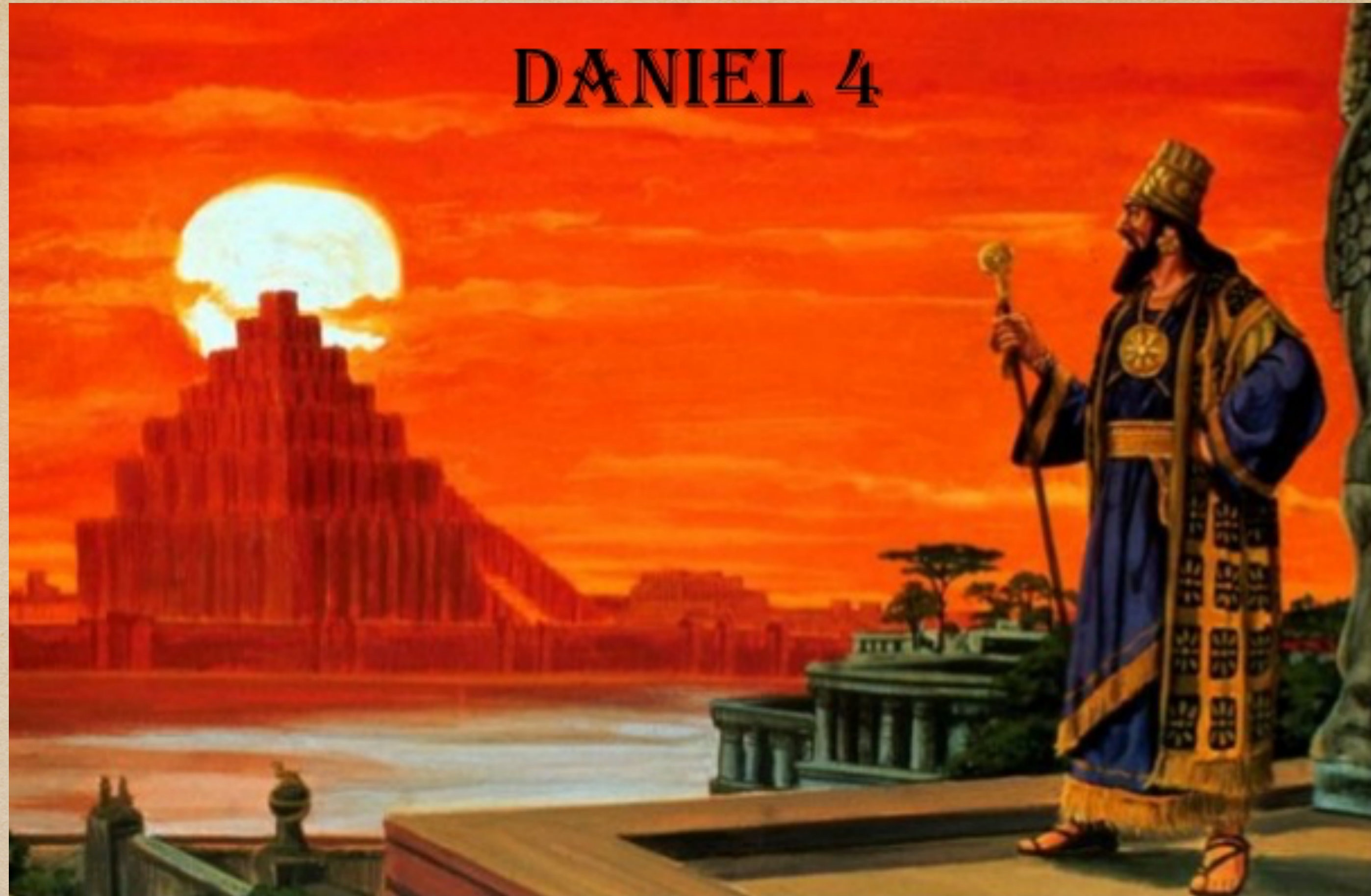


# DANIEL 4



Daniel 4  
Pride Before Destruction

# Proverbs 16:18

- ◆ Pride goeth before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall.
- ◆ the remarkable thing we'll see in this chapter is Nebuchadnezzar openly admitting his pride, his temporary insanity and his beastly behavior
- ◆ then, he gives glory to the God of Israel for his recovery

# Daniel 4:1-3

- ◆ Nebuchadnezzar the king, unto all people, nations, and languages, that dwell in all the earth; Peace be multiplied unto you. 2 I thought it good to shew the signs and wonders that the high God hath wrought toward me. 3 How great are his signs! and how mighty are his wonders! his kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and his dominion is from generation to generation.

