3.4 - Daniel 4

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3.4.1 - Daniel 4:1

As we've seen, within Scripture, Babylon represents the kingdom of man: "The pride and the spirit of the world found their classical expression for the first time in the building of the Tower of Babel, but they also met their first significant defeat at that time. From that time onward Babylon appears in the Scriptures as a symbol of the world power in its most significant and truly representative expression."[1]

Within the flow of the book of Daniel, this chapter presents God's judgment upon the pride of man as manifested by the prideful king, followed in the next chapter by the judgment of the kingdom itself as it falls to Medo-Persia.[2]

While skeptics of the book of Daniel judge the events of chapter four to be legendary or preposterous, we recognize the divine contribution this chapter makes to a larger biblical theme concerning the delusional pride of fallen mankind.

These events foreshadow the prideful activity and ultimate judgment of the final ruler during the Times of the Gentiles: the Antichrist. The chapter makes an important contribution to the divine commentary on man's tendency to deify himself. See *Man: Image of God or Beast?*

Although the chapter lacks a precise indication of the date these events took place,[3] most commentators understand the status of Babylon, as related by Nebuchadnezzar's prideful statements and the duration of his subsequent malady, as necessitating a date eight or more years before the end of his reign.[4] Thus, several decades have transpired since the events recorded in the previous chapter, and Daniel would have been approximately 47-51 years old at the time of Nebuchadnezzar's second dream. See *Chronology of Daniel*.

On first reading, it may seem as if the first three verses of this chapter fit more naturally as the end of the previous chapter. This is how the Masoretes interpreted the chapter division.[5]

> The division of the Hebrew [Masoretic Text, MT] into chapters is different from that of standard English versions in two places: Dan. 3:31-33 is part of chapter 4 in English (Dan. 4:1-3), and Dan. 6:1 is included at the end of chapter 5 in English (Dan. 5:31). This then causes all of the English verse numbers to be different from those of the Hebrew in chapters 4 and 6.[6]

This interpretation results in the chapter division found within the Tanakh, where the verses that open chapter 4 in our translation appear at the end of chapter 3.

> [3:30] Thereupon the king promoted Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego in the province of Babylon. [3:31] King Nebuchadnezzar to all people and nations of every language that inhabit the whole earth: May your well-being abound! [3:32] The signs and wonders that the Most High God has worked for me I am pleased to relate. [3:33] How great are His signs; how mighty His wonders! His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and His dominion endures throughout the generations.[7]

Both the Masoretic text and Tanakh begin chapter 4 with Nebuchadnezzar's statement of being at rest in his house. Many other translations, including the NKJV (followed here), understand these three verses to be remarks made by Nebuchadnezzar at the opening of chapter 4, written after having experienced the events related within the rest of the chapter.[8] This view takes verses 3 and 37 as bracketing the rest the narrative within the chapter.

> For some strange reason the MT joins the first three verses of this chapter to the end of chapter 3, as if connecting it with the episode of the fiery furnace rather than with the dream in chapter 4. But it is very evident that these verses (1-3) furnish an appropriate introduction to the narrative about to follow. Thus the Masoretic division is unjustified. Verse 3 obviously serves with v.37 as an envelope enclosing the narrative in the chapter.[9]

Some argue that taking the verses as the start of chapter four entails difficulty explaining Nebuchadnezzar's reference to "my god" and his polytheistic reference to "the spirits of the holy gods" in verse 8. We believe his comments reflect the perspective he held prior to experiencing God's judgment and subsequent restoration. See commentary on *Daniel 4:8*.

It seems likely that after recovering from the lengthy and serious affliction related in this chapter, the king would introduce his report with such statements of praise.[10]

This chapter is unique in its composition. With the exception of a few verses, the chapter appears to have been written in the first-person by Nebuchadnezzar with the unusual result that the direct testimony of a Gentile king is incorporated within inspired Scripture.[11] Portions of the chapter where Nebuchadnezzar is identified using third-person pronouns are probably told from the perspective of Daniel or reflect his editing of the king's account when compiling the chapter.[12] The style of the introductory declaration may indicate Nebuchadnezzar's intention that it serve as an official court record.[13]

> It is just such an account as we should suppose that a monarch, trained up in idolatry, and practicing it all his life, and yet suddenly, and in this impressive manner, made acquainted with the true God, would be likely to give. In an edict published by such a monarch, under such circumstances, it would be strange if there should be no betrayal of the fact that he had been a worshipper of pagan gods, nor would it be strange that when he disclosed his dream to Daniel, asking him to interpret it, and professing to believe that he was under the influence of inspiration from above, he should trace it to the gods in general, Dan. 4:8-9, Dan. 4:18. . . . It is just such an intermingling of truth with falsehood as we should expect in a mind trained in paganism; and yet this is a circumstance which would not be very likely to occur to one who attempted a forgery, or who endeavored to draw the character of a pagan monarch in such circumstances without authentic materials.[14]

