**Daniel 4:1-37 (NASB)**   
1  Nebuchadnezzar the king to all the peoples, nations, and *men of every* language that live in all the earth: "May your peace abound!   
2  "It has seemed good to me to declare the signs and wonders which the Most High God has done for 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.   
4  "I, Nebuchadnezzar, was at ease in my house and flourishing in my palace.   
5  "I saw a dream and it made me fearful; and *these* fantasies *as I lay* on my bed and the visions in my mind kept alarming me.   
6  "So I gave orders to bring into my presence all the wise men of Babylon, that they might make known to me the interpretation of the dream.   
7  "Then the magicians, the conjurers, the Chaldeans and the diviners came in and I related the dream to them, but they could not make its interpretation known to me.   
8  "But finally Daniel came in before me, whose name is Belteshazzar according to the name of my god, and in whom is a spirit of the holy gods; and I related the dream to him, *saying,*   
9  'O Belteshazzar, chief of the magicians, since I know that a spirit of the holy gods is in you and no mystery baffles you, tell *me* the visions of my dream which I have seen, along with its interpretation.   
10  'Now *these were* the visions in my mind *as I lay* on my bed: I was looking, and behold, *there was* a tree in the midst of the earth and its height *was* great.   
11  'The tree grew large and became strong And its height reached to the sky, And it *was* visible to the end of the whole earth.   
12  'Its foliage *was* beautiful and its fruit abundant, And in it *was* food for all. The beasts of the field found shade under it, And the birds of the sky dwelt in its branches, And all living creatures fed themselves from it.   
13  'I was looking in the visions in my mind *as I lay* on my bed, and behold, an *angelic* watcher, a holy one, descended from heaven.   
14  'He shouted out and spoke as follows: "Chop down the tree and cut off its branches, Strip off its foliage and scatter its fruit; Let the beasts flee from under it And the birds from its branches.   
15  "Yet leave the stump with its roots in the ground, But with a band of iron and bronze *around it* In the new grass of the field; And let him be drenched with the dew of heaven, And let him share with the beasts in the grass of the earth.   
16  "Let his mind be changed from *that of* a man And let a beast's mind be given to him, And let seven periods of time pass over him.   
17  "This sentence is by the decree of the *angelic* watchers And the decision is a command of the holy ones, In order that the living may know That the Most High is ruler over the realm of mankind, And bestows it on whom He wishes And sets over it the lowliest of men."   
18  'This is the dream *which* I, King Nebuchadnezzar, have seen. Now you, Belteshazzar, tell *me* its interpretation, inasmuch as none of the wise men of my kingdom is able to make known to me the interpretation; but you are able, for a spirit of the holy gods is in you.'



