

DANIEL 4 - June 29, 2014
GOD'S MIRACULOUS INTERVENTION THROUGH
THE PROPHETIC VISION GIVEN TO DANIEL
TEACHER'S GUIDE

Intro: Can you think of a time when God did something through you or someone you know that could not be explained away and caused a great belief?

Today we will again see the miraculous hand of God use Daniel to show the king this dream that God had obviously given to him to work this miracle. You see God is not just using Daniel; He first used the subconscious activity of the king while he dreamed during sleep.

READ DANIEL 4:1-3

- 1. How has King Nebuchadnezzar changed his opinion of the Hebrew God?** *(He is declaring how great are God's signs and how mighty His wonders. He calls Him the Most High God. He states that this God worked these miracles for him, the king. He is declaring this boldly to peoples, nations and languages on earth! That is a long way from stealing the articles from the Hebrew Temple and setting them up in his pagan temples with no respect for the God of Israel. He is even declaring that God's kingdom is an everlasting kingdom and His rule is from generation to generation.)*

Q – What do you think God might do today to get the attention of great leaders in the world who have no respect for Him? *(He might send you or your child. You never know what building a friendship can do to open the door for God to reveal Himself to an unbeliever, even a king. Harley's friend in Tübingen, Germany, uses the Bible to teach English as a second language to executives and students who come from all over the world. Seeds are planted as they learn English. Many foreigners to Germany have become Christians through his ministry.)*

READ DANIEL 4:4-18

- 2. What did this dream do to the king and why?** *(The dream was filled with images and visions passing through his mind and he was terrified by them. This great king who is mighty and powerful is like a scared child because of this dream.)*
- 3. Who did the king command to come before him to interpret the dream?** *(The magicians, enchanters, astrologers, and diviners came. They were all unable to do so. Then Daniel comes in and is able to do what none of the wisest men, even those involved in the occult could do.)*
- 4. Describe the king's dream before the holy messenger came down.** *(There was an enormous tree in the middle of the land. It grew until its top touched the sky and it could be seen from the very ends of the earth. The leaves were beautiful and it was so full of fruit that it could feed and even protect everyone and everything on earth.)*
- 5. What were the orders from God's holy messenger from heaven?** *(He told the king in a loud voice to cut down the tree, trim off the branches and scatter the fruit. There would only be a stump and roots. The animals*

and birds would flee. But the stump which was bound with iron and bronze would remain in the grass of the field. Now the stump is identified as a person. He will be drenched with the dew of heaven. He will live with the animals among the plants of the earth. His mind will be changed from that of a man to the mind of an animal until 7 times pass by for him. 7 is the number of completeness and times can refer to indefinite periods, so it seems the angel is saying that his mind will be like an animal indefinitely.)

Nebuchadnezzar was filled with pride over his great accomplishments of temples and Building Babylon. The book of Daniel records that it was God who struck the king with a strange affliction in order to humble him. Extrabiblical records deal with his illness. The ancient Jewish historian Josephus cited a report by the Babylonian priest Berassus that Nebuchadnezzar died following a period of weakness. The Christian writer Eusebius preserved a tradition from the Greek historian Megasthenes (308 BC) the Nebuchadnezzar, having ascended to the roof of his palace, became inspired by some god. (In antiquity insanity was looked upon as possession by a god. One disorder recorded was called Lycanthropy, where the patients imagined themselves to be wolves. He likely went mad by the hand of God. Again we see the miraculous power of God planting this vision inside the mind of the king and cutting down his pride, bringing him from a king to a frightened man.)

Q - Karl Marx said, "Religion is the sigh of the oppressed creature, the heart of a heartless world, and the soul of soulless conditions. It is the opium of the people". How was Marx, Putin, the socialist and communist who despise the idea of one true God fit the example of King Nebuchadnezzar? *(Without God there is no absolute truth and man can take whatever his power allows. Man becomes his own salvation until he breathes his last breath. However, none of these men thought there was an Almighty God who would intervene. All of them were wrong and one will be sooner or later!)*

READ DANIEL 4:19-27

- 6. Why was Daniel afraid?** *(Bad things were about to be revealed to the one to whom he was a slave. This king was not a nice man and could kill him before he finished a sentence. However the king tells him not to be alarmed but to interpret it.)*
- 7. Who does Daniel interpret as the great tree that reached to the sky and fed the people and animals of the earth?** *(King Nebuchadnezzar because he had become great and strong with a rule that reached distant parts of the earth. But now comes the bad news.)*
- 8. What is the bad news Daniel gives to the king?** *(God has sentenced you to be driven away from the people you rule and you will live with the animals and eat grass like the cattle and be drenched by the dew of heaven, homeless. Unless the king acknowledges that God is sovereign over all kings and kingdoms and gives them to anyone He wishes. Nebuchadnezzar must realize that only by the grace of God is he in the position he occupies. Only when he embraces the truth, treats the oppressed with kindness will his kingdom and wealth be restored. He is faced with a choice of humility or pity. God will not barter.)*

Q – Why do you think people try to ignore God when He is clear in His offer and in His judgment?

READ DANIEL 4:28-37

- 9. The king did not believe Daniel's interpretation could actually happen to him. How long did the king ignore God? (12 months)**
- 10. Describe the king's prideful statements while strutting around on the roof of the royal palace. (Is not this the great Babylon I have built as the royal residence, by my mighty power and for the glory of MY majesty. Oooo, not a healthy attitude before God!)**
- 11. What happens immediately as the king makes this egotistical statement? (A voice from heaven declares the prophecy will not happen exactly as Daniel described because of the king's pride. Pride goes before the fall.)**
- 12. Whatever the 7 times represented, they entire time took place and the misery and madness of the king continued. At the end of the time the king looks to heaven and God miraculously restored his sanity. What does Nebuchadnezzar immediately do? (Praised God and acknowledges that God can be held back by no man. God is the Almighty who does as He pleases. He knows that God is Almighty!)**
- 13. What does God do after the king's prayer? (He fulfills His promise that He will reward Him IF the king is humble, obedient and faithful. He was greater than ever but gave the glory to God.)**
- Q – In what areas of life do you need to glorify God more?**
- Q – What are some of the lessons you and I can learn from this chapter?**