- ◆ this doesn't sound like the Nebuchadnezzar of Chapters 1-3
- ◆ this chapter is written by him for the known world
- ◆ he had this letter sent out among the nation to be displayed for all to read
- ◆ this pagan king had discovered the real, living God
- ◆ this didn't come easy for this king

# Daniel 4:4-7

- ◆ 4 I Nebuchadnezzar was at rest in mine house, and flourishing in my palace:
- ◆ 5 I saw a dream which made me afraid, and the thoughts upon my bed and the visions of my head troubled me.
- ◆ 6 Therefore made I a decree to bring in all the wise men of Babylon before me, that they might make known unto me the interpretation of the dream.
- ◆ 7 Then came in the magicians, the astrologers, the Chaldeans, and the soothsayers: and I told the dream before them; but they did not make known unto me the interpretation thereof.

- ◆ many believe this happened 20-30 years after chapter 3
- ◆ this was a time of peace and security for Nebuchadnezzar
- ◆ he's now admiring "his" kingdom that "he" established, marking himself as the builder of "Babylon the great" and the architect of its peace and prosperity
- ◆ he will soon learn that all these things were permitted by the One, True God

- ◆ he had a second dream
  - ◆ (2:3) his first dream troubled him
  - ◆ (4:5) his second dream terrified him

# Daniel 4:8-9

- ◆ 8 But at the last Daniel came in before me, whose name was Belteshazzar, according to the name of my God, and in whom is the spirit of the holy gods: and before him I told the dream, saying,
- ◆ 9 O Belteshazzar, master of the magicians, because I know that the spirit of the holy gods is in thee, and no secret troubleth thee, tell me the visions of my dream that I have seen, and the interpretation thereof.



- ◆ notice he called him "Daniel" instead of Belteshazzar
- ◆ there had to have been some kind of special relationship between Daniel and Nebuchadnezzar (going back to Ch 2 when Daniel interpreted the dream)
- ◆ he called all of his "wise" men but they couldn't help
- ◆ the wisdom of this world is futile and only God can give a true understanding of the future

## Daniel 4:10-12

- ◆ 10 Thus were the visions of mine head in my bed; I saw, and behold a tree in the midst of the earth, and the height thereof was great.
- ◆ 11 The tree grew, and was strong, and the height thereof reached unto heaven, and the sight thereof to the end of all the earth:

## Daniel 4:10-12

- ◆ 12 The leaves thereof were fair, and the fruit thereof much, and in it was meat for all: the beasts of the field had shadow under it, and the fowls of the heaven dwelt in the boughs thereof, and all flesh was fed of it.

## Daniel 4:13-16

- ◆ 13 I saw in the visions of my head upon my bed, and, behold, a watcher and an holy one came down from heaven;
- ◆ 14 He cried aloud, and said thus, Hew down the tree, and cut off his branches, shake off his leaves, and scatter his fruit: let the beasts get away from under it, and the fowls from his branches:

## Daniel 4:13-16

- ◆ 15 Nevertheless leave the stump of his roots in the earth, even with a band of iron and brass, in the tender grass of the field; and let it be wet with the dew of heaven, and let his portion be with the beasts in the grass of the earth:
- ◆ 16 Let his heart be changed from man's, and let a beast's heart be given unto him; and let seven times pass over him.

# Daniel 4:17-18

- ◆ 17 This matter is by the decree of the watchers, and the demand by the word of the holy ones: to the intent that the living may know that the most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will, and setteth up over it the basest of men.

## Daniel 4:17-18

- ◆ 18 This dream I king Nebuchadnezzar have seen. Now thou, O Belteshazzar, declare the interpretation thereof, forasmuch as all the wise men of my kingdom are not able to make known unto me the interpretation: but thou art able; for the spirit of the holy gods is in thee.

