

# Book of Daniel

*Class for September 17, 2023*

*Daniel – Chapter 4*

*Logos Class. Mod 5 Room 1*

# Class Schedule for the next few weeks

- ✓ *Aug 27, 2023 - Daniel Introduction and Ch 1*
- ✓ *Sep 3, 2023 - Daniel Chapter 2*
- ✓ *Sep 10, 2023 - Daniel Chapter 3*
- ✓ *Sep 17, 2023 - Daniel Chapter 4*
- *Sep 24, 2023 – **Wade Williams** to teach*
- *Oct 1, 2023. - **Wade Williams** to teach*
- *Oct 8, 2023. - Daniel Chapter 5*

*We will be on vacation for the 2 Sundays Wade is teaching,  
And we will be Zooming all of these lessons, God willing.*

# Before we start

- We have covered a lot of ground so far in Daniel and seen dreams identified and revealed.
- We've seen young Hebrew captives stand up for their beliefs and their purity in a pagan Kingdom, and live to be promoted and honored
- We've seen God deliver these men in times of desperate need and the prayers of the afflicted to God to reveal wisdom, action to take, and complete dependency on Him to protect them and ring glory to Himself.
- We've seen that God uses the pagans and non-believers to accomplish His will, even if they don't know it. We've also seen God punish His children for unbelief and disobedience.
- Today we are going to see that God is indeed sovereign over all the world, the things of the world, and the Kings of this world. AND we are going to see the wicked acknowledge Him

# Human Nature

- *One of the commentaries and sermons I listened to in preparing this lesson recalled a story in his local newspaper about a man who refused to wear his seatbelt, even after many tickets*
- *Relate that to a long-time friend of ours in Kentucky and to Respiratory Therapists treating Vicki's Dad. Bypass surgery, and lung disease*
- *What is it in human nature that keeps us from listening to warnings and changing behaviors?*
- *We are all guilty of this to some degree, especially in regard to our health and safety.*
- *Could it be a rebellion against authority beyond ourselves?*
- *Today we will explore this in King Nebuchadnezzar's life.*

- *Another 15-20 years pass after Chapter 3*
- *Daniel and his 3 friends are about 50 years old and have been fixtures in Babylonian ruling infrastructure. The Kingdom is doing very well and is quite prosperous.*
- *King Nebuchadnezzar is a gifted builder, and has spent money on making the palace, the city, and the hanging gardens beautiful. The gardens are considered one of the Wonders of the Ancient World.*
- *Time has had a positive benefit for the King, but also lulled him into a sense of his own importance*

# Daniel Ch 4 *Differences in Ch. 4 and others*

- *The narrative is written by the King himself, and is probably just inserted in the notes of Daniel that are published...with a few notations by Daniel*
- *This Ch is a confession by the King, and some would say a confession of faith in the God of Daniel.*
- *It is an official biographical confessional document from the King of Babylon which makes it both unique and God inspired.*
- *It is an open letter to the whole Kingdom.*
- *Let's take a look at it...*



# Gods of the Babylonians



- *Babylonians were polytheists*
- ***Marduk and Bel***
- ***Marduk** was originally the God of Thunderstorms, but gradually became the God of all things.*
- ***Bel** was another God who protected the Babylonians and considered the God in particular of King Nebuchadnezzar. (Bel will protect him)*
- ***Bel** means "lord" or a secondary meaning is to be "worn out" or "worthless"*
- *Non-Canonical book **Bel and the Dragon** is a catholic mythical book inserted in the NT era with a single story about the worthlessness of Bel.*

# Daniel Ch 4 :1-3 *Nebuchadnezzar's Dream of a Tree*

*4 King Nebuchadnezzar,*

*To the nations and peoples of every language, who live in all the earth:*

*May you prosper greatly!*

*<sup>2</sup> It is my pleasure to tell you about the miraculous signs and wonders that the Most High God has performed for me.*