19  "Then Daniel, whose name is Belteshazzar, was appalled for a while as his thoughts alarmed him. The king responded and said, 'Belteshazzar, do not let the dream or its interpretation alarm you.' Belteshazzar replied, 'My lord, *if only* the dream applied to those who hate you and its interpretation to your adversaries!   
20  'The tree that you saw, which became large and grew strong, whose height reached to the sky and was visible to all the earth   
21  and whose foliage *was* beautiful and its fruit abundant, and in which *was* food for all, under which the beasts of the field dwelt and in whose branches the birds of the sky lodged—   
22  it is you, O king; for you have become great and grown strong, and your majesty has become great and reached to the sky and your dominion to the end of the earth.   
23  'In that the king saw an *angelic* watcher, a holy one, descending from heaven and saying, "Chop down the tree and destroy it; yet leave the stump with its roots in the ground, but with a band of iron and bronze *around it* in the new grass of the field, and let him be drenched with the dew of heaven, and let him share with the beasts of the field until seven periods of time pass over him,"   
24  this is the interpretation, O king, and this is the decree of the Most High, which has come upon my lord the king:   
25  that you be driven away from mankind and your dwelling place be with the beasts of the field, and you be given grass to eat like cattle and be drenched with the dew of heaven; and seven periods of time will pass over you, until you recognize that the Most High is ruler over the realm of mankind and bestows it on whomever He wishes.   
26  'And in that it was commanded to leave the stump with the roots of the tree, your kingdom will be assured to you after you recognize that *it is* Heaven *that* rules.   
27  'Therefore, O king, may my advice be pleasing to you: break away now from your sins by *doing* righteousness and from your iniquities by showing mercy to *the* poor, in case there may be a prolonging of your prosperity.'   
28  "All *this* happened to Nebuchadnezzar the king.   
29  "Twelve months later he was walking on the *roof of* the royal palace of Babylon.   
30  "The king reflected and said, 'Is this not Babylon the great, which I myself have built as a royal residence by the might of my power and for the glory of my majesty?'   
31  "While the word *was* in the king's mouth, a voice came from heaven, *saying,* 'King Nebuchadnezzar, to you it is declared: sovereignty has been removed from you,   
32  and you will be driven away from mankind, and your dwelling place *will be* with the beasts of the field. You will be given grass to eat like cattle, and seven periods of time will pass over you until you recognize that the Most High is ruler over the realm of mankind and bestows it on whomever He wishes.'   
33  "Immediately the word concerning Nebuchadnezzar was fulfilled; and he was driven away from mankind and began eating grass like cattle, and his body was drenched with the dew of heaven until his hair had grown like eagles' *feathers* and his nails like birds' *claws.*   
34  "But at the end of that period, I, Nebuchadnezzar, raised my eyes toward heaven and my reason 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 *endures* from generation to generation.   
35  "All the inhabitants of the earth are accounted as nothing, But He does according to His will in the host of heaven And *among* the inhabitants of earth; And no one can ward off His hand Or say to Him, 'What have You done?'   
36  "At that time my reason returned to me. And my majesty and splendor were restored to me for the glory of my kingdom, and my counselors and my nobles began seeking me out; so I was reestablished in my sovereignty, and surpassing greatness was added to me.   
37  "Now I, Nebuchadnezzar, praise, exalt and honor the King of heaven, for all His works are true and His ways just, and He is able to humble those who walk in pride."



**C. The second dream of Nebuchadnezzar (**[**chap. 4**](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+4)**)**

**1. The King's Proclamation (**[**4:1-3**](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+4%3A1-3)**)**

Apparently a number of years transpired between the experience of Daniel's three friends in [chapter 3](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+3) and Nebuchadnezzar's dream and period of insanity in [chapter 4](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+4). Nebuchadnezzar reigned for 43 years (605-562 b.c.). His insanity lasted seven years and he returned to the throne for a short time afterward before he died. His last years did not take place until he had time to conclude his extensive building operations ([v. 30](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+4%3A30)). Thus this incident may have taken place about the 35th year of Nebuchadnezzar's rule, or about 570. This would be some 30 years after the experience of the three men in the fiery furnace, about the 50th year of Daniel's life.

[4:1-3](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+4%3A1-3). Daniel recorded an official proclamation made by **Nebuchadnezzar** which was circulated throughout his realm. Daniel was led by the Holy Spirit's inspiration to include this official proclamation. God had shown the king that He is able to deliver and preserve those who trust and obey Him. But God's revelation of Himself to Nebuchadnezzar did not conclude there. For God further revealed Himself to the king through the circumstances recorded in this chapter. And in his proclamation to all the people in his empire (**peoples, nations, and men of every language**; cf. [comments](http://www.crossbooks.com/book.asp?pub=0&book=137&sec=00031775#links2168) on [3:4](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+3%3A4)), Nebuchadnezzar declared that through God's **miraculous signs** he had learned of His power and that **God** (**the Most High**; cf. [comments](http://www.crossbooks.com/book.asp?pub=0&book=137&sec=00031808#links2169) on [3:26](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+3%3A26)) is sovereign and exerts His will in **His... eternal kingdom.** Whereas earlier Nebuchadnezzar believed it was his own power and wisdom that had consolidated the kingdom under his authority, he learned that it is *God* who rules according to His will and uses those He chooses as His instruments.