- ◆ Daniel is the “master of the magicians” or the “chief of the magicians”
- ◆ he was brought in separately, more than likely in a special place since he was placed in high authority
- ◆ the king recognized that the “spirit of the gods” was in Daniel and had given him remarkable wisdom and insight



- ◆ the king described his dream to Daniel in great detail
  - ◆ it was a huge tree that supplies everyone's needs, but it's being cut down
  - ◆ the dream changes from an idiom to personal, which we can see as we read it
  - ◆ this tree represents a person
    - ◆ v. 16 — Let his heart be changed from man's, and let a beast's heart be given unto him; and let seven times pass over him

- ◆ “times” = year
- ◆ this was the Aramaic way of saying “seven years”
- ◆ v. 17 — This matter is by the decree of the watchers, and the demand by the word of the holy ones: to the intent that the living may know that the most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will, and setteth up over it the basest of men
- ◆ this is the key to the whole chapter — to make known Who is really in charge — Jehovah God — we’ve all been guilty of forgetting He’s in charge by our doubt and ingratitude

## Daniel 4:19

- ◆ 19 Then Daniel, whose name was Belteshazzar, was astonished for one hour, and his thoughts troubled him. The king spake, and said, Belteshazzar, let not the dream, or the interpretation thereof, trouble thee. Belteshazzar answered and said, My lord, the dream be to them that hate thee, and the interpretation thereof to thine enemies.

- ◆ Nebuchadnezzar noticed in Daniel's countenance that something was wrong
- ◆ Daniel's thoughts were troubled because he saw what was ahead for this monarch
- ◆ he told Daniel to be upfront and honest; not holding anything back
- ◆ Daniel basically was saying, "I wish this dream was against your enemies and not against you."

# Daniel 4:20-22

- ◆ 20 The tree that thou sawest, which grew, and was strong, whose height reached unto the heaven, and the sight thereof to all the earth;
- ◆ 21 Whose leaves were fair, and the fruit thereof much, and in it was meat for all; under which the beasts of the field dwelt, and upon whose branches the fowls of the heaven had their habitation:
- ◆ 22 It is thou, O king, that art grown and become strong: for thy greatness is grown, and reacheth unto heaven, and thy dominion to the end of the earth.

## Daniel 4:23

- ◆ 23 And whereas the king saw a watcher and an holy one coming down from heaven, and saying, Hew the tree down, and destroy it; yet leave the stump of the roots thereof in the earth, even with a band of iron and brass, in the tender grass of the field; and let it be wet with the dew of heaven, and let his portion be with the beasts of the field, till seven times pass over him;

- ◆ Daniel told Nebuchadnezzar years before that he was the head of gold in the other dream
- ◆ now he announces to him that he is the tree

- ◆ Trees in the Bible
  - ◆ symbols of political authority such as:
    - ◆ kings
    - ◆ nations
    - ◆ empires
    - ◆ (Ezek 17, 31; Hos 14; Zech 11:1-2; Luke 23:31)



- ◆ It was by God's decree that Nebuchadnezzar be the man he was and build the empire he had built that reached "to the end of the earth" (Dan 4:22)
- ◆ strong, great kingdom
- ◆ Nebuchadnezzar was taking the credit for these achievements and was in great danger because his heart was full of pride

- ◆ Nebuchadnezzar was very forgetful
- ◆ he witnessed the preservation of the three Hebrew men in the fiery furnace and the power of their God
- ◆ he witnessed the power of God to reveal dreams and give interpretations
- ◆ now, he's going to have an encounter with this One, True God and receive severe discipline from His hand

# Daniel 4:24-26

- ◆ 24 This is the interpretation, O king, and this is the decree of the most High, which is come upon my lord the king:
- ◆ 25 That they shall drive thee from men, and thy dwelling shall be with the beasts of the field, and they shall make thee to eat grass as oxen, and they shall wet thee with the dew of heaven, and seven times shall pass over thee, till thou know that the most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will.
- ◆ 26 And whereas they commanded to leave the stump of the tree roots; thy kingdom shall be sure unto thee, after that thou shalt have known that the heavens do rule.