*<sup>3</sup> How great are his signs,*

*how mighty his wonders!*

*His kingdom is an eternal kingdom;*

*his dominion endures from generation to generation.*



# Daniel Ch 4:4-8 The King begins the story...

***4** I, Nebuchadnezzar, was at **home in my palace, contented and prosperous.***

***5** I had a dream that made me afraid. As I was lying in bed, the images and visions that passed through my mind **terrified me.***

***6** So I commanded that **all the wise men of Babylon be brought before me to interpret the dream for me.***

***7** When the magicians, enchanters, astrologers and diviners came, I told them the dream, but they **could not** interpret it for me.*

***8** Finally, **Daniel** came into my presence, and I told him the dream. (He is called **Belteshazzar**, after the name of my god, and **the spirit of the holy gods is in him.**)*

# Daniel Ch 4:9-12    A tree, huge and beautiful

***<sup>9</sup> I said, “Belteshazzar, chief of the magicians, I know that the spirit of the holy gods is in you, and no mystery is too difficult for you. Here is my dream; interpret it for me.***

***<sup>10</sup> These are the visions I saw while lying in bed: I looked, and there before me stood a tree in the middle of the land. Its height was enormous.***

***<sup>11</sup> The tree grew large and strong, and its top touched the sky; it was visible to the ends of the earth.***

***<sup>12</sup> Its leaves were beautiful, its fruit abundant, and on it was food for all. Under it the wild animals found shelter, and the birds lived in its branches; from it every creature was fed.***

## Daniel Ch 4:13-15 God's messenger comes...

*<sup>13</sup> “In the visions I saw while lying in bed, I looked, and there before me was a **holy one, a messenger (or a watchman)**, coming down from heaven.*

*<sup>14</sup> He called in a loud voice: **‘Cut down the tree and trim off its branches; strip off its leaves and scatter its fruit. Let the animals flee from under it and the birds from its branches.***

*<sup>15</sup> **But let the stump and its roots, bound with iron and bronze, remain in the ground, in the grass of the field.***

*“Let **him** be drenched with the dew of heaven, and let **him** live with the animals among the plants of the earth. <sup>16</sup> Let his mind be changed from that of a man and let him be given the mind of an animal, **till seven times pass by for him.***

<sup>17</sup> *“The decision is announced by messengers, the holy ones declare the verdict, so that the living may know that the Most High is sovereign over all kingdoms on earth and gives them to anyone he wishes and sets over them the lowliest of people.’*

<sup>18</sup> *“This is the dream that I, King Nebuchadnezzar, had. **Now, Belteshazzar, tell me what it means, for none of the wise men in my kingdom can interpret it for me. But you can, because the spirit of the holy gods is in you.**”*

# Daniel Ch 4:19-23 The Meaning

<sup>19</sup> Then Daniel (also called Belteshazzar) was **greatly perplexed** for a time, and **his thoughts terrified him**. **So** the king said, “**Belteshazzar, do not let the dream or its meaning alarm you.**”

*Belteshazzar answered, “My lord, if only the dream applied to your enemies and its meaning to your adversaries!*

<sup>20</sup> *The tree you saw, which grew large and strong, with its top touching the sky, visible to the whole earth,*

<sup>21</sup> *with beautiful leaves and abundant fruit, providing food for all, giving shelter to the wild animals, and having nesting places in its branches for the birds—*

<sup>22</sup> **Your Majesty, you are that tree!** *You have become great and strong; your greatness has grown until it reaches the sky, and your dominion extends to distant parts of the earth.*

<sup>23</sup> *“Your Majesty saw a holy one, a messenger, coming down from heaven and saying, ‘Cut down the tree and destroy it, but leave the stump, bound with iron and bronze, in the grass of the field, while its roots remain in the ground. Let him be drenched with the dew of heaven; let him live with the wild animals, until seven times pass by for him.’*



