



## God humbles Nebuchadnezzar

Daniel 4



King Nebuchadnezzar was the King of a huge kingdom. Though he had spent his entire life worshipping false gods, he finally realized that the God of the Bible was the only true God. He decided to write a letter to the entire world to share his story. When Nebuchadnezzar spoke, people listened! In fact, we are still listening today!

## Day #1: The Dream

The fourth chapter of Daniel is actually King Nebuchadnezzar's letter to the world. In it, he described the event that changed his life - and his eternity.

One night, Nebuchadnezzar had a strange dream. He didn't know what it meant, but it scared him. Once again, none of the wise men could explain his dream, so the King called for Daniel.

Nebuchadnezzar told Daniel that he saw a vision of a tree. It was big and strong. It was beautiful and it gave food and shelter to animals and people. It gave shade to the animals on the ground, and a safe place for birds to build their nests. This tree must have been a beautiful sight.

But then, Nebuchadnezzar explained, a messenger from heaven came to announce that the tree would be cut down, but the stump and roots would remain.

Daniel understood exactly what the dream meant. The tree was a symbol for Nebuchadnezzar. God had blessed him with a huge kingdom and great power (James 1:17). But Nebuchadnezzar was *proud*. He thought he *deserved* his kingdom. The King did not pay any attention to God. So God was going to take away his kingdom (James 4:6).

God was actually being merciful to Nebuchadnezzar by taking away his kingdom. Nebuchadnezzar's pride had caused his heart to be far from God. Nebuchadnezzar thought he did not need God. So God wanted to show the King that it was God who was in control of all things. King Nebuchadnezzar would be FAR better off losing his kingdom and finding God, than keeping his kingdom and staying separated from his loving Creator.

### Day #1 continued:



*A single day in your courts is better than a thousand anywhere else! I would rather be a gatekeeper in the house of my God than live the good life in the homes of the wicked.* - Psalm 84:10 NLT



Draw a picture of the stump that was left in the ground in Nebuchadnezzar's dream. Save this picture all week. Remember that without God, we are like that stump - sad, worthless, and bearing no fruit.

## Day #2: Clear Warning

Daniel gave King Nebuchadnezzar the full meaning of his dream. Daniel told the King the **reason** God planned to take away his kingdom:



*"Then you will recognize that the Most High God rules over all of the kingdoms of men. He gives them to anyone He wants."* - Daniel 4:25b

God wanted Nebuchadnezzar to come to know Him. God was not willing to leave the King in his sinful, prideful condition. God would go to any length - even take away a kingdom - to make Himself known to this man. Our loving God pursues people! (Genesis 16:7) It is an amazing God who goes after those who don't even care about Him!

Daniel went on to explain that after Nebuchadnezzar finally turned to God, God would give back his kingdom. This was shown in the dream by the tree stump being left in the ground. The tree was cut down but not destroyed - its roots were still alive (John 15:2).

Daniel had one more word of wisdom for the King:

*"So, my King, I hope you will accept my advice. Stop being sinful. Do what is right. Give up your evil practices. Show kindness to those who are being treated badly. Then perhaps things will continue to go well with you."* - Daniel 4:27

God is so good! By His grace, He patiently gave Nebuchadnezzar the opportunity to repent (2 Peter 3:9). God gave the King the opportunity to turn to Him without the pain of losing his kingdom. But sadly, the King ignored Daniel's warning. He remained in his pride, and his heart was far from God.



Do you know someone who doesn't seem to be at all interested in God? Pray for God to pursue him or her.

## Day #3: PRIDE

God sent a warning to Nebuchadnezzar about his future. Then, patiently, God waited. God gave the King a full year to repent and turn to Him. But Nebuchadnezzar did not turn from his pride. Nebuchadnezzar writes:



*All of that happened to me. It took place twelve months later. I was walking on the roof of **my** palace in Babylon. I said, "Isn't this the great Babylon **I have built** as a place for **my** royal palace? **I used my mighty power** to build it. It shows how glorious **my majesty** is." - Daniel 4:28-30*

Look at the verses above. See how many times the King talked about his own greatness. Before he had finished uttering these words, a voice spoke out of heaven. It said, "King Nebuchadnezzar...Your royal authority has been taken from you."