##### **2. The King's Tree Vision (**[**4:4-18**](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+4%3A4-18)**)**

**a. The request for interpretation by the wise men (**[**4:4-7**](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+4%3A4-7)**)**

[4:4-7](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+4%3A4-7). For the second time a revelation was given to **Nebuchadnezzar** through **a dream** (cf. [2:1](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+2%3A1), [27-29](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+2%3A27-29)). This dream, like the one years before, **terrified** the king (cf. [2:1](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+2%3A1), [3](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+2%3A3)). Though **contented and prosperous,** he was **afraid.** So he sought an interpretation of **the dream to** allay his fears. Though **all the wise men of Babylon** had been discredited previously because of their inability to interpret the king's first dream ([2:10-12](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+2%3A10-12)), counselors had been retained by the king. He summoned **the magicians, enchanters, astrologers, and diviners** (see [comments](http://www.crossbooks.com/book.asp?pub=0&book=137&sec=00031636#links2163) on [1:17](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+1%3A17)) and ordered them **to interpret the dream** which he revealed to **them.** However, they were unable to do so.



###### **b. The dream explained to Daniel (**[**4:8-18**](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+4%3A8-18)**)**

[4:8](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+4%3A8). Then the king **told... the dream** to **Daniel.** Unable once again to be helped by his own conjurers, he had to consult one who worshiped Yahweh. However, the king still acknowledged his own **god** (perhaps Bel, alias Marduk) as he referred to Daniel by his Babylonian name (**Belteshazzar**; cf. [comments](http://www.crossbooks.com/book.asp?pub=0&book=137&sec=00031600#links1968) on [1:7](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+1%3A7)) which included Bel's name. The word **finally** suggests that some time passed before Daniel went **into** the king's **presence.** Obviously Daniel was not among the wise men who had first been summoned to interpret the dream ([4:6](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+4%3A6)). Apparently Daniel was in a position of significant governmental authority and not serving as a counselor to the king (cf. [comments](http://www.crossbooks.com/book.asp?pub=0&book=137&sec=00031786#links2170) on [3:12](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+3%3A12)). That would explain why he was not included in the invitation given previously to the wise men.



Because of the impression made on Nebuchadnezzar through Daniel's previous interpretation (cf. [2:46](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+2%3A46)) it is not likely that the king had forgotten about Daniel's ability to interpret dreams. Possibly the king suspected the ominous message contained in his dream and hoped that the wise men could soften the message when they interpreted it to him. The king thought that Daniel operated by **the spirit of the holy gods** (cf. [4:9](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+4%3A9), [18](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+4%3A18); [5:11](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+5%3A11), [14](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+5%3A14)) and that through Daniel the message would be unveiled. Obviously Nebuchadnezzar was still a polytheist though he had acknowledged Yahweh's sovereignty years before ([2:47](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+2%3A47); [3:28-29](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+3%3A28-29)).



[4:9-12](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+4%3A9-12). Nebuchadnezzar referred to Daniel as **chief of the magicians,** not because he was in authority over the wise men but because he was wiser than all of them, capable of understanding and interpreting dreams. The king implored Daniel to **interpret** his **dream** for him. Nebuchadnezzar's dream was a simple one. He was perplexed not by what he had seen, but by his inability to understand its meaning.



Previously Nebuchadnezzar had traveled to Lebanon to watch the felling of the great cedars to provide timber for his construction projects in Babylon. So he had witnessed the felling of mighty trees. The **tree** he saw in his dream was significant because of its size ([vv. 10-11](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+4%3A10-11)), its beauty ([v. 12](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+4%3A12)), and its **fruit** ([v. 12](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+4%3A12)). It provided **food** and **shelter** for all the animals and **birds** who lived **under** it or **in** it.

[4:13-14](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+4%3A13-14). The king then explained that he saw **a messenger, a holy one.** This holy messenger, unknown to Nebuchadnezzar, would have been known to the Jewish people as an angel sent **from heaven** with an announcement. The messenger said that **the tree** was to be **cut down,** the **branches** trimmed from the trunk, the **leaves** stripped off, and the **fruit** scattered. **The animals** and **birds** that found shelter under and in **its branches** were to scatter.



[4:15-16](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+4%3A15-16). However, **the stump** was not to be removed but secured with bands of **iron and bronze.** The first part of the vision of the tree ([vv. 10-12](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+4%3A10-12)) probably would have caused Nebuchadnezzar no concern. It may have even produced pride as he recognized himself in the tree as the one who provided bountifully for the subjects in his realm. But this second part of the vision ([vv. 13-15a](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+4%3A13-15)), that the tree was to be cut down, must have greatly disturbed him.

