 9 as the seventh week. Nebuchadnezzar, the Gentile world power, comes under the judgment of God for his exalting himself above God and is brought into total subjection by the sovereign Most High God. God utterly crushes the Gentile powers in the end times that seek to exalt themselves above Him. These Gentile powers will never be restored to power though as they never repent of their sin as Nebuchadnezzar did.

upon Him), **and** (now being humbled and in my submission), **my understanding returned to me** (I was restored to my

right mind);¹² **and I blessed the Most High and praised and honored Him¹³ who lives forever** (is eternal): **for His dominion is an everlasting dominion, and His kingdom is from generation to generation**, (God not only lives forever, but He maintains universal control forever [in contrast to Nebuchadnezzar's head of gold and the various other kingdoms represented in Nebuchadnezzar's dream of the great image in chapter two. Only God's kingdom is forever, {3:44}]).

³⁵ **All the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing** (I and all mankind like me are nothing in comparison to God); **He does according to His will in the army** (inhabitants), **of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth**, (man is answerable to God, not God to man, for no one can stop God – as I couldn't). **No one can restrain His hand or say to Him, "What have You done?"** (Not only can you not hinder God, but neither does anyone have the right to question Him – as I did, [cf., Job 33:12, 13; Isa. 29:16; 45:9; Rom. 9:19, 20])¹⁴

F APPLICATION:

(34-35) Nebuchadnezzar realizes the error of his self-righteous folly.

Precious are the few that meet the Lord in this life and realize the folly of their way and not in the after life! Is there anything that could be too painful, too demeaning or too difficult for us if it develops humility in us and brings us closer to God!? Pride comes before a fall, but humility will be close behind to fill the void – if we will only make room. Nebuchadnezzar realizes that nobody has the right to question

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COMMENTARY:

¹² Imagine what a sight that must have been. What would you think if you saw this man; all wet, hair like eagle's feathers, nails like bird's claws and grass between his teeth, in the middle of a field praising God?! How low God has to bring some before they lift up their eyes unto heaven and bless the Most High God. Praise God that He would humble some rather than destroy them. Many during the tribulation lift up not only their eyes to the heavens, but their fists as well and curse God. Surely their plight is worse than the humbled.

¹³ These three verbs are used synonymously. . . they show on his part a sense of awe and respect for God, a recognition of God's greatness, a feeling of his own thankfulness, an admission of personal dependency, and a spirit of humble admiration. That Nebuchadnezzar employed three verbs indicates that he wished to stress the overall thought. He was truly repentant and submissive now before the great God of heaven, (Wood, *Daniel*, p. 124).

¹⁴ Nebuchadnezzar's prayer that he modeled before his subjects sounds a little like the Lord's prayer that Christ gave as a model to His disciples, "**Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven. . . For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.**" (Mat. 9:9b-10, 13b).

God about anything. Nebuchadnezzar bends his knee and confesses with his tongue that God is who He says He is and has the right to do **whatever** He wants, **when** He wants, **how** He wants, **to whom** He wants. Nebuchadnezzar does this in

voluntary repentance rather than in misery at judgment. Today is the day of repentance, (for the believer [parental forgiveness], and unbeliever [judicial forgiveness] alike), because tomorrow may be too late.

³⁶ **At the same time** (that I looked up in submission to this), **my reason returned to me, and for the glory of my kingdom, my honor and splendor returned to me** (I was not only returned to power, but with all the splendor, authority and integrity that I had before my humiliation). **My counselors and nobles** (who prevailed for me in my absence), **resorted to me** (desired to have me as formerly to be their head without any bribery or fighting), **I was restored to my kingdom**, and (as if that wasn't enough), **excellent majesty was added to me**, (my authority was greater than even before [cp., Job 42:12; Prov. 22:4; Mat. 6:33]).

(36) Nebuchadnezzar receives the kingdom back.

As Job received more than what he lost (physically as well as spiritually), so has Nebuchadnezzar. As Daniel and his friends received more than what they had lost, so has Nebuchadnezzar. As Nebuchadnezzar received more than what he lost, so will you, (if not in this life, then in eternity if you are a believer in Christ. He that loses his life will always find it afresh and anew. Is God (out of necessity), still withholding blessings that He wants to give to us because of our attitude or actions?

³⁷ **Now** (having told you my story, you see now why), **I, Nebuchadnezzar** (do now, and will forevermore), **praise and extol and honor the King of heaven**¹⁵ (which I did only temporarily following my first dream and the miraculous deliverance from the fiery furnace – I've been transformed this time; not merely impressed with the King of heaven), **all of whose works** (the works of the Most High God), **are truth** (meaning they correspond to His standard of righteousness and deal with each situation as it truly is), **and His ways justice**, (God, seeing all things precisely as they are, perfectly knows what should be done in every case [God's edicts are just and the affliction those judged incur are deserved – as was that which He did to me]).