3.4.1.1 - Similar Historical Writings

Critics of the Bible, especially those who take the book of Daniel as a Maccabean-era production, often point to similar historical writings in an attempt to explain Daniel's account of Nebuchadnezzar's malady found in chapter 4 as a secondary, distorted account of the true historical record. As we discussed in the introduction concerning the *Date* and *Authorship* of the book of Daniel, we believe these conclusions are driven more by a

liberal, anti-supernatural bias than objective interpretation of the historical evidence. Among the related historical writings we find:

- **Prayer of Nabonidus** - The *Prayer of Nabonidus* is an Aramaic composition found among the DSS[15] that relates an illness experienced by the last king of Babylon, Nabonidus (who was coregent with Belshazzar). Liberal critics have held that the prayer (see Glossary) relates the original facts whereas the similar account here in Daniel reflects a late-Maccabean distortion or the original.[16] Harrison treats the suggestion that Daniel depends upon the *Prayer of Nabonidus* at some length[17] and concludes, "The present writer would agree with Freedman that there is no connection between the 'Prayer of Nabonidus' and Daniel 4 . . ."[18] As we have discussed elsewhere, we believe the book of Daniel was written well in advance of the Maccabean era and that the opposite is true: the author of the *Prayer of Nabonidus* has confused the affliction of Nebuchadnezzar, as related by Daniel, with a different Babylonian king: Nabonidus.[19] The relationship of the prayer found at Qumran to the original account recorded by Daniel is unclear, yet numerous similarities are apparent: both accounts 1) concern an illness;[20] 2) afflicting a king of Babylon; 3) in punishment for sin; 4) lasting several years; 5) the king eventually recovered.[21] The prayer also mentions elements from Nebuchadnezzar's vision of *Daniel 2*: gold, silver, bronze, iron, stone, and clay.[22]
- **Account of Berosus** - Berosus was a Chaldean priest residing in Babylon at the time of Alexander the Great. "Berosus wrote three books relative to the history of the Chaldeans, of which only some fragments are preserved in Josephus and Eusebius. As a priest of Belus he possessed every advantage which could be desired for obtaining a knowledge of the Chaldeans, and if his work had been preserved it would doubtless be of great value."[23] Portions of his work have been preserved in Josephus: "This is what Berosus relates . . . concerning this king Nabuchodonosor . . . in his third book:—'Nabuchodonosor, after he had begun to build the forementioned wall, **fell sick, and departed this life, when he had reigned forty-three years**; whereupon his son Evil-merodach obtained the kingdom.' " [emphasis mine][24] As Barnes explains, "It is manifest that Berosus here refers to some sickness in the case of Nebuchadnezzar that was unusual, and that probably preceded, for a considerable time, his death. This appears from the fact, that in the case of the other monarchs whom he mentions in immediate connection with this narrative, no sickness is alluded to as preceding their death. This is the case with respect to Neriglissar and Nabonnedus - successors of Nebuchadnezzar. . . . There is no improbability in supposing, that what Berosus here calls 'sickness' is the same which is referred to in the chapter before us. Berosus, himself a Chaldean, might not be desirous of stating all the facts about a monarch of his own country so distinguished, and might not be willing to state all that he knew about his being deprived of reason, and about the manner in which he was treated, and yet what occurred to him was so remarkable, and was so well known, that there seemed to be a necessity of alluding to it in some way; and this he did in the most general manner possible. If this were his object, also, he would not be likely to mention the fact that he was restored again to the throne. He would endeavor to make it appear as an ordinary event - a sickness which preceded death - as it 'may' have been the fact that he never was wholly restored so far as to be in perfect health. . . . This statement of Berosus accords, in respect to 'time,' remarkably with that in Daniel. Both accounts agree that the sickness occurred after he had built Babylon, and toward the close of his reign."[25] "It was only some three centuries after the death of Nebuchadnezzar that a Babylonian priest named Berossus preserved a tradition stating that Nebuchadnezzar was taken ill suddenly towards the end of his reign. As recorded in the writings of Josephus, Berossus stated that, after a reign of forty-three years, Nebuchadnezzar became sick within a very short time of commencing the construction of a certain wall, and subsequently died. Since sickness prior to death was so common, then as now, there would seem to have been no point in recording the matter had it not actually comprised a discrete way of referring to some embarrassing ailment that polite persons refrained from mentioning."[26]
- **Account of Abydenus** - Abydenus was a Greek who lived *circa* 268 B.C. and a student of Berosus (above). He wrote, in Greek, an historical account of the Chaldeans, Babylonians, and Assyrians, only a few fragments of which have been preserved by Eusebius, Cyrill, and Syncellus.[27] One fragment relates a strange prediction made by Nebuchadnezzar while at his palace, after which he disappeared from public view. As Eusebius records, "I found also the following statements concerning Nebuchadnezzar in the work of Abydenus *Concerning the Assyrians*: [ABYDENUS] 'Now Megasthenes says that Nebuchadnezzar was braver than Hercules, and made an expedition against Libya and Iberia, and, having subdued them, settled a

