

Daniel 4 - Nebuchadnezzar humbled

DAN 4:1-3 THE KING'S PROCLAMATION PRAISING GOD

Chronologically, **Dan 4:1-3** is at the end of the chapter. The decree is issued as a result of his experience. In **Dan 4** Neb speaks in the first person, except when his madness is being described, where it is in the third person: **Dan 4:28-33**.

v1 People, nations, languages: A message to the whole world: **Dan 3:4; 6:25; Rev 14:6**. **v2 I thought it good:** NIV "It is my pleasure". Neb is humiliating himself here. This decree proclaims Yahweh and the gospel. **Signs:** **Dan 6:27**. Also **Mt 16:3; Acts 7:36; 8:13; Heb 2:4**. **Wonders:** **Dan 12:6** Roth mgn: *astounding things*. These words come from **Psa 145:7-13**. Who told Neb about this? **Psa 145:6-7** tells of the glory and majesty of God's Kingdom. An amazing turnaround from the events of **Dan 3**. See also **Psa 107:2-8**. Now he believes God had given him a kingdom: **Jer 27:5-8**. Neb ends up crying unto God as he is humbled, praising Yahweh for his goodness: **Psa 107:6-8**. **High God: Dan 3:26; 4:17**. **Toward me:** He recognises God is not only working among nations but also towards him personally.

v3 Everlasting kingdom: **Dan 4:3** is a summary of the lessons learnt in **Dan 2-3**. Where did Neb learn this? From Daniel: **Dan 2:44; 7:27**. "Kingdom" is 13x in **Dan 4** and "King" 12x.

DAN 4:4-7 KING'S DREAM, SEARCH FOR EXPLANATION

In **Dan 4** Neb speaks in the first person, except when his madness is described, where it is in third person: **4:28-33**.

v4 Flourishing: Str. "green, ie. prosperous". Righteous believers are symbolised by trees: **Psa 1:3; Job 15:32; Rev 22:1-2**.

v5 Thoughts: Mgn ref. **Dan 2:28**. A direct connection to the first dream of Neb. **v6 Bring in all the wise men:** Exactly what happened in **Dan 2**. **v7 Magicians etc:** The same 4 groups as in **Dan 2:2**. **Soothsayers:** **Dan 2:27; 5:7,11**. In **Dan 2** Neb was angry with these men. They tried to manipulate him. Now in **Dan 4** he trusts them, and they tell him the truth! Is this because of Daniel's influence? He was master of the magicians!

DAN 4:8-18 THE KING'S DESCRIPTION OF THE DREAM

v8 Name of my God: Daniel's name was changed to honour Babylon's gods: **Dan 1:7**. Babylon believed in many gods. **Spirit of the holy gods:** Similar words to Pharaoh: **Gen 41:38**. Consider parallels between Daniel/Joseph in notes on **Daniel 6**.

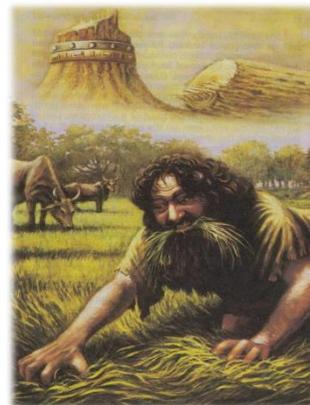
v9 Master of the magicians: Wise men who came to Jerusalem were "magicians". (Gk. *magos* **Mt 2:1,7,16**). They are astrologers and when they compared the star in the east with **Dan 9:24-25** they sent representatives to meet Jesus. Daniel had a real influence upon these men. **No secret troubleth thee:** Whenever he was asked a question he had the right advice. Do we seek to provide counsel for those who need help?