The third part of the vision ([vv. 15b-16](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+4%3A15-16)) must have been even more terrifying—if Nebuchadnezzar recognized himself as represented by the tree—for sanity was to leave **him** and he would become demented, living among **the animals.** He would have no more mental ability than **an animal.** This condition would continue for an extended period of time (**till seven times pass by**; cf. [vv. 23](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+4%3A23), [25](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+4%3A25), [32](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+4%3A32)). The "seven times" were probably seven years because (a) seven days or months would have been inadequate for his hair to have grown to the length of feathers ([v. 33](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+4%3A33)), and (b) "times" in [7:25](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+7%3A25) means years (cf. [comments](http://www.crossbooks.com/book.asp?pub=0&book=137&sec=00032092#links2171) there).



[4:17-18](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+4%3A17-18). Several **messengers** (**holy ones**) announced the lesson to be learned through the vision: **so that the living may know that the Most High** (cf. [comments](http://www.crossbooks.com/book.asp?pub=0&book=137&sec=00031808#links2169) on [3:26](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+3%3A26)) **is sovereign over the kingdoms of men and gives them to anyone He wishes and sets over them the lowliest of men.** This vision was designed to be a part of God's revelation of Himself and His authority over **Nebuchadnezzar** who in pride had exalted himself above God. The **king** again (cf. [4:9](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+4%3A9)) asked Daniel (**Belteshazzar**; cf. [comments](file:///C:\ProgramData\WORDsearch\WORDsearch%2011\Cache\copy_passage.html#links2161) on [v. 8](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+4%3A8)) to **tell** him the meaning of **the dream.**



**3. The Vision Interpreted (**[**4:19-27**](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+4%3A19-27)**)**

[4:19](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+4%3A19). Whereas **Daniel** had had no reticence about interpreting Nebuchadnezzar's first dream to him ([2:27-45](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+2%3A27-45)), he now was reluctant to interpret this second **dream.** The first dream exalted Nebuchadnezzar; he was the head of gold ([2:38](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+2%3A38)). But this second dream debased him. When **the king** saw Daniel's reluctance, he encouraged Daniel not to be alarmed but to share its meaning with him. Daniel respectfully stated that he wished **the dream** pertained to the king's **enemies.**



[4:20-22](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+4%3A20-22). Daniel repeated the description of the greatness of **the tree** ([vv. 20-21](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+4%3A20-21)) and then explained that the **tree** represented Nebuchadnezzar ([v. 22](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+4%3A22)). Daniel tactfully gave the good news first! Like the tree, Nebuchadnezzar had **become great and strong,** and his kingdom had been expanded and consolidated under his rule. His kingdom had become greater than any kingdom up to that time.



[4:23-25](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+4%3A23-25). Then came the bad news. The cutting **down** of **the tree**—a **decree** from **the Most High**—meant that Nebuchadnezzar would be removed from his position of authority in the kingdom. He would be turned out of the palace (**driven away from people**) and would **live** like an animal among **the wild animals** until **seven times** ([v. 23](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+4%3A23)) would **pass by.** The word "times" is used again in [7:25](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+7%3A25) where it also means a year (cf. [comments](http://www.crossbooks.com/book.asp?pub=0&book=137&sec=00032092#links2171) there). Thus Daniel predicted that Nebuchadnezzar would live in a demented state for seven years.



In the mental illness known as zoanthropy (an illness observed in modern times) a person thinks of himself as an animal and acts like one. This may have been the disease Nebuchadnezzar had. Daniel then referred to the purpose of this experience, which the messengers had announced in the dream ([4:17](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+4%3A17)). Through this illness Nebuchadnezzar would come to **acknowledge that the Most High is sovereign over the kingdoms of men and gives them to anyone He wishes.**



[4:26-27](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+4%3A26-27). The fact that **the stump** was not to be uprooted (but was to be secured and left in the field, [v. 15](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+4%3A15)) indicates that the **king** would **be restored** to the throne. However, that restoration would not take place till Nebuchadnezzar acknowledged God's sovereign right to rule (**that heaven rules**).



Daniel concluded by exhorting the king to **renounce** his **sins.** This points out the principle that any announced judgment may be averted if there is repentance (cf. the Book of Jonah). Daniel urged Nebuchadnezzar to turn from his sinful pride and produce fruits of righteousness (**doing what is right** and **being kind to the oppressed**)—acts which stem from a heart that is submissive to God. Had Nebuchadnezzar done so, he would have averted his seven years of insanity.