> part of their inhabitants on the right shore of Pontus. And afterwards, the Chaldeans say, he went up to his palace, and being possessed by some god or other uttered the following speech: *O men of Babylon, I Nebuchadnezzar here foretell to you the coming calamity, which neither Belus my ancestor, nor Queen Beltis are able to persuade the Fates to avert. There will come a Persian mule, aided by the alliance of your own deities, and will bring you into slavery. And the joint author of this will be a Mede, in whom the Assyrians glory. O would that before he gave up my citizens some Charybdis or sea might swallow him up utterly out of sight; or that, turning in other directions, he might be carried across the desert, where there are neither cities nor foot of man, but where wild beasts have pasture and birds their haunts, that he might wander alone among rocks and ravines; and that, before he took such thoughts into his mind, I myself had found a better end*. He after uttering this prediction had immediately disappeared, and his son Amil-marudocus became king. But he was slain by his kinsman Iglisar, who left a son Labassoarask. And when he died by a violent death, Nabannidochus, who was not at all related to him was appointed king. But after the capture of Babylon, Cyrus presents him with the principality of Carmania.' "[28] An alternative translation of the passage is found in Barnes.[29] The account of Abydenus shares some similarities with the events of this chapter: both 1) concern King Nebuchadnezzar; 2) indicate a subsequent disappearance from the public following a pronouncement made from atop the palace; 3) bear signs of a malady affecting his mental faculties; and 4) mention wandering with beasts as a form of judgment. It seems that Abydenus is relating a legend which may be reminiscent of events in this chapter.[30]

As interesting as these related writings might be, there can be little doubt that Daniel—written well in advance of the Maccabean era—is the basis of the related accounts. As Zöckler observes, the relationship between Daniel and the Gentile king within this chapter is the complete opposite one would expect from an account written during the Maccabean era.

> In relation to the conduct of Daniel—where, in the theocratic state, and especially among the apocalyptists of the Maccabæan period who were enthusiasts for God, could a parallel to the prophet of this chapter be found? What servant of Jehovah in that age can be mentioned, who, like our prophet, and in analogy with the course of the Syrian captain Naaman (2 Kings 5:18), would quietly sojourn at the court and in the immediate presence of a heathen ruler; who would have counselled the king in friendship, warned him in loving earnestness, supported and comforted him, as Daniel actually did in his intercourse with the Chaldæan monarch, according to the statements of our section?[31]

To all peoples, nations, and languages that dwell in all the earth

This chapter accurately records Nebuchadnezzar's statements and concepts as they were incorporated by Daniel into the inspired record.[32] As with similar passages within the Bible, we must take care to distinguish the accurate record of what was said from the accuracy of the statements themselves when their source does not speak by the Spirit of God. In this case, we have the accurate divine record of statements made by an uninspired Gentile king.

> Verse 1 overstated his case, but if some poetic license (or royal conceit) is allowed, this was a contextually justifiable assertion, if not a literally accurate one. Please note that its inaccuracy does nothing to undermine Scripture's claim of divine inspiration in all details—this is simply a truthful record of Nebuchadnezzar's edict, and makes no commentary on the literal accuracy of his claim. Clearly, a pagan king does not make his edicts under divine inspiration![33]

Even though Nebuchadnezzar's Babylon did not hold sway over the entire globe,[34] God had unambiguously given him such authority, "You, O king, are a king of kings. For the God of heaven has given you a kingdom, power, strength, and glory; **and wherever the children of men dwell, or the beasts of the field and the birds of the heaven, He has given them into your hand**, and has made you ruler over them all—you are this head of gold" [emphasis mine] (Dan. 2:37-38▸).

> Nebuchadnezzar, the king of the Babylonians, one of the wealthiest men of all time, one of the greatest architectural geniuses of all time, a man who led the armies of the Chaldeans against the Assyrians, against the Egyptians, and defeated both of those great empires, who consolidated a phenomenal empire that stretched

> from Egypt to India, all of the area that we now look at on a map that is so popular and when we focus in, and everybody looks at Afghanistan, Iraq and Iran and all of that part of the world, what we used to call the Ancient Near East, all of that was under the authority of Nebuchadnezzar. He was the greatest king, perhaps, of the ancient world.[35]