# Daniel Ch 4:24-27 Judgment given

*24 “This is the interpretation, Your Majesty, and this is the decree the Most High has issued against my lord the king:*

*25 You will be driven away from people and will live with the wild animals; you will eat grass like the ox and be drenched with the dew of heaven. **Seven times will pass by for you until you acknowledge that the Most High is sovereign over all kingdoms on earth and gives them to anyone he wishes.***

*26 The command to **leave the stump of the tree with its roots** means that **your kingdom will be restored to you when you acknowledge that Heaven rules.***

*27 Therefore, Your Majesty, **be pleased to accept my advice:** Renounce your sins by doing what is right, and your wickedness by being kind to the oppressed. It may be that then your prosperity will continue.”*

# Daniel Ch 4:28-33 Fulfillment

*28 All this happened to King Nebuchadnezzar.*

*29 Twelve months later, as the king was walking on the roof of the royal palace of Babylon,*

*30 he said, **“Is not this the great Babylon I have built as the royal residence, by my mighty power and for the glory of my majesty?”***

*31 Even as the words were on his lips, a voice came from heaven, **“This is what is decreed for you, King Nebuchadnezzar: Your royal authority has been taken from you.***

*32 You will be driven away from people and will live with the wild animals; you will eat grass like the ox. Seven times will pass by for you **until you acknowledge that the Most High is sovereign over all kingdoms on earth and gives them to anyone he wishes.**”*

*33 Immediately what had been said about Nebuchadnezzar was fulfilled. He was driven away from people and **ate grass like the ox. His body was drenched with the dew of heaven until his hair grew like the feathers of an eagle and his nails like the claws of a bird.***

# Daniel Ch 4:34-37 Some lessons are hard

***34 At the end of that time, I, Nebuchadnezzar, raised my eyes toward heaven, and my sanity was restored. Then I praised the Most High; I honored and glorified him who lives forever.***

*His dominion is an eternal dominion;  
his kingdom endures from generation to generation.*

***35 All the peoples of the earth  
are regarded as nothing.***

*He does as he pleases  
with the powers of heaven  
and the peoples of the earth.*

*No one can hold back his hand  
or say to him: **“What have you done?”***

***36 At the same time that my sanity was restored, my honor and splendor were returned to me for the glory of my kingdom. My advisers and nobles sought me out, and I was restored to my throne and became even greater than before.***

***37 Now I, Nebuchadnezzar, praise and exalt and glorify the King of heaven, because everything he does is right, and all his ways are just. And those who walk in pride he is able to humble.***

# Daniel Ch 4

# God Rules

*King Nebuchadnezzar documents his journey for all his subjects and gives glory and majesty to God. This an amazing chapter of the character of God and His faithfulness to His promises and His punishments/disciplines.*

*He has a big change of heart – Is it lasting ?*

*What about us? Do we have to be taken to these extremes of discipline to bring us back to the Lord?*

***My question for all of us** is what about our arrogance and refusal to acknowledge God as sovereign? Are we following Him? Or are we biding time assuming we are “good to go?”*

***Chapter 5 after we return. Wade next two weeks***

# Daniel Ch 4



# Quick Recap from Chapter 2

- *Crisis in Babylon for the wise men. It was a life or death situation*
- *What was it?*
  - *Nebuchadnezzar had had a recurring dream that no one could interpret for him. It worried him so much that he could not sleep, so he searched for answers.*
  - *He summoned his wise men to tell him, but he insisted they tell him both his dream, and what it meant. They could not do that and made him angry with them. He did not trust them anyway. Nebuchadnezzar ordered them All to be put to death.*
  - *Daniel was not there, and when they came to kill him, he persuaded the guard to take him to the King and ask for time so he could interpret the dream for the King. It was granted.*
  - *Daniel and the three Hebrews went directly to God and prayed for an answer to what the dream was, and what it meant*
  - *God honored that prayer and request, and Daniel went back to the King and shared the dream and its interpretation.*

Next Week