- ◆ the cutting down of the tree symbolized Nebuchadnezzar's disgrace and removal from the throne, but the leaving of the stump meant he would one day return to this throne
- ◆ he was going to be cut down, but not dead
- ◆ he was going to be in the fields with the beasts and he would be wet by the dew at night for 7 years

- ◆ God's lesson for Nebuchadnezzar and for us
  - ◆ God alone is sovereign and will not permit anyone to assume or take His throne or credit for His works
  - ◆ we are the creatures and He is the Creator
  - ◆ we are subjects, but He is the King of kings
  - ◆ when humans refuse to submit themselves to God as creatures made in His image they are in danger of descending to the level of animals

- ◆ when God is left out of our lives, we can descend to the level of animals
- ◆ David said in Ps. 32:9 — do not be like the horse or like the mule” (NKJV)
- ◆ David was like the impulsive horse when he rushed into sin with Bathsheba and he was like the stubborn mule when he delayed confessing his sins and repenting (2 Sam 11-12)

## Daniel 4:27

- ◆ 27 Wherefore, O king, let my counsel be acceptable unto thee, and break off thy sins by righteousness, and thine iniquities by shewing mercy to the poor; if it may be a lengthening of thy tranquillity.

- ◆ Daniel pleads with him to do what was right, to repent and get right with God
- ◆ Daniel was telling him what was going to happen but he ALSO told him what he needs to do now — we need to do this as the church of God
- ◆ when we hear and understand the Word of God but do not obey it then we deceive ourselves into thinking we've grown spiritually but in all reality we've moved backwards



## James 1:22-27

- ◆ 22 But don't just listen to God's word. You must do what it says. Otherwise, you are only fooling yourselves. 23 For if you listen to the word and don't obey, it is like glancing at your face in a mirror. 24 You see yourself, walk away, and forget what you look like. 25 But if you look carefully into the perfect law that sets you free, and if you do what it says and don't forget what you heard, then God will bless you for doing it.

## James 1:22-27

- ◆ 26 If you claim to be religious but don't control your tongue, you are fooling yourself, and your religion is worthless. 27 Pure and genuine religion in the sight of God the Father means caring for orphans and widows in their distress and refusing to let the world corrupt you.

- ◆ Jesus is coming soon!

- ◆ William Culbertson

- ◆ “You do not truly hold the truth of the doctrine of the return of the Lord Jesus Christ until that doctrine holds you and influences your manner of living as the Bible says it should”

- ◆ Peter explains how Christians are to live and behave when they truly believe the Lord will return:

- ◆ 2 Peter 3:11-18

- ◆ notice how he says, "I," "my," "me"
- ◆ this is dangerous because it makes pride take over
- ◆ often, it takes a fall to allow God to use us

## 2 Peter 3:11-18

11 Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness,  
12 Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat? 13 Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness. 14 Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless.

## 2 Peter 3:11-18

15 And account that the long suffering of our Lord is salvation; even as our beloved brother Paul also according to the wisdom given unto him hath written unto you; 16 As also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things; in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction. 17 Ye therefore, beloved, seeing ye know these things before, beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own steadfastness. 18 But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and for ever. Amen.

- ◆ Daniel was calling for repentance
  - ◆ he wanted the king to change his mind, acknowledge his sins, turn from them and put his faith in the true and living God
  - ◆ Nebuchadnezzar knew what he was supposed to do, but passed up his opportunity to submit to God
    - ◆ he made the wrong decision!

## Daniel 4:28-30

- ◆ 28 All this came upon the king Nebuchadnezzar.
- ◆ 29 At the end of twelve months he walked in the palace of the kingdom of Babylon.
- ◆ 30 The king spake, and said, Is not this great Babylon, that I have built for the house of the kingdom by the might of my power, and for the honour of my majesty?



## Daniel 4:31-33

- ◆ 31 While the word was in the king's mouth, there fell a voice from heaven, saying, O king Nebuchadnezzar, to thee it is spoken; The kingdom is departed from thee.
- ◆ 32 And they shall drive thee from men, and thy dwelling shall be with the beasts of the field: they shall make thee to eat grass as oxen, and seven times shall pass over thee, until thou know that the most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will.