The mighty King was cast out of the palace. He lived out in the wilderness, away from other people. He ate grass like the goats and cows. The Bible says his nails grew like the claws of a bird, and his hair was like the feathers of an eagle (Daniel 4:33). Close your eyes and try to imagine the King with torn clothes and matted hair. He was wet from the rain, and muddy from crawling on the ground.

Without God, Nebuchadnezzar could do NOTHING! In time, the former King lost his mind; he went crazy. Nebuchadnezzar lived like a wild animal for seven years. He was without God and without a clear mind.



Write the word PRIDE on a piece of paper. Circle the center letter. "I" is at the center of pride. If you are focused on yourself, and you think that you can control the things in your life, your mind will be filled with fear and worry - just like Nebuchadnezzar in the wilderness.

## Day #4: Restoration

After seven years of living like a wild animal, Nebuchadnezzar finally realized that he was helpless without God. Nebuchadnezzar turned his attention to the Lord.



*At the end of that time I, Nebuchadnezzar, **looked up toward heaven**. My mind became clear again. Then I praised the Most High God. I gave honor and glory to the One who lives forever. His rule will last forever. His kingdom will never end. - Daniel 4:34*

As soon as Nebuchadnezzar turned to God, his mind was made clear. He praised God for being in control of everything (Daniel 4:35). God forgave Nebuchadnezzar's sin and as He promised, God once again allowed him to rule Babylon. In fact, God blessed Nebuchadnezzar even more than before. The greatest blessing by far was that Nebuchadnezzar had a relationship with God. The restored King now lived with God's peace in his life.

## Day #4 continued:

When you understand the truth that God is in control of everything, your mind will be healthy and clear, and you will feel God's peace (Galatians 5:22).



Take the picture of the tree stump from day #2, and add a beautiful tree to the stump. This is a reminder that God restored Nebuchadnezzar's mind and kingdom when he turned to God. Write, "God is in control." Remember to keep your focus on God, and He will give you His perfect peace.

*(Lord) You will keep in perfect peace all who trust in You, all whose thoughts are fixed on You! - Isaiah 26:3*  
NLT

## Day #5: Step by Step

God had been drawing Nebuchadnezzar to Himself for a long time. God had arranged for Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego to become an influence in the King's life. Each event that happened showed Nebuchadnezzar a little more about God. Little by little, Nebuchadnezzar learned who God really is. Let's retrace Nebuchadnezzar's steps on his path to knowing God.

In Daniel 1, Daniel and his three friends decided ahead of time not to eat the King's food because it was against God's law. God blessed the four men and made them wiser than all the other men in the palace. So King Nebuchadnezzar saw that there was something different about those who followed Israel's God.

In Daniel 2, God gave Daniel the meaning of his dream about the coming Kingdom. King Nebuchadnezzar learned that God is wise and He reveals truth.

In Daniel 3, Nebuchadnezzar was amazed when God saved Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego from the fiery furnace. Nebuchadnezzar learned that God is powerful and faithful.

Then, when God took away Nebuchadnezzar's pride, the King finally learned that God is the ONLY true God, worthy of all praise and honor.



*Now I, Nebuchadnezzar, give praise and honor and glory to the King of heaven. Everything He does is right. All of His ways are fair. He is able to bring down those who live proudly. - Daniel 4:37*



Just as Nebuchadnezzar learned about God by watching Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, the people around you can learn about God by watching your life. You may not see it with your eyes, but God may be using you to draw people to Himself. There is nothing more exciting than being a part of someone's journey toward God!

### - EXTRA ACTIVITY -

Follow in Nebuchadnezzar's footsteps!  
Write a letter to someone you know who needs to be encouraged by the truth of God's word.