NOTES:



COMMENTARY:

¹⁵ The Hebrew is in the continuous action and thus implies that Nebuchadnezzar never stopped worshipping the Most High God as His God from that point on.

And those who walk in pride (as I once did – beware), **He** (God), **is able to put** (you), **down**, (humble you; trust me).¹⁶

¹⁶ Nebuchadnezzar's proclamation and worship of God is very similar to that of

(37) Nebuchadnezzar exhibits evidences that agree with his profession.

- As James says, *“faith without works is dead,”* (Ja. 2:14-20). Not only does Nebuchadnezzar exalt God as **THE** King, but he forewarns all who may yet think as he once thought. Nebuchadnezzar warns those who still think that they are something when in reality they are nothing but putty in the hands of a just and almighty God. They are all sub-kings to the King of kings. *“That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father,”* (Phil. 2:10, 11). How great do we think we are? How important are our positions to us?
- “Nebuchadnezzar is also an example – an example warning us of how not to be led astray by power and achievement and a model of how to respond to chastisement and humiliation. He is even more a promise, that earthly authorities are in the hand of God, not merely for their judgment, but for his glory.”¹⁷

**SOME EVIDENCES THAT
NEBUCHADNEZZAR’S CONVERSION WAS REAL**

1. He desires that God’s peace shall be the experience of all people everywhere, (4:1). *A love/burden for the lost*
2. He wants to tell others about the wonderful things God has done for him, (4:2). *He witnesses/evangelizes – fulfills the great commission*
3. He expresses his appreciation for God’s wonders, (4:3). *Thankfulness*
4. He praises and magnifies God, (4:34). *Worships*
5. He attributes everything he has and is to God’s interventions in his life. *He is truthful, honest*
6. He willingly condemns himself before the whole world in order to justify God’s dealings with him in mercy and grace, (4:37). *Humbles himself*
7. He practices the art of prayer. He passes from the scene with a prayer on his lips. *---Dr. John L. Benson*

NOTES:

the angels in heaven during the great tribulation in Revelation 15:3, 4 and 16:7.

¹⁷ (John E. Goldingay, *Word Biblical Commentary: Daniel*, [TX: Word, 1989], p. 97).

NEBUCHADNEZZAR ILLUSTRATES HOW GOD WILL BRING THE GENTILE NATIONS DOWN TO HUMILIATION.

1. The Pride **Manifested** (in insolence, self-glory)
 2. The Pride **Abased** (reduced to the status of beasts)
 3. The Pride **Cured** (giving the God of Israel the glory)
- + The plans of the devil to destroy the remnant resulted in the promotion of the remnant. The devil always oversteps himself. God uses the malice of the devil to further God's own plans. He uses the wrath of men to praise Him. ---Dr. John L. Benson

A COMMENTARY ON HUMAN PRIDE

1. In pride man takes full credit for all of his personal accomplishments, (4:4, 30). *Is this not great Babylon I have built?!*
2. In pride man appeals to the wisdom of this world for the solution to life's mysteries, (4:6-7). *He looked to his wise men*
3. Only as a last resort does pride allow man to seek out God's people, (4:8). When all other helpers fail, man turns to the word of God. *He sought Daniel's counsel*
4. In pride man finds satisfaction in realizing that everyone else is dependent upon him, (4:12). *Being this great tree*
5. In pride man refuses to make amends despite clear warnings of coming judgment, (4:27). *He ignored Daniel's counsel*
6. In pride man imagines that a delay of judgment means the cancellation of judgment, (4:28-29). *Twelve years later*
7. In pride he does not benefit from a long stay of execution. He thinks his sins are not, after all, deserving of judgment. *But God will step in at some point*
8. In pride he robs God of His glory (4:30). *Babylon was built by **my** mighty power and for the honor of **my** majesty!*
9. Pride offends the angels; they concur with the divine decree against the proud. *They chopped down the tree*
10. Pride collapses under divine judgment. *No one can overrule God's purposes*
11. Pride reduces man to a state of irrationality. *He became as a beast*
12. Pride gives way to humility when God debases the proud, (4:35-37). *He finally, after seven years – cries uncle*

***He that exalts himself shall be abased,
but he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.***

---Dr. John L. Benson

NOTES:

 **INTERPRETATION:**

F **APPLICATION:**

 **COMMENTARY:**

1a To a select group, (14-17)