> Nebuchadnezzar, first of the Gentile world-kings in whom the times of the Gentiles (Lk. 21:24; Rev. 16:14▸) began, perfectly comprehended the universality of the sway committed to him (Dan. 2:37▸, 38▸); as also did Cyrus (Ezra 1:2). That they did not actually subject the known earth to their sway is true, but they might have done so. The earth lay in their power.[36]

> The custom of defining the limits of civilization as extending only to the borders of Elam was at least as early as the Third Dynasty of Ur. Back in the Sumerian period, King Amar-Enzu referred to himself as *lugal dubdalimmubak* ("king of the Four Quarters" of the earth) in his dedicatory building inscriptions, even though his empire was far more circumscribed than Nebuchadnezzar's.[37]

Like other powerful rulers of the ancient world who did not rule the entire globe, Nebuchadnezzar naturally spoke as if he did.[38] See commentary on *Daniel 2:38*.

Some have questioned how Nebuchadnezzar could have remembered the various details of the edict that follows —given the intervening period of his mental affliction. This is easily explained by the common practice of governments to keep official records of court proceedings (Est. 6:1) in combination with the personal remembrances and records of those, such as Daniel, who remained loyal to the king during his absence from power.[39] Others find it strange this important edict is unknown from secular records outside the Bible, but this expects too much of the fragmentary archaeological records from Daniel's time.

> The king himself took all possible measures, by the edict referred to in this chapter, to make them known, and to make a permanent record of them. How could it have happened that all knowledge would have been lost if they had thus occurred? . . . As to the objection that if the edict was promulgated it would not be likely to be lost, or the memory of it fade away, it is sufficient to observe that almost "all" of the edicts, the laws, and the statutes of the Assyrian and Chaldean princes have perished with all the other records of their history, and almost all the facts pertaining to the personal or the public history of these monarchs are now unknown. It cannot be believed that the few fragments which we now have of their writings are all that were ever composed, and in the thing itself there is no more improbability that "this" edict should be lost than any other, or that though it may have been kept by a Hebrew residing among them, it should not have been retained by the Chaldeans themselves.[40]

3.4.2 - Daniel 4:2

I thought it good to declare

King Nebuchadnezzar was so convinced by the miraculous events recorded in this chapter, that he was compelled to tell others what God had done. This is the natural response of those to whom God has revealed Himself in a dramatic way, a grateful response accompanied by worship and service. The king's declaration would also encourage the Jews held captive in Babylon, "The captive Jews needed to know that even the apparently limitless power of Nebuchadnezzar was under the control of the Lord God Almighty, who still cared for them and had a great future for them in their land."[41]

The king's declaration was addressed to "all peoples, nations, and languages that dwell on the earth" (Dan. 4:1▸). His pronouncement would serve as an evangelistic witness as it traveled throughout his realm and beyond.

> Nebuchadnezzar is writing a praise tract, that's why he says, "Nebuchadnezzar, the king, unto all people, nations, and languages," that is the sign of an official governmental decree. So it's a very powerful situation and shows you that as far back as, say around 570 or 560 BC, in this era, the entire world had information about the gospel.[42]

> Daniel 4 is Nebuchadnezzar's testimony of his salvation. It's written as a gospel tract that went out through the whole world, the whole earth, the entire empire; no one was without an excuse after this. It was publicly proclaimed throughout Babylon; there was a greater witness throughout the Ancient Near East at that time than probably in America today because of the way they promoted and proclaimed these imperial decrees.[43]

This worshipful response by Nebuchadnezzar is in accord with Solomon's prediction many years earlier that the truth of God would be known to the Gentiles.[44]

> Moreover, **concerning a foreigner**, who is not of Your people Israel, but has come from a far country for Your name's sake (for **they will hear of Your great name and Your strong hand and Your outstretched arm**), when he comes and prays toward this temple, hear in heaven Your dwelling place, and do according to all for which the foreigner calls to You, **that all peoples of the earth may know Your name and fear You**, as do Your people Israel, and that they may know that this temple which I have built is called by Your name. (1K. 8:41-43) [emphasis mine]

signs and wonders

Signs is from אָת [*'āṯ*]: an Aramaic word similar to the Hebrew word אוֹת [*'ôṯ*] describing a non-verbal symbol or act communicating or reminding the recipient of a truth or promise of God (e.g., Gen. 1:14; 9:12-17; 17:11). Signs were often miraculous in nature so as to rivet the attention of their intended audience (e.g., Ex. 4:4-9, 30). God used signs to communicate with a previous Gentile king: the Pharaoh of Egypt (Ex. 7:3; 8:23; 10:1-2). Unlike Nebuchadnezzar, the Pharaoh hardened his heart and failed to respond to God's truth (Ex. 7:13, 23; 8:15, 19, 32; 9:34).[45] *Wonders* is from תְּמַהּ [*t^{e}mah*]: an astonishing event, a miracle meant "to communicate to someone."[46]

