



SAVED TO SERVE

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DANIEL THE PROPHET - DANIEL 4 NEBUCHADNEZZAR'S AUTOBIOGRAPHY, PART 1

1. In this Sabbath School Lesson, we will look at Daniel 4 and learn lessons from the last recorded life experience of Nebuchadnezzar.

2. Who wrote Daniel 4, and to whom is the chapter addressed? Daniel 4:1-3

3. What happened to Nebuchadnezzar next, and who did he call in to interpret for him? Daniel 4:4-7

4. When the Babylonian magicians and wisemen could not interpret the dream, who was the last person to come in before the king? Daniel 4:8-9

5. In what chapter of Daniel did we see a similar scene taking place regarding a dream and the king summoning the wisemen to interpret it for him?

6. **Note:** In Daniel 2, we saw a similar scene taking place as in Daniel 4. Nebuchadnezzar had a dream of an image made of various metals, and after the Babylonian wisemen failed to recall and interpret the dream, Daniel was brought in and revealed to him the interpretation. So why is it that in chapter 4, Daniel was brought in last again? Many times in our lives, we wait until all other earthly supports have failed before we come to God for guidance and help. Such was the experience of Nebuchadnezzar time and time again.
7. Daniel was given the Babylonian name Belteshazzar. Who was Daniel named after, and how did Nebuchadnezzar describe him? Daniel 4:8-9

8. **Note:** Nebuchadnezzar ascribed the wisdom that Daniel had to his false, heathen gods even though he had experienced the power of the almighty God. From Nebuchadnezzar's description of Daniel, we can gather that the king was still unconverted and did not fully understand or acknowledge the true God of heaven, even though he had seen so many evidences of His existence and power from Daniel chapters 1-3. Read Jeremiah 9:23-24 to see what Nebuchadnezzar should have gloried in besides the wisdom of man.

9. Like Nebuchadnezzar, what is the attitude of many professed Christians and atheists today? John 12:37

10. **Note:** Let us now read Daniel 4:10-17 - the last dream, which God gave to Nebuchadnezzar.
11. Who does this tree represent? Daniel 4:20-22 _____
12. Who is the watcher, and what did He say must be done to the tree? Daniel 4:23; Luke 4:34 _____
13. According to this dream, what would happen to Nebuchadnezzar, and for how long? Daniel 4:25-26 (*Notice that "times" in this context points to years. See these scriptures - Daniel 2:20-21; Ezekiel 12:27; Revelation 12:14*)

14. Before Daniel revealed the dream to Nebuchadnezzar, how was his demeanor described? Daniel 4:18-19

15. What was Daniel's admonition to the king after sharing God's judgment? Daniel 4:27; Acts 8:22

"My lord," Daniel answered, "the dream be to them that hate thee, and the interpretation thereof to thine enemies." **The prophet realized that upon him God had laid the solemn duty of revealing to Nebuchadnezzar the judgment that was about to fall upon him because of his pride and arrogance. Daniel must interpret the dream in language the king could understand; and although its dreadful import had made him hesitate in dumb amazement, yet he must state the truth, whatever the consequences to himself.** {PK 517.3}

...**"Christ's ambassadors have nothing to do with consequences. They must perform their duty and leave results with God."** {GC 609.1}

16. What specific sin was God going to punish Nebuchadnezzar for? Daniel 4:30, 37; Proverbs 16:18

17. **Note:** We will now transition and compare the dream Nebuchadnezzar had with the parable of the fig tree in Luke 13.

18. What is the primary message of the parable of the fig tree in Luke 13? Luke 13:3, 5

19. **Note:** Read Luke 13:6-9. Primarily, this barren fig tree points to Israel, God's chosen people at that time (Isaiah 5:1-2, 7; 61:3).

20. Who else do trees represent in scripture? Mark 8:24; Psalm 1:3

21. Let us compare and contrast Nebuchadnezzar, the tree in Daniel 4, with the barren fig tree in Luke 13. The barren fig tree did not have fruit. Did the tree in Daniel 4 have fruit? Daniel 4:12, 21

22. The tree in Luke 13 was threatened to be cut down. Was the tree in Daniel 4 hewn or cut down? What portion of it remained? Daniel 4:14, 15

23. Why was Nebuchadnezzar, the tree in Daniel 4, cut down when he was bearing fruit? Matthew 7:16-19; Genesis 3:6

"Seeds of truth had been planted in Babylon. The holy Watcher sought constantly for the growth of a tree which would bring life. All nations were gathered under the influence of Babylon in hopes that they might there be fed with fruit which would prove to be the bread of life; but instead, it was a mixture of good and evil, which poisoned the consumer." {1901 SNH, SDP 56.1}

24. Remember that we are represented as trees in scripture. Why is the end result of the barren fig tree not mentioned? Deuteronomy 30:19; Joshua 24:15

25. Was God's judgment against Nebuchadnezzar absolute or was it conditional based on his choice? Daniel 4:28-30; Jonah 3:1-10

26. What is God's plea to us? Jeremiah 3:14

27. What must we acknowledge when we choose to repent of our sins?

28. Jeremiah 3:13(a)

29. Jeremiah 3:13(b)

30. Jeremiah 3:13(c)

31. What character trait does God emphasize as a reason why we should return to Him? Jeremiah 3:12

32. Meditate on the following quotation about the parable of the barren fig tree as we close.

"The warning sounds down along the line to us in this generation. Are you, O careless heart, a fruitless tree in the Lord's vineyard? Shall the words of doom ere long be spoken of you? How long have you received His gifts? How long has He watched and waited for a return of love? Planted in His vineyard, under the watchful care of the gardener, what privileges are yours! How often has the tender gospel message thrilled your heart! You have taken the name of Christ, you are outwardly a member of the church which is His body, and yet you are conscious of no living connection with the great heart of love. The tide of His life does not flow through you. The sweet graces of His character, "the fruits of the Spirit," are not seen in your life." {COL 216.3}

"You realize, though it may be but dimly, that you are a cumberer of the ground. Yet in His great mercy God has not cut you down. He does not look coldly upon you. He does not turn away with indifference, or leave you to destruction. Looking upon you He cries, as He cried so many centuries ago concerning Israel, "How shall I give thee up, Ephraim? How shall I deliver thee, Israel? ... I will not execute the fierceness of Mine anger. I will not return to destroy Ephraim; for I am God, and not man." Hosea 11:8, 9. The pitying Saviour is saying concerning you, Spare it this year also, till I shall dig about it and dress it." {COL 217.2}