##### **4. The Vision Fulfilled (**[**4:28-33**](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+4%3A28-33)**)**

[4:28-33](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+4%3A28-33). The revelation given **to**... **Nebuchadnezzar** through Daniel's interpretation was soon forgotten and Daniel's exhortation was ignored. Nebuchadnezzar continued in his sinful pride. He did not repent as Daniel had advised him to do ([v. 27](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+4%3A27)). The **king** was controlled by his great egotism. He considered the city of **Babylon** itself as his personal possession and as a reflection of his **power** and **glory** ([v. 30](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+4%3A30)).



God endured Nebuchadnezzar's pride for **12 months.** This may have been a period of grace in which God was giving Nebuchadnezzar an opportunity to turn to Him in repentance. But when Nebuchadnezzar ignored Daniel's exhortation God, who had given Nebuchadnezzar his authority, announced the interruption of his rule.

What had been predicted was no longer postponed and judgment came on **Nebuchadnezzar,** in keeping with Daniel's interpretation. As the king was boasting of his accomplishments while **walking on the roof** (apparently a flat roof, common in those days) **of** his **royal palace** ([v. 29](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+4%3A29)), **a voice... from heaven** ([v. 31](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+4%3A31)) announced his judgment.

As predicted, the king lived like an animal in the field, eating **grass like cattle.** (Later Daniel added that the king lived with wild donkeys, [5:21](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+5%3A21).) **His body was drenched with... dew... his hair grew** long like an eagle's **feathers... and his nails** grew **like** a bird's **claws.** He gave no attention to his bodily appearance. Perhaps, because of his royal position, Nebuchadnezzar was hidden in a secluded park so his true condition could be hidden from the populace. Also in the king's absence Daniel may have played a major role in preserving the kingdom and possibly in preventing anyone from killing the king.



##### **5. The King's Restoration (**[**4:34-37**](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+4%3A34-37)**)**

[4:34-35](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+4%3A34-35). When the seven years (cf. [comments](http://www.crossbooks.com/book.asp?pub=0&book=137&sec=00031861#links2172) on [v. 23](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+4%3A23)) had transpired (**at the end of that time**) **Nebuchadnezzar** with his **sanity... restored... praised the Most High** (cf. [comments](http://www.crossbooks.com/book.asp?pub=0&book=137&sec=00031808#links2169) on [3:26](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+3%3A26)). The king who had sought honor and glory for himself now acknowledged that the Most High **lives forever.** The king confessed that God's **dominion is... eternal,** that **His kingdom endures** (cf. [6:26](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+6%3A26); [7:14](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+7%3A14), [27](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+7%3A27)). Thus he acknowledged God's sovereign authority.



Nebuchadnezzar also acknowledged God's irresistible will: **He does as He pleases with the powers of heaven and the peoples of the earth.** Also the king confessed that man is answerable to God, not God to man, for no one can stop God and **no one** has a right to question Him (cf. [Job 33:12b-13](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Job+33%3A12-13); [Isa. 29:16](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Isa+29%3A16); [45:9](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Isa+45%3A9); [Rom. 9:19-20](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Ro+9%3A19-20)).



[4:36-37](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+4%3A36-37). The king's acknowledgment of God's right to rule ([vv. 34-35](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+4%3A34-35)) brought about the restoration of the king's **sanity** (cf. [v. 34](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+4%3A34)) and a restoration to his **throne.** Having been humbled before God, Nebuchadnezzar rose to **greater** heights of honor than he had known when he walked in pride. He said he praised, exalted, and glorified **the King of heaven** (cf. "honored" and "glorified" in [v. 34](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+4%3A34)). These verbs indicate continued action, suggesting that Nebuchadnezzar did these things habitually. These verbs embody the ideas of reverence, respect, honor, admiration, and worship.



Since Nebuchadnezzar said that these attitudes characterized his life, many have concluded that he experienced regeneration, becoming a child of God. Nebuchadnezzar did confess that what God had done in dealing with him was **right** and **just.** This is certainly not acknowledged by one who continues in rebellion against God. The king also admitted that he had walked **in pride** (cf. [5:20](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+5%3A20)) but had been humbled by his experience. This too would testify to a transformation in Nebuchadnezzar's character through a newfound knowledge of God.