> The historicity of the proclamation has been impugned on the grounds that the theocratic language used [e.g., "signs and wonders"] is out of place in the mouth of a pagan monarch. But it must be remembered that for many years Daniel was in the closest contact with the king and that, as a man of sterling faith and prayer, he had exerted large influence upon the monarch, as the whole episode of the dream of the image in chapter 2 and Daniel's interpretation of it attest.[47]

The signs and wonders included: the revelation and interpretation of Nebuchadnezzar's dream in chapter 2; the miraculous deliverance of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego from the fiery furnace in chapter 3, including the appearance of a fourth individual within the furnace (Dan. 3:25); the interpretation and subsequent fulfillment of the dream recorded in this chapter, Nebuchadnezzar's personal experience of madness and his subsequent restoration to sanity; and the preservation of Nebuchadnezzar's rule during his lengthy sickness.[48]

Most High God

See commentary on *Daniel 3:26*.

3.4.3 - Daniel 4:3

His signs

See commentary on *Daniel 4:2*.

His wonders

See commentary on *Daniel 4:2*.

His kingdom *is* an everlasting kingdom

This is one of numerous passages wherein Gentiles honor the God of the Jews during a time when the majority in Israel are found walking in disobedience (1K. 7:9-12; 2K. 5:15; Mat. 8:8-12; Luke 7:6-9; 4:25-27; cf. Mal. 1:11-12). The words of Nebuchadnezzar are similar to that of the Jewish psalmist.

> All Your works shall praise You, O LORD, And Your saints shall bless You. They shall speak of the glory of Your kingdom, And talk of Your power, To make known to the sons of men His mighty acts, And the glorious majesty of His kingdom. Your kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, And Your dominion endures throughout all generations. (Ps. 145:10-13)

Unlike the psalmist, Nebuchadnezzar's understanding of the everlasting nature of God's kingdom was primarily understood from Daniel's interpretation of his dream in chapter 2.[49]

> You watched while a stone was cut out without hands, which struck the image on its feet of iron and clay, and broke them in pieces. Then the iron, the clay, the bronze, the silver, and the gold were crushed together, and became like chaff from the summer threshing floors; the wind carried them away so that no trace of them was found. And the stone that struck the image became a great mountain and filled the whole earth. . . . And in the days of these kings **the God of heaven will set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed; and the kingdom shall not be left to other people; it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever**. Inasmuch as you saw that the stone was cut out of the mountain without hands, and that it broke in pieces the iron, the bronze, the clay, the silver, and the gold-the great God has made known to the king what will come to pass after this. The dream is certain, and its interpretation is sure. (Dan. 2:34-35▸, 44-45▸) [emphasis mine]

> Nebuchadnezzar's affirmation that God "lives forever" and his kingdom is "eternal" and "forever" (Dan. 4:31▸) reinforces a theme from chapter 2▸, where the four world kingdoms in succession are destroyed by the advent of God's eternal kingdom (Dan. 2:44-45▸). The same theme is prominent in chapter 7▸ (especially Dan. 7:14▸, 27▸), which describes how God's kingdom is given to the Messiah, the one "like a Son of Man" (Dan. 7:13▸)[50]

Having experienced a severe debilitating mental affliction rendering the king unfit to rule, he would have a heightened awareness of the temporal nature of his own rule.

> Nebuchadnezzar was comparing God's rule with his own, so recently taken from him by illness. God was not subject to interruptions of this kind. His rule was stable, unchanging, eternal . . . No assassinations or usurpations could bring a halt to it.[51]

> No one is so mighty that he can prolong his own reign; and no one can make his own authority extend to the next generation. Earthly governments, therefore, however mighty, are of short duration; and history is made up of the records of a great number of such administrations, many of them exceedingly brief, and of very various character. The scepter falls from the hand of the monarch, never to be resumed by him again; another grasps it to retain it also but a little time, and then he passes away. . . . though the scepter has long since fallen from the hands of Alexander and the Caesars, yet the same God who ruled in their age is still on the throne.[52]

Many take Nebuchadnezzar's proclamation in this verse as evidence he became a believer as a result of the this chapter's events. For a discussion regarding whether Nebuchadnezzar was saved, see commentary on *Daniel 4:37*.