v10 Tree: Depiction of Babylon's pride. Also **Isa. 14:13**. Assyria is a cedar in **Ezek 31:3**. Jesus used a tree to symbolise God's kingdom: **Mt 13:31-32**. **Dan 4:22** says the tree is Neb and his empire, cp. **4:1**. **Dan 5:22-23:** "lifted thyself up against the Lord of heaven". Now he was like a tree (made by God). Nebuchadnezzar is now in the place of God. Archaeologists have dug up inscriptions with a tree giving shade to the world.

v11 Reach to heaven: Babylon's pride: **Gen 11:4,5** "Yahweh came down to see the city and the tower" cp. **Dan 4:13** "a watcher and an holy one came down from heaven"

Gen 11:8 "So Yahweh scattered them abroad from thence upon the face of all the earth" cp. **Dan 4:14** "shake off his leaves, scatter his fruit."

v12 Leaves: **Isa. 34:4**. Also **Isa 1:30**. **Boughs:** **Isa 17:9** Strong cities. Also **Ezek 17:23**. **Fruit:** This is the works Babylon's power: **Lk 6:43**.



The theme of fruit is used all through the NT eg. **Mt 17:17-19; Rom 7:4,5; Gal 5:22; Mt 7:16**. God's purpose is to feed the world: **Psa 145:15-16**. Here we have the Babylonish tree feeding the world. He is standing in the place of God. Just like the image of **Dan 3**. Neb is playing God. It does the same in **Rev 13:11-18**. **v12 Beasts of the field:** Neb, as one of mankind, had dominion over the beasts: **Gen 1:26-27, Jer 27:6** "the beasts of the field have I given him also to serve him". God was going to show him that he was only a beast. Symbolically in Daniel, the beasts have dominion over men, the opposite to **Gen 1:26-27**.

v13 Watcher: the angels **4:13,17,23** cp. **2 Chr 16:9; Zech 3:9; 4:10**. Chal. "examiner, watchful one" (Str. # 5894). The angels have the responsibility of overseeing world affairs: **Rev 16:1**. They are the eyes of Yahweh going throughout the world. The saints will be like the angels in the kingdom age: **Rev 4:8; Ezek 1:18**. Angels are "ministers of Yahweh" **Heb 1:14; Psa. 103:20-21**. They are protectors of the faithful: **Psa 34:7**. Also, **4:14** says "he" - singular. The "holy one" was the angel. **v14 cried aloud:** This is the phrase used of Neb's men in **Dan 3:4**. Margin "with might" cp. **Rev 14:6-7**. Also **Rev 18:2**. See notes on **Dan 3:4**. The beasts and birds represent different nations under Babylon's control. The tree represents Babylon's pride.

Daniel 4 is the background for Jesus's parable in **Mt 13:31-32**. A mustard seed is very small. Within a few months you have a very large tree, growing 2m high. From the smallest beginnings, the Word of God has potential to change people: **1 Pet 5:5-7**. **Watchers:** Angels: **2 Chr 16:9**. These come to see the tower of Babel: **Gen 11:5**. Also to see Sodom: **Gen 18:21**. They overshadowed Israel's fathers: **Gen 28:16**. They were placed over the nation's affairs: **Ex 23:20**. **The living:** Ourselves now! **Holy one:** Yahweh is holy: **Lev 19:2**.

v17 Basest of men: Roth "one low" **Ezek 21:25-27; 1 Cor 1:26-30; Mt 11:29; Phil 2:5-8**. NIV "the lowliest of men" Roth. "one low among men" LXX "him who is set at nought of men" Strong: "from a root word translated as 'abase, put down, humble, subdued.'" cp. **Lk 23:11** "Herod with his men of war set him at nought, and mocked him, and arrayed him in a gorgeous robe, and sent him again to Pilate." Yahweh has exalted Jesus Christ above all: **Phil 2:9-11; Heb 2:8**. **Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men:** The grand theme of Daniel. Repeated in **Dan 4:17,25,32; 5:21**. Also **Psa 75:6-7; 113:7,8**; cp. **Dan 8:25**.