There seems to be prophetic significance in this incident as well as in the one in [chapter 3](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+3). Even though God has appointed Gentiles to a place of prominence in His program during the times of the Gentiles, yet most nations and people walk in rebellion against God. This attitude is graphically described in [Psalm 2:1-3](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Ps+2%3A1-3). God will deal with the nations to humble them and bring them into subjection to Himself. One purpose of the Tribulation, which will immediately precede Christ's second coming, will be to humble the nations and bring them to the point of subjection to Christ's authority. At the conclusion of God's judgments, described in [Revelation 6-19](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Rev+6-19), Jesus Christ, the victorious Rider on the white horse, will descend from heaven and smite the nations. Then an angel will announce that "the kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ and He will reign forever and ever" ([Rev. 11:15](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Rev+11%3A15)). God's judgment on Nebuchadnezzar, designed to subject him to God's authority, seems to prefigure God's judgment on the nations to subject them to the authority of the One who has been given the right to rule.



The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures by Dallas Seminary Faculty.

**Open it**

1. What is a dream that you vividly remember?   
 **When I was young and getting sick, I would always dream about getting chased by a big white ball down a hallway.**

2. What does the term "temporary insanity" mean to you?   
 **They were only insane long enough to commit the crime, or thought they could get away with the crime**  
  
**Explore it**

3. What were King Nebuchadnezzar’s opening comments in his public decree? ([4:1-3](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+4%3A1-3))   
 **Nebuchadnezzar the king to all the peoples, nations, and *men of every* language that live in all the earth: "May your peace abound! "It has seemed good to me to declare the signs and wonders which the Most High God has done for me. "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**.

4. Why did the king request a visit from the wise men? ([4:4-6](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+4%3A4-6))   
 **I, Nebuchadnezzar, was at ease in my house and flourishing in my palace. "I saw a dream and it made me fearful; and *these* fantasies *as I lay* on my bed and the visions in my mind kept alarming me. "So I gave orders to bring into my presence all the wise men of Babylon, that they might make known to me the interpretation of the dream.**   
  
5. What did the wise men fail to do? ([4:7](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+4%3A7))   
 **Then the magicians, the conjurers, the Chaldeans and the diviners came in and I related the dream to them, but they could not make its interpretation known to me.**  
6. Why did the king think that Daniel would be able to help him? ([4:8-9](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+4%3A8-9))   
 **"But finally Daniel came in before me, whose name is Belteshazzar according to the name of my god, and in whom is a spirit of the holy gods; and I related the dream to him, *saying,* 'O Belteshazzar, chief of the magicians, since I know that a spirit of the holy gods is in you and no mystery baffles you, tell *me* the visions of my dream which I have seen, along with its interpretation.**

7. What were the visions that the king related to Daniel? ([4:10-18](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+4%3A10-18))   
 **'Now *these were* the visions in my mind *as I lay* on my bed: I was looking, and behold, *there was* a tree in the midst of the earth and its height *was* great. 'The tree grew large and became strong And its height reached to the sky, And it *was* visible to the end of the whole earth.   
'Its foliage *was* beautiful and its fruit abundant, And in it *was* food for all. The beasts of the field found shade under it, And the birds of the sky dwelt in its branches, And all living creatures fed themselves from it. 'I was looking in the visions in my mind *as I lay* on my bed, and behold, an *angelic* watcher, a holy one, descended from heaven. 'He shouted out and spoke as follows: "Chop down the tree and cut off its branches, Strip off its foliage and scatter its fruit; Let the beasts flee from under it And the birds from its branches. "Yet leave the stump with its roots in the ground, But with a band of iron and bronze *around it* In the new grass of the field; And let him be drenched with the dew of heaven, And let him share with the beasts in the grass of the earth.  "Let his mind be changed from *that of* a man And let a beast's mind be given to him, And let seven periods of time pass over him. "This sentence is by the decree of the *angelic* watchers And the decision is a command of the holy ones, In order that the living may know That the Most High is ruler over the realm of mankind, And bestows it on whom He wishes And sets over it the lowliest of men." 'This is the dream *which* I, King Nebuchadnezzar, have seen. Now you, Belteshazzar, tell *me* its interpretation, inasmuch as none of the wise men of my kingdom is able to make known to me the interpretation; but you are able, for a spirit of the holy gods is in you.'**