The eternal nature of God's kingdom is a major theme of the book of Daniel. See *The Eternal Kingdom of Messiah*.[53]

dominion

Dominion is from שָׁלְטָן [*šolṭān*], "the authority or power to rule,"[54] from whence we get *sultan*.[55]

3.4.4 - Daniel 4:4

was at rest . . . and flourishing

At rest is שְׁלֵה [*šᵉlēh*], "at ease, implying a carefree and light-hearted attitude."[56] *Flourishing* is from רַעֲנַן [*raʿnan*], "prosperous, . . . pertaining to thriving, with the focus on contentment and adequacy of life; this adequacy implies a life of luxury, riches, good health or other such ideas."[57]

> The adjective רָעְנָן [*rāʿᵉnān*], "flourishing" (HALOT), is cognate to the Hebrew רָעֲנָן [*rāʿănān*], which occurs nineteen times in the OT and often describes a verdant tree (e.g., Deu. 12:2; 1K. 14:23), sometimes as a metaphor for a person (e.g., Ps. 52:10; 92:15; cf. Hos. 14:9). It may be used here in anticipation of Nebuchadnezzar's depiction as a tree in the dream.[58]

Peace is to be sought after as a precious commodity.[59] All the more so in view of the volatile military campaigns marking the earlier parts of Nebuchadnezzar's reign.[60]

Nebuchadnezzar lived hundreds of years too early to benefit from Jesus' teaching concerning the temporal and deceptive nature of a plentiful life engendering a belief in self-sufficiency and independence from God (Luke 12:15-22).

> And I will say to my soul, 'Soul, you have many goods laid up for many years; take your ease; eat, drink, and be merry.' But God said to him, 'Fool! This night your soul will be required of you; then whose will those things be which you have provided?' So is he who lays up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God. (Luke 12:19-21)

By God's grace, the king would experience a major disruption in his life designed to benefit his soul and bring eternal peace, which only comes from being reconciled to God.

> The King was technically at rest from war and from major construction projects, but there is no rest for a person when they are alienated from the true Savior God. The Lord graciously disturbed his rest in order that he might experience true rest.[61]

> Ere God awakened him, he had been "at rest in his house, and flourishing in his palace." Think of that! At rest and flourishing while still in his sins and a stranger to God! Ah, there is a deceitful rest, a deceitful peace, which lulls many a soul into a false security. To be untroubled is no evidence of safety. . . . God saw that he needed to be troubled—he needed to be awakened from his sleep of death. It was grace that thus exercised him. And in some way every soul that is saved has to pass through this period of soul-anxiety and concern.[62]

Nebuchadnezzar's short-lived time of prosperity and peace reminds one of conditions immediately prior to the arrival of the Day of the Lord.

> For you yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so comes as a thief in the night. For when they say, "Peace and safety!" then sudden destruction comes upon them, as labor pains upon a pregnant woman. And they shall not escape. (1Th. 5:2-3)

in my house . . . in my palace[63]

Nebuchadnezzar appeared to be enjoying a tranquil time, both professionally and personally. There were no campaigns or insurrections requiring his attention.

> It is possible that the two words here - house and palace - may refer to somewhat different things: the former - house - more particularly to his own private family - is domestic relations as a man; and the latter - palace - to those connected with the government who resided in his palace. If this is so, then the passage would mean that all around him was peaceful, and that from no source had he any cause of disquiet. In his own private family - embracing his wife and children; and in the arrangements of the palace - embracing those who had charge of public affairs, he had no cause of uneasiness.[64]

"My house," *i.e.*, in the abode of peace, not in the field in order to prosecute warlike enterprises.[65]

3.4.5 - Daniel 4:5

a dream which made me afraid

Made me afraid is from דְּחַל [*dᵉḥal*], pael stem, to "cause terror."[66] The same Aramaic word described the *awesome* form of the image Nebuchadnezzar previously saw in chapter 2 (Dan. 2:31▸). As in his previous dream of chapter 2, Nebuchadnezzar suspects the symbolism of the dream has negative implications. Even though Nebuchadnezzar feared the dream, God had given it for his benefit.

> For God may speak in one way, or in another, Yet man does not perceive it. In a dream, in a vision of the night, When deep sleep falls upon men, While slumbering on their beds, Then He opens the ears of men, And seals their instruction. In order to turn man from his deed, And conceal pride from man, He keeps back his soul from the Pit, And his life from perishing by the sword. (Job 33:14-18)

Scripture records numerous times when God uses dreams to warn individuals (often Gentiles):

- Abimelech was warned he had taken Abraham's wife (Gen. 20:3).
- Upon Jacob's departure, Laban was warned to speak neither good or bad (Gen. 31:34).
- Pharaoh was warned of a coming time of famine (Gen. 41:1).
- Nebuchadnezzar was warned concerning the temporary nature and sequence of Gentile powers (Dan. 2:28▸).[67]
- Nebuchadnezzar was warned about his prideful rule and the impending judgment God would bring as a result.
- Pilate was warned, through his wife's dream, that Jesus is just and should be dealt with carefully (Mat. 27:19).

the thoughts on my bed

Thoughts is from הַרְהֹר [*harhōr*], a "mental image in a dream-like state, hence unreal thought . . . a fantasy."[68]

troubled me

Daniel will have a similar reaction following his vision of the sequence of beast kingdoms (Dan. 7:28▸).

