

# Explanation for 2<sup>nd</sup> Dream

Daniel 4:19-37

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**Daniel 4:1-18 Summary:** Nebuchadnezzar sought an interpretation of his dream of a great tree that could be seen from everywhere on earth and provided food for all people. An angel commanded the tree to be chopped down and mulched with the stump and roots left intact. Then the tree became a beast of the field for 7 years.

## What applications do we see from this passage?

- God blesses those who recognize and honor Him.
- God is in control and raises up and puts down kings.

## Daniel 4:19-27

<sup>19</sup> Then Daniel, whose name was Belteshazzar, was astonished for a time, and his thoughts troubled him. So the king spoke, and said, "Belteshazzar, do not let the dream or its interpretation trouble you." Belteshazzar answered and said, "My lord, may the dream concern those who hate you, and its interpretation concern your enemies!"

<sup>20</sup> "The tree that you saw, which grew and became strong, whose height reached to the heavens and which could be seen by all the earth, <sup>21</sup> whose leaves were lovely and its fruit abundant, in which was food for all, under which the beasts of the field dwelt, and in whose branches the birds of the heaven had their home— <sup>22</sup> 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. <sup>23</sup> "And inasmuch as the king saw a watcher, a holy one, coming down from heaven and saying, 'Chop down the tree and destroy it, but leave its stump and roots in the earth, bound with a band of iron and bronze in the tender grass of the field; let it be wet with the dew of heaven, and let him graze with the beasts of the field, till seven times pass over him'; <sup>24</sup> this is the interpretation, O king, and this is the decree of the Most High, which has come upon my lord the king: <sup>25</sup> They shall drive you from men, your dwelling shall be with the beasts of the field, and they shall make you eat grass like oxen. They shall wet you with the dew of heaven, and seven times shall pass over you, till you know that the Most High rules in the kingdom of men, and gives it to whomever He chooses.

<sup>26</sup> "And inasmuch as they gave the command to leave the stump and roots of the tree, your kingdom shall be assured to you, after you come to know that Heaven rules.

<sup>27</sup> Therefore, O king, let my advice be acceptable to you; break off your sins by being righteous, and your iniquities

*by showing mercy to the poor. Perhaps there may be a lengthening of your prosperity."*

## v19 – Why did Daniel hesitate to interpret the dream for the king?

It was bad news as the king feared it would be... but he managed to preface his interpretation with a wish that the dream and its interpretation would be of concern to the king's enemies.

- It is clear from this that Daniel had courage and was an accomplished diplomat.

## What was Daniel's interpretation of the dream?

Daniel informed him that the tree represented the king himself but the great and mighty king would be brought low!

- For seven years Nebuchadnezzar was to be plagued by an extreme form of insanity where he'd behave like a beast of the field even sustain himself by eating grass. (The insane condition is termed "lycanthrope".)

## v25 – When would the humbling of the king end?

He would behave like an animal until he was sufficiently humbled and acknowledged that God is sovereign over all the kingdoms of men.

- It was his decision to make but it would take him 7 years to make it.

## Who is referred to by the "they"?

Certainly, the holy angels executing the will of God but ultimately this is God Himself. The plural here indicating the triune Godhead.

## What was the significance of the bound trunk and roots that remained in the earth?

The binding of the trunk was to preserve it and the roots remaining in the earth indicated that the Nebuchadnezzar would be restored as king.

## v27 – What hope did Daniel give the king?

He advised him to repent of his sinful pride and show mercy to the poor to delay the dream coming true.

### **Did Daniel indicate that repentance would keep the dream from coming true?**

- Daniel did not say that the prediction and consequences of the dream would not happen if he did repent and renounce his pride.
- Daniel did say “perhaps” the prediction could be delayed

### **Nebuchadnezzar’s Humiliation, Daniel 4:28-33**

<sup>28</sup> All this came upon King Nebuchadnezzar. <sup>29</sup> At the end of the twelve months he was walking about the royal palace of Babylon. <sup>30</sup> The king spoke, saying, “Is not this great Babylon, that I have built for a royal dwelling by my mighty power and for the honor of my majesty?”

