

Daniel Chapter 4 is a personal memoir of a once ruthless, pagan king who ruled one of the world's greatest kingdoms. This mighty king underwent a miraculous [spiritual conversion](#), causing him to love and worship the Lord, the One, True God of Creation and Redemption.

Babylonian King Nebuchadnezzar chronicles his rise, his humbling fall, and his ultimate transformation in a letter addressed to all inhabitants of the world. Nebuchadnezzar's praises to God are those of one who has had a personal encounter with Jesus Christ:

"I thought it good to show the signs and wonders that the high God hath wrought toward 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." Daniel 4:2, 3

Q: Notice what Nebuchadnezzar said about God's Eternal Kingdom (v3). How does this compare to his setting-up a statue of pure gold on the plain of Dura in Daniel Chapter 3?

A: This memoir shows God's power to humble and convert a once proud, boastful, and defiant king into a faithful follower of Jesus Christ (Heb 12:6). As we soon study God's incredible works in the life of Nebuchadnezzar, we, like he, must come to recognize God's awesomeness and our nothingness!

Consider, the king was given another dream that none in his realm could interpret except the God of Daniel. We learned

in a prior lesson that God identified Himself as the "All Wise God, the Giver and Revealer of secrets and all mysteries" (Daniel 2:20-23, 28, 45, 47). Let us review the details of the king's nighttime vision (v10-18):

- A massive tree in the midst of the land that grew towards heaven and before all of earth's inhabitants
- The tree, under which all found shade, bore beautiful leaves and fruit, from which both man and beast could partake
- A Watcher and Holy One descended from heaven giving the command to cut down the tree but leave the stump
- The command is given to bind the tree stump with a band of **iron and brass**, and let its heart be changed from the heart of a man to the heart of a beast for **seven times**

Q: Notice the Bible revealed the dream and the decrees given therein were by order of the holy ones and watchers. Who do you suppose them to be? Read Daniel 4:17.

A: The holy ones and watchers are exalted angels, empowered by God to make a decree on the fate of the king. See Job 1:6; 1 Kin 22:19-22; Ps 103:20; Mk 8:38; Mt 13:41

Q: Consider Daniel's response when he heard the king's account of his dream. Why do you suppose he was astonished for an hour, and his thoughts troubled him?



A: It is evident that Daniel had become fond of King Nebuchadnezzar, and grieved the fate pronounced for him. As a wayward son (even before his conversion), it was inevitable that God should chasten the haughty king (Heb 12:6) [see [Lesson #8](#)]. Despite his personal feelings towards the king, as a true and faithful prophet of God, Daniel in no way altered or sugarcoated the words given to him.

Let us now understand the interpretation of the dream given by God and interpreted by His servant, Daniel.

Q: According to the revelation of God, who did the massive tree represent?

A: "It [is] thou, O king [Nebuchadnezzar], 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 4:22

Q: According to the will of God, what is meant by the tree being hewn down, leaving the stump to be bound by a band of iron and brass? Read Job 14:7-9. Compare another prophecy



involving the hewing down of a different tree, found in Luke 3:2-9

A: God determined to chasten Nebuchadnezzar for his arrogance, bringing his glory down before the world. The stump bound by *iron and brass*, a remnant of the once mighty tree, denoted God's chastisement upon the rebellious one. Yet God would preserve the kingdom for Nebuchadnezzar until the time of chastisement should cease; contrary to the prophecy spoken in Luke, where the tree was to be hewn down at the roots, never to rise again.

Q: What is meant by "Nebuchadnezzar would be driven from men and his dwelling would be with the beasts of the field"?

A: God would cause Nebuchadnezzar, the head of gold and pride of Babylon's power (Lev 26:19), to lose his reasoning and mind for a period of "seven times". During this time, his body would grow nails like a bird, hair like eagle's feathers, he would



make his abode with the cattle of the field, and he would eat grass like a beast.

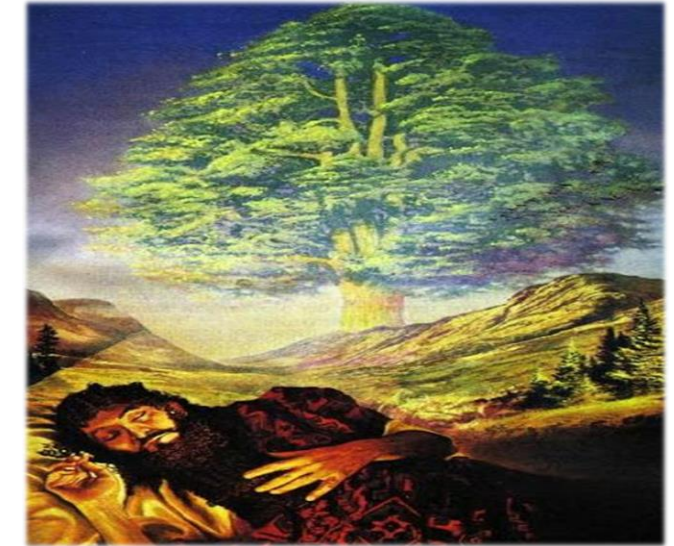
Notice the term **seven times** describes the duration for Nebuchadnezzar's chastisement. The number seven in the Bible denotes God's completeness, as in the seven days of Creation. However, a time is the phrase given for a year, based on the Hebrew calendar, having 360 days. The numerical equivalent of the term therefore, is as follows:

- A Time [1 year]: 360 days (based on the lunar calendar)
- **Seven Times** [7 years]: 7 x 360 days = **2,520** days

God uses this prophetic phrase to symbolize His **indignation**, first mentioned in the book of Leviticus 26:13-45 (particularly verses 18, 21, 24, and 28). Four occurrences of the term appear in both Leviticus 26 and Daniel 4, accentuating the parallels in the two chapters. The term was first spoken against Israel, whom God foreknew would fall into rebellion, worshipping idols, intermarrying with foreigners who were idolaters, and breaking God's law,

From Fickleness to Faithfulness

Daniel Chapter 4



Lesson 10

wilderness where, under the *dew of heaven*, his raw food diet of grass cured his prideful megalomania. At the conclusion of 7 years of being humbled, the king wrote:



"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: ...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." Dan 4:34-37

The account of Nebuchadnezzar's conversion affirms Jesus' love towards all men and His desire to bring salvation to all people! No person or his sins are beyond God's mercy (Romans 5:6-10; Hebrews 7:25; 2 Peter 3:9). God has shown that He will do whatever is required so that a person recognizes his or her need for Him, repent and acknowledge Him as Sovereign, and ask Him into his or her life. God may not cause us to eat grass today like Nebuchadnezzar, He nonetheless wants our attention! Let us learn from this once proud king, humble ourselves, and yield to God's love that we too, like Nebuchadnezzar, might be saved!

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second interpretation of the term.

Q: *What is the attitude most hated by God that the Children of Israel exhibited and for which He purposed to punish Nebuchadnezzar?*

A: **Pride!** See Daniel 4:30, Leviticus 26:19, Proverbs 6:16-19, Luke 18:14; Isaiah 65:2-5

Q: *Notice Daniel's advice to Nebuchadnezzar regarding his pronounced fate. Also note that Daniel said, "perhaps" the king's prosperity would be "prolonged" and the chastisement "delayed"; however, he in no ways stated that the prophecy would not occur. Why is that so?*

A: Consider: Isaiah 46:9, 10; 55:10, 11; Habakkuk 2:2, 3

Q: *How well did Nebuchadnezzar heed Daniel's warnings?*

A: Read Daniel 4:28-30

Exactly one literal year to the day after Nebuchadnezzar had dreamt his dream, was given its interpretation by Daniel, was counseled to humble himself, repent, and turn from his sins, we are shown the king's prideful boast of the kingdom, its glory, and that it existed by his strength. The Bible detailed the fateful fulfillment of the prophecy: "...



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..." Daniel 4:29-33.

In mercy, God banished King Nebuchadnezzar to the

particularly the Fourth Commandment (Deuteronomy 29:24-30:4; Isaiah 10:24,25). God's chastisement for rebellion involved withholding the blessing of rain so that the heavens would become as *iron* and the earth as *brass*; having one's enemies pillage the land; and being *scattered*, a *moral fall* from one's appointed position and being displaced from one's homeland. God's *indignation* would conclude by one of two outcomes: a **gathering**, where God's blessings would be restored, as He reinstates His covenant with His people; or a continuation of the **scattering**, never to be gathered again. The two outcomes of the indignation reflect the fate of the two classes of people described in the **Everlasting Covenant**. Each person's destiny is determined by their personal choice to accept or reject Jesus Christ as part of the **Plan of Redemption**. Let us further understand

7x this term and its application in the chapter:

1: A scattering, followed by a gathering

- Proverbs 24:16^a; Ezek 34:11-16
- 2 Kings 4:32-35
- Neh 1:8, 9; Dan 4:20-22, 29-36
- Jer. 30, 24:5-7

Following a time of scattering, God in mercy brings restoration and renewal, based on this usage of the term.

7x **2:** A scattering, never to be gathered again

- Joshua 6:1-5, 16, 20
- Genesis 11:1-9
- Daniel 5:25-31
- Jeremiah 24:8-10
- Hosea 5:3-7
- 2 Kings 17:20-29

Scattering and utter destruction are the fate under this