Most high God: cp. Neb's acknowledgement in **Dan 3:26**. The title refers to Yahweh's governance over the nations, See **Gen 14:18-19** where the title is first used.

DAN 4:19-27 DANIEL'S INTERPRETATION AND WISDOM

v23 Watcher: Most likely Michael in whose hands Israel's affairs were placed: **Ex 23:20, Josh 5:14, Dan 10:21**. A similar vision was given in **Dan 2:37-38,44**. The tree personally involved Neb as a symbol of Babylon itself. Consider **Isa 14:13-14** and notes on **Dan 5:22**. **Seven times:** Emphasised in **4:16,23,25,32**.

v25 Beasts: Man is no different to the beasts. See **Eccl 3:19, Psa 49:12-15**. **Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men:** Also a great theme of the Bible, and in fact the culmination of God's purpose with the earth: **Num 14:21, Psa 72:19; Hab 2:14, Isa 11:9**.

v27 Break off: See **Psa 7:2**. The same imagery used by Jesus in **Mt 5:30**. The dream didn't come into effect for another 12 months. **Heavens do rule:** **1 Pet 3:22**. **Sure:** Str. "permanent". Babylon did not fall when Neb was alive or while he was a beast. In a similar way as Babylon was restored to Neb, so too latter-day Babylon is restored for a short time: **Rev 17:6**. Jerusalem Bible: "your kingdom will be kept for you until..." **Shewing mercy to the poor:** See **Prov 31:20** "poor and needy" - The ecclesia cares for these. Sodom however did not care: **Ezek 16:49-50**. **Tranquillity:** Roth. "thy security"

DAN 4:28-33 DREAM FULFILLED - NEB MADE LIKE A BEAST

v30 Twelve Months: 12 the number of Israel: eg. **Rev 7:3-8**. **Is this not Great Babylon:** Key Principle. The Kingdom of men revels in their achievements without giving God any acknowledgement. Roth. "Is not this Babylon the great, which I myself have built as the home of the kingdom?" Do we sit back and relax to contemplate and revel in our "achievements"? God hates pride.

DAN 4:34-37 THE KING ACKNOWLEDGES GOD'S GREATNESS

v31 While the words were in the king's mouth: A big warning for us. God knows our words before we even speak them. **There fell a voice from heaven:** Compare with Christ at his baptism: **Mt 3:16-17**.

v32 The beasts of the field: A disease called Lycanthropy where the victim imagines they are an animal. Similar word meaning "wolf". **Seven times shall pass over thee:** 7 years, 2520 days. **Same hour:** How ironic! God remembered Neb's decree: **Dan 3:6** "the same hour shall be cast into the midst of a burning fiery furnace" **Dan 5:5** "the same hour came forth fingers of a man's hand." The drama that came upon Neb was also to come upon Babylon! **At the end of the days:** Typical of nations who will fall down to worship Yahweh: **Psa 72:8-11**.

Doeth according to his will: Defining characteristic of the Kingdom of Men: **Dan 11:36**. Contrast to Christ in the garden of Gethsemane: **Lk 22:42**. **Army of heaven:** the angels: **Matt 26:53**. **v36 At the same time my reason returned unto me:** "reason" tr. "knowledge" in **Dan 2:21; 5:12**. Typical of the day when the insanity of nations will be transformed: **Isa 2:2-4**. Compare today's world depicted in **Jer 25:15-16**. **v37 Now I praise and extol and honour the King of heaven:** See **Psa 11:4; 93:1; 103:19**. **Those that walk in pride he is able to abase:** Key lesson from this chapter. See **Prov 8:13; 15:25; 16:5,19; 21:4; Mk 7:22; 1 Jn 2:16**. How do we overcome human pride? **Mt 5:3,5; Mk 10:15; 2 Cor 10:1; Col 3:12; Jas 4:6; 1 Peter 3:4; 5:5**.