8. How did Daniel respond to the king’s dream? ([4:19](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+4%3A19))   
 **Then Daniel, whose name is Belteshazzar, was appalled for a while as his thoughts alarmed him. The king responded and said, 'Belteshazzar, do not let the dream or its interpretation alarm you.' Belteshazzar replied, 'My lord, *if only* the dream applied to those who hate you and its interpretation to your adversaries!**

9. What was the meaning of the tree in Nebuchadnezzar’s dream? ([4:20-26](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+4%3A20-26))   
 **'The tree that you saw, which became large and grew strong, whose height reached to the sky and was visible to all the earth and whose foliage *was* beautiful and its fruit abundant, and in which *was* food for all, under which the beasts of the field dwelt and in whose branches the birds of the sky lodged— it is you, O king; for you have become great and grown strong, and your majesty has become great and reached to the sky and your dominion to the end of the earth. 'In that the king saw an *angelic* watcher, a holy one, descending from heaven and saying, "Chop down the tree and destroy it; yet leave the stump with its roots in the ground, but with a band of iron and bronze *around it* in the new grass of the field, and let him be drenched with the dew of heaven, and let him share with the beasts of the field until seven periods of time pass over him," this is the interpretation, O king, and this is the decree of the Most High, which has come upon my lord the king: that you be driven away from mankind and your dwelling place be with the beasts of the field, and you be given grass to eat like cattle and be drenched with the dew of heaven; and seven periods of time will pass over you, until you recognize that the Most High is ruler over the realm of mankind and bestows it on whomever He wishes. 'And in that it was commanded to leave the stump with the roots of the tree, your kingdom will be assured to you after you recognize that *it is* Heaven *that* rules.**

10. How did Daniel conclude his exhortation? ([4:27](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+4%3A27))   
 **'Therefore, O king, may my advice be pleasing to you: break away now from your sins by *doing* righteousness and from your iniquities by showing mercy to *the* poor, in case there may be a prolonging of your prosperity.'**   
  
11. What happened to the king twelve months after the dream? ([4:28-33](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+4%3A28-33))   
 **"All *this* happened to Nebuchadnezzar the king. "Twelve months later he was walking on the *roof of* the royal palace of Babylon. The king reflected and said, 'Is this not Babylon the great, which I myself have built as a royal residence by the might of my power and for the glory of my majesty?' "While the word *was* in the king's mouth, a voice came from heaven, *saying,* 'King Nebuchadnezzar, to you it is declared: sovereignty has been removed from you, and you will be driven away from mankind, and your dwelling place *will be* with the beasts of the field. You will be given grass to eat like cattle, and seven periods of time will pass over you until you recognize that the Most High is ruler over the realm of mankind and bestows it on whomever He wishes.' "Immediately the word concerning Nebuchadnezzar was fulfilled; and he was driven away from mankind and began eating grass like cattle, and his body was drenched with the dew of heaven until his hair had grown like eagles' *feathers* and his nails like birds' *claws.***

12. What happened at the end of the king’s illness? ([4:34-37](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Da+4%3A34-37))   
 **But at the end of that period, I, Nebuchadnezzar, raised my eyes toward heaven and my reason 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 *endures* from generation to generation. All the inhabitants of the earth are accounted as nothing, But He does according to His will in the host of heaven And *among* the inhabitants of earth; And no one can ward off His hand Or say to Him, 'What have You done?' At that time my reason returned to me.** **And my majesty and splendor were restored to me for the glory of my kingdom, and my counselors and my nobles began seeking me out; so I was reestablished in my sovereignty, and surpassing greatness was added to me. "Now I, Nebuchadnezzar, praise, exalt and honor the King of heaven, for all His works are true and His ways just, and He is able to humble those who walk in pride."**

**Get it**

13. How has God most recently revealed Himself to you?   
 **Through the many people we have prayed for, for healing, for change of mind and thoughts**

14. How is God blessing you right now?   
 **By letting me teach you**  
  
**Apply it**

15. What first step can you take to help someone you know who is in deep mental distress?   
 **Be a friend and talk with them, invite them out for a pop or coffee and ask how are they doing**

16. With what prayer do you want to submit every area of your life to God?   
 **God, do with me as you will for your glory not mine.**