3.4.6 - Daniel 4:6

issued a decree

This situation and decree are much like that of Daniel 2:2▸ and the reaction of Pharaoh to his troubling dream (Gen. 41:7-8).

wise *men*

Wise men is חַכִּימַי [*ḥakkîmê*]. See commentary on *Daniel 2:12*.

> Certainly time had changed the thinking of Nebuchadnezzar regarding these men from what it was when he had ordered the death of all. During the intervening thirty years they probably had been called on many times, and apparently had performed to his satisfaction.[69]

the interpretation

Interpretation is פְּשַׁר [*pᵉšar*]. See commentary on *Daniel 2:4*.

3.4.7 - Daniel 4:7

magicians . . . astrologers . . . Chaldeans

See commentary on *Daniel 1:20* and *Daniel 2:2*.

soothsayers

The Stone edition of the Tanakh identifies the advisors as "Necromancers . . . astrologers . . . Chaldean [stargazers] and . . . demonists."[70] See commentary on *Daniel 2:27*.

I told them the dream

Unlike chapter 2, where Nebuchadnezzar suspected the wise men of falsity, this time he tells them the dream. It could be that Daniel's actions in chapter 2 restored the kings confidence in the wise men so that he felt no need to test them again. Steinmann suggests this may have been because the dream of this chapter was less frightening to the king.

> Note the contrast to his reaction to the dream in Daniel 2. Here the verbs signal fear, whereas in Dan. 2:1, 3, the verb פְּעַם [*pᵉʿam*] indicates consternation, but not fear. This may be the reason why in this case the king does not demand that his wise men first tell him the dream and then its interpretation (as he had demanded in Daniel 2).[71]

they did not make known to me its interpretation

As with the previous dream, the various occult resources of Babylon did not provide an interpretation of the dream. See commentary on *Daniel 2:2*.

The question has been asked, since Nebuchadnezzar had already revealed the contents of the dream itself, why his advisors did not provide an interpretation? It is suggested they could have produced an errant interpretation—but one they themselves believed—and Nebuchadnezzar would have been none the wiser. Perhaps they sensed the negative implications for the king having heard Daniel's interpretation of the king's earlier dream.

> As noted regarding the first dream (cf. Dan. 2:4), they had rule books for giving such interpretations. The interpretation they would have given would not have been the true one, but they would have thought it was. . . . Significantly, the text does not say that they could not give it, but only that they did not . . . The reason why they would not have wished to give it was due to the nature of the dream. It was a dream which meant humiliation and tragedy for the king, which their rules would very likely also have indicated, and they simply would not have wanted to convey this kind of information to the great Nebuchadnezzar.[72]
>
> More than likely they were simply reluctant to voice any interpretation adverse to the king so they chose to remain silent.[73]
>
> They may have listened with some trepidation when they recalled how a similar occasion, perhaps twenty years earlier, was fraught with grave danger for a similar assembly in which some of those present may have taken part.[74]

3.4.8 - Daniel 4:8

at last Daniel came

Various reasons have been suggested to explain why Daniel did not appear with the earlier wise men.[75]

Calvin suggests the king preferred the Magi over Daniel,[76] but this seems unlikely given the loyalty inferred from Daniel's reluctance to deliver bad news to the king (Dan. 4:19▸). Also, the Scriptural truths related within the king's decree suggest the king and Daniel had interaction beyond that recorded here.

Keil suggests the lengthy time period that transpired since Daniel's interpretation of Nebuchadnezzar's earlier dream in chapter 2 was long enough Daniel's abilities of interpretation had faded from the kings mind.[77] This too seems unlikely because the vividness of the earlier dream, the intensity with which the king sought its meaning, and his relief upon receiving Daniel's interpretation would hardly have been forgotten.

Young suggests Daniel was not summoned by the king until last because the king was reluctant to hear Daniel's interpretation. The king appeared to realize the dream had negative connotations—similar to his earlier dream—and may have feared Daniel's interpretation would not be something he wanted to hear.[78]

> It's very possible that Nebuchadnezzar didn't wait for Daniel because he had an idea, based on previous experience, what Daniel was going to say, and like many unbelievers, the last thing they want to hear is divine viewpoint. They are going to do anything they can, they're going to exhaust every avenue possible in order to find someone, some where with some idea, some concept that is going to solve their problem and make life work without having to turn to God exhaustively, without having to put exclusive faith in God.[79]

> Put yourself in Nebuchadnezzar's place, that last dream 20 years ago, what did Daniel tell you about that dream? It was a disturbing dream; it disturbed Nebuchadnezzar and the dream was disturbing because that kingdom would one day be smashed. And so apparently Nebuchadnezzar, like many unbelievers, is still trying to see if there is a solution other than the one offered by the God of Daniel[80]