<sup>31</sup> While the word was still in the king’s mouth, a voice fell from heaven: “King Nebuchadnezzar, to you it is spoken: the kingdom has departed from you! <sup>32</sup> 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 kingdom of men, and gives it to whomever He chooses.” <sup>33</sup> That very hour the word was fulfilled concerning Nebuchadnezzar; he was driven from men 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.

### **Why is this section of Chapter 4 written in the third person?**

Daniel augmented Nebuchadnezzar’s testimony by inserting his explanation of what happened between the interpretation of the dream and Nebuchadnezzar being restored his sanity.

### **Why did it take 12 months before the dream came true?**

Grace – God gave Nebuchadnezzar 12 months to repent.

### **How did Nebuchadnezzar express pride rather than repentance?**

As he surveyed the great city of Babylon (14 x 14 miles), he voiced how wonderful and great he was for building it.

- He attributed everything to himself and acknowledged God in absolutely nothing!
- Babylon with its walls, hanging gardens, temple dedicated to Bel, and the royal palaces made it the greatest city in the world at that time... Babylon was called one of the seven wonders of the world.

### **What indication was there that Nebuchadnezzar’s boasting was going to be shown for what it was?**

A voice from heaven reminded him of the interpretation of his dream a year ago.

### **How quickly did Nebuchadnezzar make the transition from king to beast of the field?**

Pretty quick... that very hour (v. 33).

### **What did Nebuchadnezzar look like after he was driven from the city?**

Like a beast – his body dirty and wet from dew, his hair grew long and thick like feathers (probably a substitute for clothing), his nails grew long like a bird and hooked so that he might better grub in the ground for food.

### **Nebuchadnezzar Praises God, Daniel 4:34-37**

<sup>34</sup> And at the end of the time I, Nebuchadnezzar, lifted my eyes to heaven, and my understanding returned to me; and I blessed the Most High and praised and honored Him who lives forever: For His dominion is an everlasting dominion, And His kingdom is from generation to generation.

<sup>35</sup> All the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing; He does according to His will in the army of heaven And among the inhabitants of the earth. No one can restrain His hand or say to Him, “What have You done?”

<sup>36</sup> At the same time my reason returned to me, and for the glory of my kingdom, my honor and splendor returned to me. My counselors and nobles resorted to me, I was restored to my kingdom, and excellent majesty was added to me. <sup>37</sup> Now I, Nebuchadnezzar, praise and extol and honor the King of heaven, all of whose works are truth, and His ways justice. And those who walk in pride He is able to put down.

### **What happened after the seven years were up?**

After seven years, Nebuchadnezzar raised his eyes toward heaven and repented, and his sanity was restored!

- A repentant Nebuchadnezzar has his sanity and reason restored to him then he praises God
- His Kingdom, his honor, and splendor were returned to him; he was accepted back into the position as King of Babylon!

### **What sort of things did Nebuchadnezzar recognize about God?**

- God lives forever
- God’s kingdom is in every generation and is everlasting
- God does according to His will
- No one can question God or cause Him to not do His will.
- God’s works are truth
- God’s ways are just
- God will humble those who walk in pride.

**What prophetic applications might there be for this story?**

- Nebuchadnezzar's madness foreshadows the madness of the present Gentile nations in their rejection of God
- Nebuchadnezzar's restoration foreshadows the restoring of the Gentile nations during the Millennial Kingdom
- God will glorify Himself among the nations. When Nebuchadnezzar captured Judah, he had reason to believe that his gods were stronger than the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob – he was wrong! (His ways are not our ways, Isaiah 55:8-9)
- When the Antichrist is in control of the world, during the Tribulation Period, it will truly seem like God has abandoned mankind... The pompous, prideful people of this earth will experience "hell on earth"
- Rebellion against an Almighty God is tantamount to insanity!

**What principles come to mind that we can apply to our own lives in the here and now?**

- God has a way of humbling the proud; be humble before the Lord.
- Don't underestimate God... even His hardened enemies can be saved.