# Daniel 4:31-33

- ◆ 33 The same hour was the thing fulfilled upon Nebuchadnezzar: and he was driven from men, and did eat grass as oxen, and his body was wet with the dew of heaven, till his hairs were grown like eagles' feathers, and his nails like birds' claws.

- ◆ He was a prideful man:
- ◆ there was a Babylon inscription by Nebuchadnezzar found in cuneiform tablets that reads:
- ◆ I, Nebuchadnezzar, King of Babylon, I am the son of Nabopolassar, King of Babylon. I who erected the Ezida Temple, I who built the Procession Street, The Street of the Forgiven Son, The Street of Nebu, And paved it with shimmering stones. Nebu, you the divining minister, grant me immortality.”

- ◆ God hates pride — Prov 6:16-19; 16:5; 16:18; 1 Cor 4:6-7; Phil 2:3-4, 5-8; 1 Tim 6:4-10, 17; James 4:13-17
- ◆ Why does He hate pride?
  - ◆ it lead to Satan's fall — Isaiah 14:4-14; Eze 28
    - ◆ For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north: 14 I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High. (Is 14:13-14)

- ◆ God gave the king an entire year to repent
- ◆ pride had gripped his heart so much that he couldn't submit to God
- ◆ Ecclesiastes 8:11 — Because the sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil.
- ◆ God waited patiently in the days of Noah and gave the inhabitants of the world 120 years to repent
- ◆ He gave the city of Jerusalem almost 40 years of grace after the religious leaders crucified their Messiah

- ◆ while his prideful words were still on his lips, God spoke to him
- ◆ this man was beastly at heart and it was made manifest in the flesh for all to see
- ◆ some think that he was kept behind the palace walls not to be seen by the public
- ◆ Dan 5:21 - Then he was driven from the sons of men, his heart was made like the beasts, and his dwelling was with the wild donkeys

- ◆ remember the point of this whole chapter — to give glory to God and realize He is the Creator
- ◆ God chose the Jewish people to be a light to the Gentiles but they failed miserably and started practicing the darkness of the pagan nations
- ◆ for this reason, God used a pagan king to give glory to His name

## Daniel 4:34-35

- ◆ 34 And at the end of the days I Nebuchadnezzar lifted up mine eyes unto heaven, and mine understanding returned unto me, and I blessed the most High, and I praised and honoured him that liveth for ever, whose dominion is an everlasting dominion, and his kingdom is from generation to generation:



## Daniel 4:34-35

- ◆ 35 And all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing: and he doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?

- ◆ this restoration began with the king lifting up his eyes to God, which suggests both faith and submission
- ◆ Ps 123:1 — Unto You I lift up my eyes, O You who dwell in the heavens.
- ◆ Isa 45:22 — “Look to Me, and be saved, All you ends of the earth! For I am God, and there is no other.
- ◆ it appears that Nebuchadnezzar experienced a spiritual conversion

- ◆ the first thing Nebuchadnezzar did was he praised the Lord
- ◆ he acknowledged the sovereignty of God
- ◆ this is a great example of God's sovereignty and the man's responsibility
- ◆ no person is more free than the believer who surrenders to the sovereign will of God

- ◆ if we ignore God's sovereignty then we exalt man's responsibility and that makes man his own savior
- ◆ if we deny responsibility then that makes man a robot without accountability
- ◆ the Bible maintains a balance here

## Daniel 4:36-37

- ◆ 36 At the same time my reason returned unto me; and for the glory of my kingdom, mine honour and brightness returned unto me; and my counsellors and my lords sought unto me; and I was established in my kingdom, and excellent majesty was added unto me.
- ◆ 37 Now I Nebuchadnezzar praise and extol and honour the King of heaven, all whose works are truth, and his ways judgment: and those that walk in pride he is able to abase.

- ◆ he became greater than before (v 36)
- ◆ when God isn't permitted to rule, He overrules and accomplishes His divine purposes for his glory

- ◆ Isaiah 13:11 — “I will punish the world for its evil, And the wicked for their iniquity; I will halt the arrogance of the proud, And will lay low the haughtiness of the terrible.
- ◆ Matthew 23:12 — And whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted.