

Daniel

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Chapter Four

Dan 4:1-3

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.

This is the only chapter in Scripture that is composed under the authority of a pagan. He begins by stating his rule over all the peoples, nations, and men of every language in all the earth! The understanding of the immensity of the earth by people in this region, and I suppose in every region of the earth, was very limited. He states that he wishes for their peace to abound. The first three verses state his gratitude to Daniel's God. In verse two he states his desire to let others know the wonders that God has done for him. Before writing this portion he had endured his humiliation of being made like a beast of the field so he did understand his weaknesses and folly before the God of the Hebrews. He realized his dependence upon God for his sanity and even his life. He has learned to recognize the sovereignty of God but certainly has not come to the point of making a confession of conversion. The name Nebuchadnezzar used for God was "Most High God" and it is used six times in this chapter and in verse 26 of chapter three. A concordance reveals that the name is used 22 (explicitly as Most High God) times in the Old Testament and first occurs in Genesis in Abraham's meeting with Melchizedek:

Gen 14:18-20 And Melchizedek king of Salem brought out bread and wine; now he was a priest of God Most High. (19) He blessed him and said, "Blessed be Abram of God Most High, Possessor of heaven and earth; (20) And blessed be God Most High, Who has delivered your enemies into your hand." He gave him a tenth of all.

Here the title is defined as "Possessor of heaven and earth" or, as some translations state, "Ruler of heaven and earth". The title then refers to God as the One who rules both heaven and earth so that He is sovereign over everything that exists and it does not refer to Him as the Redeemer. We also read about Satan wanting to be like the Most High:

Isa 14:13-14 "But you said in your heart, 'I will ascend to heaven; I will raise my throne above the stars of God, And I will sit on the mount of assembly In the recesses of the north. (14) 'I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will make myself like the Most High.'

It is interesting and informative that the Bible reveals this desire of Satan and not his desire to be like the Redeemer, Most Wise God, or any other of His titles. The reason is that Satan wanted to be like God in His sovereign rule over all creation. He wanted to remove God from His ruling throne and sit there himself. The greatest sin of an individual or a nation is to take glory for ourselves rather than giving the glory to the sovereign God. America has achieved considerable greatness in many areas but instead of giving the glory to God we tend to take glory for our

accomplishments. The story of humanity consists of three phases: 1) the raising up of a nation by the blessings of God, 2) the taking of glory for themselves, 3) God tearing down the nation to show that He is the Most High God. If America does not repent then phase three will happen to it also.

Nebuchadnezzar had to learn that if he behaves spiritually like a beast then God will make him physically as a beast. Paul wrote the first chapter of Romans to show what happens when men turn from God. First God gave them up to all kinds of uncleanness, especially sexual uncleanness such as adultery and fornication (1: 24). Second He gave them up to vile affections, primarily sexual perversions such as prostitution and homosexuality (1:26). Third He gave them up to a reprobate mind that demands approval for all they do as the right things to do and all should recognize them as such (1:28). Do we see this progression in America? It seems to me that we are in phase three and so I wonder if our judgment is fast approaching.

The effect of this approach on the churches is especially revolting. The gay community demands ordination to the Christian ministry because they want the so-called moral authority (the church) to approve the gay life style as an acceptable way of life for all people and this is the last phase of demanding that everyone approve that style, the reprobate mind. It seems that then with such actions in the church God is giving them up. There are many horrible sins practiced by mankind in the world but the homosexuality issue seems the most prevalent example of sin spreading through all three phases in our society. God will not accept such in the church especially.

Here in the beginning of this chapter Nebuchadnezzar wrote, he states that he wants all to know what the sovereign ruler has done for him as the reason for this chapter. This introduction informs us that Nebuchadnezzar has been taught well by the Most High God.

Daniel 4:4-7

"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.

Now the king begins his narrative about this next dream. He states that he was resting and flourishing in his palace. He had been victorious over enemies including the Egyptians in 588-587 B.C. and his destruction of Jerusalem in 587-586 B.C. Most scholars think the events of this chapter occurred 8-9 years before the end of the siege of Tyre in 573 B.C. as prophesied by:

Ezek 26:7-9 For thus says the Lord GOD, "Behold, I will bring upon Tyre from the north Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, king of kings, with horses, chariots, cavalry and a great army. (8) "He will slay your daughters on the mainland with the sword; and he will make siege walls against you, cast up a ramp against you and raise up a large shield against you. (9) "The blow of his battering rams he will direct against your walls, and with his axes he will break down your towers.

It probably was in 583 that Nebuchadnezzar had this dream. Just as he had done for the previous dream he called forth the same group of people to seek an interpretation of this new dream that made him fearful. In verse five he states that the dream kept bothering him to the extent that he must have relief from it to do his daily duties. This time he did not insist that the people tell him the dream and the interpretation but they were not able to give him its interpretation.

Dan 4:8-12

"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.

Daniel may have been waiting for the other wise men to fail before he came before the king. Note that Nebuchadnezzar still maintains his god to be different from Daniel's God as he preferred the name he gave Daniel relating to that god (Bel or Marduk) which was his favorite god. We have to constantly remember that this chapter was written by Nebuchadnezzar and we see that he used both names for Daniel indicating that he had become very fond of this young Jew. He then told the dream to Daniel. In verse nine he relates that he asked Daniel to tell him the visions of the dream but in verse 10 he tells Daniel the visions. The first part of the dream is relaxing as the vision of a huge tree that reached to the sky is seen. He states that the tree was visible to the end of the entire earth, which certainly means relative to his vision of the earth or just to the horizon of his vision. Not only is the tree beautiful but also it had an abundant fruit that was available as food for all to eat. Under the shade of the tree were the beasts of the field and the birds stayed in its branches so that all living creatures could feed from the tree.

Dan 4:13-16

'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.

But as he was enjoying this vision, it suddenly changed to include an angelic watcher who came down from heaven. Since he came down from heaven this was not a fallen angel but one of the angels that remained with God. The term used is unusual and this is the only place in the Bible when the word is used that comes from the verb meaning "be wakeful" or "be on the watch".

From verse 17 we can infer that it is used for a special class of angels who are involved with executing judgmental decrees of God that also includes their pronouncement to mankind. The angel gave the order to chop down the tree and to strip it of its branches and foliage and to scatter its fruit. Thus the tree cannot offer any sustenance to any of the creatures. The beasts and the birds would then leave the tree as it no longer offered protection, shade, or sustenance.

But the order from the angel said to leave the stump with the roots in the ground implying a stage of future growth back to its original form later. The order also was to bind the stump with a band of iron and bronze to keep it in the new grass of the field. Thus the stump was not allowed to leave this area and to be drenched by the dew of heaven so it would stay alive. Note that the reference to the stump changed from the impersonal pronoun “it” of verse 15a to the personal pronoun “him” in 15b. Also in verse 15c this person is to share the grass with the beasts of the earth. In Scripture a tree can represent many things. It can represent a man as it does here and does also in Ps 1:3; 17:8; Isa 58:3. In verse 16 the mind of the person is to change from that of a man to that of a beast. The word used for “mind” is literally interpreted to be “heart”, which refers to the seat of moral reflection or conscience that gives patterns of behavior. This change of conscience refers not only to mental processes but the feelings, affections, emotions and all factors affecting choices to life situations. The person represented by this tree stump is changed in a very fundamental way to that of an animal. The last sentence states the time for the duration of this transformation to be seven “seasons”, which refers to years and not literal seasons.

Dan 4:17-18

"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.

The word “living” of verse 17 refers to all people in the world so the purpose of this command is so that all mankind will know that God is ruler over the entire realm of mankind and He can impose His sovereign will upon whomever He wishes even over the lowliest of men. This setting of rule even over the lowliest is echoed in:

- Job 5:11-13 So that He sets on high those who are lowly, And those who mourn are lifted to safety. (12) "He frustrates the plotting of the shrewd, So that their hands cannot attain success. (13) "He captures the wise by their own shrewdness, And the advice of the cunning is quickly thwarted.
- 1Sam 2:7-9 "The LORD makes poor and rich; He brings low, He also exalts. (8) "He raises the poor from the dust, He lifts the needy from the ash heap To make them sit with nobles, And inherit a seat of honor; For the pillars of the earth are the LORD'S, And He set the world on them. (9) "He keeps the feet of His godly ones, But the wicked ones are silenced in darkness; For not by might shall a man prevail.

Only a few years before Nebuchadnezzar had this dream Ezekiel used a similar figure of speech concerning the fall of Assyria (Ezek 31:3-17). This use of metaphors was very familiar in Hebrew literature but apparently the pagan wise men were not familiar with it for they could not

interpret his dream. God setting up the authorities in the world is discussed by Paul in the thirteenth chapter of the book of Romans. God put Nebuchadnezzar in power and He chooses such people for His purposes. History demonstrates that many times He has chosen the lowliest of people for such roles. We don't see many advertisements saying something like: "Vote for me as President for I am one of the lowliest of people and not suited for the position"! We have to trust God and vote according to our conscience. It may seem sometimes that we do see people in leadership positions who are not suited for such positions.

He showed his confidence in the ability of Daniel because he had been convinced that "a spirit of the holy gods" is in him. Note the use of "a spirit" and the plural form of gods. Nebuchadnezzar was not a follower of Yahweh but he understood the sovereignty of Daniel's God. The honor of Daniel's God was at stake in the interpretation even though He was still God even if He determined not to reveal the meaning of the vision to Daniel and then to the king.

Dan 4:19-22

"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.

Remember that the king is writing this chapter so he refers to Daniel in the third person and by the name he had given him. Evidently Daniel's countenance revealed to the king that Daniel was hesitating to reveal the meaning to the king. Daniel was devoted to Nebuchadnezzar and had served him for some time now so he did not want to straightforwardly reveal its meaning to him. The literal interpretation of the Aramaic is "he was stupefied for one hour" although the precise meaning of the word translated "hour" does not literally mean 60 minutes but rather "a time".

The king then gently told Daniel to not be alarmed over the dream but to tell him the meaning. Nebuchadnezzar then wrote that Daniel then stated that he would rather the interpretation of the dream was to be applied to the king's enemies rather than to him. Daniel then proceeded to interpret the vision term by term. The mighty tree represented Nebuchadnezzar and all of his military success and genius in developing the empire. The use of phrases such as "to the end of the earth" was a writing style of all kings in this area and time period. King Amar-Enzu of the Third Dynasty of the Sumerian period referred to himself as "king of the Four Quarters of the earth". This rule was in the 21st to 20th centuries BC and the Sumerian city of Eridu, on the coast of the Persian Gulf in Mesopotamia, was the world's first city. The rulers of empires would have been familiar with other empires near them but still used terminology indicating their rule was the most important and thus "over all the earth".

Dan 4:23-26

'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.

Daniel then gave the interpretation of the vision to Nebuchadnezzar that stated that not only was he to lose his ruling power but that he also was to lose his sanity. However the leaving of the stump in the ground with its roots and being drenched with the dew of heaven states that the kingdom can be restored to the king after he learns the true source of his power is the Most High. The description of the tree indicates that all the needs of the people and animals and birds of the area were provided by the kingdom. Trees are often used in Scripture to symbolically represent political authority such as kings nations, and empires (Ezek 17; 31; Hosea 14; Zech 11:1-2; Luke 23;31). But the king thought that he alone was responsible for its development and his heart was becoming very proud. The banding of the stump may be indicative of God marking him for protection until He was through developing him. The vision also tells him that the time of this punishment will be seven years. This was an awful vision for the king to have been given so we understand the reluctance of Daniel to tell the king.

Dan 4:27-28

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.

Daniel then pleads with the king to repent from his sins by doing righteousness and from his iniquities by showing mercy to the poor so that his prosperity might be prolonged. Hearing and even understanding God's truth is not enough unless we also apply it. We may become self-deceived into thinking we have grown spiritually when we have actually moved backward:

James 1:22-27 But prove yourselves doers of the word, and not merely hearers who delude themselves. (23) For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man who looks at his natural face in a mirror; (24) for once he has looked at himself and gone away, he has immediately forgotten what kind of person he was. (25) But one who looks intently at the perfect law, the law of liberty, and abides by it, not having become a forgetful hearer but an effectual doer, this man will be blessed in what he does. (26) If anyone thinks himself to be religious, and yet does not bridle his tongue but deceives his own heart, this man's religion is worthless. (27) Pure and undefiled religion in the sight

of our God and Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their distress, and to keep oneself unstained by the world.

Many people speak glibly about the day of the coming of the Lord and the judgment seat of Christ but do not apply such understanding to their daily lives. Peter explains how Christians behave when they really believe the coming of the Lord:

2Peter 3:11-18 Since all these things are to be destroyed in this way, what sort of people ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness, (12) looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be destroyed by burning, and the elements will melt with intense heat! (13) But according to His promise we are looking for new heavens and a new earth, in which righteousness dwells. (14) Therefore, beloved, since you look for these things, be diligent to be found by Him in peace, spotless and blameless, (15) and regard the patience of our Lord as salvation; just as also our beloved brother Paul, according to the wisdom given him, wrote to you, (16) as also in all his letters, speaking in them of these things, in which are some things hard to understand, which the untaught and unstable distort, as they do also the rest of the Scriptures, to their own destruction. (17) You therefore, beloved, knowing this beforehand, be on your guard so that you are not carried away by the error of unprincipled men and fall from your own steadfastness, (18) but grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To Him be the glory, both now and to the day of eternity. Amen.

Daniel needed courage to tell the king that he had sinned before God and that he had showed callousness toward the poor and favoritism toward the rich for he could have lost his post in the kingdom and even his life for such judging of the king. We also need courage to tell family members and friends about their sins and the coming judgment of God for such sins. There are many examples of God's servants who proclaimed sins of people like Moses in the court of Pharaoh. We also read of Nathan in the court of David when he told David that "you are the man" (2 Sam 12:7). Elijah confronting wicked King Ahab and Queen Jezebel (1 Kings 18:17), Isaiah rebuking Hezekiah (Isa 39), and John the Baptist telling King Herod to stop his evil relationship with Herodias (Mark 6:14-29).

The king does not report his reply to Daniel. He just states that this happened to the king. Was this added by Daniel? Sometimes a writing style referring to self in the third person is used.

Dan 4:29-30

*"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?'*

The fact that one year lapsed between the interpretation of the vision and the next action of the king implies that perhaps Nebuchadnezzar had made some effort to follow the recommendations of Daniel. Or this time may just reflect the grace of God as He is patient beyond our understanding. God waited 120 years in the time of Noah for the people to repent but they refused (1 Peter 3:20; Gen6:3). God gave Jerusalem almost 40 years after their religious leaders had crucified His Son and then the Romans destroyed the city and the temple. Also think about

how long God has been patient with the present evil world (2 Peter 3:9). But he still maintained his prideful attitude and did not realize his total dependence upon God for all that he possessed. He maintained that he had built the kingdom by his own authority and had a profound admiration for all he had accomplished. Archeology indicates that he built the celebrated Ishtar Gate and about twenty temples he had erected or refurbished in the kingdom. The Temple of Marduk was one of the most famous and he also had composed a hymn to Marduk praising him and giving him credit for making what is good to Marduk come to pass. Pride is one of the sins that God hates (Prov 6:16). Pride transformed Lucifer into the devil (Isa 14: 12-15) and pride caused the downfall of King Uzziah (2 Chron 26:16-21).

Dan 4:31-32

"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.'

Even while such boasting was still in his mouth God spoke to him to declare that his rule had been taken away from him and that the prophecy of the vision would now be made true. He would be driven away from mankind and live with the beasts of the field. He would only be allowed to eat the grass like cattle and this time of punishment would be seven years when he would recognize that the Most High is ruler over all mankind and sovereign over all the administration of His kingdom. What he should have learned from his first vision and from the fiery furnace would be finally accepted by him.

Dan 4:33

"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.

So immediately the vision was fulfilled. He would be exposed to highs of 110-120 degrees Fahrenheit in the summer and below freezing in the winter so his skin would become coarse, his hair grew uncut, and his nails became like the claws of birds. His outward appearance became like he appeared spiritually to God. We read an interesting comparison of man in regard to other created beings:

- Psa 8:4-9 *What is man that You take thought of him, And the son of man that You care for him? (5) Yet You have made him a little lower than God, And You crown him with glory and majesty! (6) You make him to rule over the works of Your hands; You have put all things under his feet, (7) All sheep and oxen, And also the beasts of the field, (8) The birds of the heavens and the fish of the sea, Whatever passes through the paths of the seas. (9) O LORD, our Lord, How majestic is Your name in all the earth!*
- Heb 2:6-8 *But one has testified somewhere, saying, "WHAT IS MAN, THAT YOU REMEMBER HIM? OR THE SON OF MAN, THAT YOU ARE CONCERNED ABOUT HIM? (7) "YOU HAVE MADE HIM FOR A LITTLE WHILE LOWER THAN THE*

ANGELS; YOU HAVE CROWNED HIM WITH GLORY AND HONOR, AND HAVE APPOINTED HIM OVER THE WORKS OF YOUR HANDS; (8) YOU HAVE PUT ALL THINGS IN SUBJECTION UNDER HIS FEET." For in subjecting all things to him, He left nothing that is not subject to him. But now we do not yet see all things subjected to him.

We see that man was created lower than angels but higher than beasts. Man then looks up to God but if he looks down at the beasts in comparison then he will become like them. Evolutionary thinking recently proposes that man is just an advanced beast and when examining what we used to call perversions such scientists state that the other animals do them also. Such activity is expected for it is "just in our background". The fall of Nebuchadnezzar shows that man can become worse than the beasts by thinking that he can be a god. The moral decline of our country illustrate that there is no line below which we will not go. Pornography is a huge business in the world but people used to say that they would not degrade to child pornography but we see that happening as well. Carefully read the first chapter of Romans to learn more about what will happen to mankind if God does not intervene.

Dan 4:34-35

"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?'

At the end of the designated time period, God restored the reasoning ability of Nebuchadnezzar and he blessed the Most High and praised and honored Him who lives forever. This was a miracle of divine grace in the same way that God acts upon any of His people to bring true reasoning ability to them so as to bring them from a state of bestiality to true humanity as He originally intended. The king was now able to give God the glory and praise for all that He had allowed him to achieve as king of the Chaldeans and rebuilders of Babylon. He then exalted God as the only omnipotent God who is sovereign over all heaven and other creations. It is only by being in total submission to God can anyone find true meaning for his life. He also honored God as the Ruler of the only Kingdom that would push aside all other kingdoms and rule forever as his first dream had shown him. Lastly, in verse 35 he acknowledged that man is nothing compared to God and nobody can judge Him. The pot cannot question the potter (Rom 9:20).

Dan 4:36-37

"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."

Once he had made the proper reasoning related to the interactions between man and God, his reason returned to him and he had, in essence, been “born again”. He was now qualified for renewed leadership of the kingdom and his former counselors and nobles began seeking him to fully restore him as king. It is indeed a miracle that after seven years of absence from the throne the former subjects were willing to have him return as king. Probably Daniel and other leaders had kept the kingdom running smoothly during this time of discipline of the king. God certainly wanted Nebuchadnezzar to write this chapter so He maintained the kingdom so the king could write about God’s sovereignty. His grateful testimony was that he was reestablished in his sovereignty under the absolute sovereignty of God, and had been granted even surpassing greatness. All this is because he now could praise, exalt, and honor the King of heaven. He said that God’s works are true, His ways are just, and He can humble anyone who walks in pride. He indeed learned what we all must learn: *“Pride goes before destruction, And a haughty spirit before stumbling.”* (Prov 16:18)

Some people claim there is a problem with the sovereignty of God and the responsibility of man but there is no conflict when both are properly understood. The human heart wants to be free of all outside control (Psa 2:1-6) and sinners who want to be free do not understand how bound they are by their fallen nature and the forces of Satan and the world (Rom 3). God is so wise and omnipotent that He can create His creatures to have the freedom to make decisions and even to disobey Him, and yet He can accomplish all His will and divine purposes. The submission of Nebuchadnezzar to the sovereign God set him free from his beastly state.

This witness by Nebuchadnezzar would have been very important to the captive Jews as they had been led to understand that their God was less than the god of Babylon: Marduk, Nebo, and Bel. The warnings of Leviticus 26 and Deuteronomy 28 had been fulfilled since they had rebelled against God but they needed some assurance that He had not forgotten them and that all the gods of the pagan nations were only idols. It seems that Nebuchadnezzar finally got the message. The reason that he wrote this book was clearly written at the beginning:

Dan 4:2-3 "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.

Praise God!