Others observe there is no indication of a separate summons for Daniel[81] and suggest his official station, as ruler over the province of Babylon and chief administrator over the wise men (Dan. 2:24▸), would necessitate delegating routine court affairs to lower-level advisors, leaving him free to perform important duties.[82]

> Among the various answers to the question as to why Daniel was not at once summoned before the king to interpret the dream, instead of being subsequently introduced, the one here indicated, which refers to the freedom of his official station, is certainly the most simple and appropriate, since various features of our book appear to conflict with the assumption that he occupied a political or priestly station in the proper sense . . .[83]

Perhaps Daniel perceived (or was informed by God) this particular dream of the king's had divine significance. As head of the wise men, he may have purposely arrived last, to demonstrate the inability of Babylonian occult practitioners to obtain the true interpretation.[84]

> Daniel may simply have intentionally stayed behind, possibly because of an undisclosed revelation from God to that end. The reason could have been that such a delayed appearance of Daniel would give time for the deficiency of the other wise men to show itself once more, which in turn would make his true interpretation all the more impressive. Fitting into this explanation is the usage of the word "until" . . . coming at the beginning of the verse. It suggests that Daniel's arrival was timed at a point when the wise men had been deliberating a long time, with the king having become quite impatient.[85]

> It was ordered by God's providence that he should be reserved to the last, in order that all mere human means should be proved vain, before God manifested His power through His servant; thus the haughty king was stripped of all fleshly confidences.[86]

his name *is* Belteshazzar

See *Meaning of Names*.

> Questions have been raised why verse 8 not only calls him Daniel but adds the expression "whose name was Belteshazzar." In view of the fact that this is part of a record where Daniel is prominent, why the double name? The answer, however, is quite simple. This decree was going throughout the kingdom where most people would know Daniel by his Babylonian name, Belteshazzar. The king, in recognition of the fact that Daniel's God is the interpreter of his dream, calls Daniel by his Hebrew name, the last syllable of which refers to Elohim, the God of Israel.[87]

according to the name of my god

> The fact that the king described this as "according to the name of my god" may perhaps indicate that even this was an abbreviated form of Bel-belteshazzar (Akkad. *Bel - balaṭsu - uṣur*, "Bel, protect his life") or even Nebu-belteshazzar (Akkad. *Nabu - balaṭsu - uṣur*, "Nebo, protect his life")—if by "his god" the king referred to the god whose name began his own, Nebu-chadnezzar.[88]

Nebuchadnezzar's reference to his pagan beliefs may simply reflect his viewpoint at the time of the events being related—before his malady and restoration brought him to recognize the One True God of Scripture.

> Nebuchadnezzar is reminding us subtly here that he had formerly been devoted to these gods, "whose name is Belteshazzar according to the name of my god," and what he means by that is the former name of my god, my god at that time. He is not making a statement here that Bel or Marduk, who is the name of the God, Bel Marduk, is still his god, that becomes clear from what he says at the end of the chapter.[89]

Others interpret this reference to pagan beliefs as evidence the prologue of this chapter should be associated with the close of chapter 3. See commentary on *Daniel 4:1*.

in him *is* the Spirit of the Holy God

Spirit of the Holy God is רוּחַ־אֱלָהִין קַדִּישִׁין [*rûaḥ–ʾĕlāhîn qaddîšîn*].

There is considerable discussion concerning whether this phrase should be translated in the singular as denoting the One True God or as a plural referring to pagan deities.

We know the related term in biblical Hebrew, אֱלֹהִים [*ʾĕlōhîm*]—generally translated "God"—is plural in form. This plural form has generally been understood as a plural denoting majesty.[90] Whether the term denotes one or many in biblical Hebrew can generally be determined by the context and by observing whether an associated verb is singular or plural in form, but this passage lacks a closely-associated verb to provide this important clue. Perhaps the associated adjective provides a clue instead.

> In biblical Aramaic, אֱלָהִין [*ʾĕlāhîn*] is always a true plural, "gods," and is never understood to be singular. . . . the following plural adjective קַדִּישִׁין [*qaddîšîn*], "holy," demonstrates that "gods" is plural here.[91]

> "The spirit of the holy gods is in him." (That this *ʾelāhîn*, ["gods"] is meant as a true plural—rather than a plural of majesty—is shown by the plural form of the adjective *qaddîšîn* accompanying it.)[92]

> What is far more persuasive is how the Aramaic *ʾĕlāh* (sg.) and *ʾĕlāhîn* (pl.) are used in the book of Daniel. A careful study of the usage of these terms *in Daniel* indicates that *ʾĕlāhîn* in Dan. 4:8▸ should be taken as a true plural, "gods."[93]

The combination of the plural noun with plural adjective appears to favor understanding the phrase as a reference to Nebuchadnezzar's belief in a pantheon of pagan deities. On the other hand, Montgomery points to a passage in biblical Hebrew containing a very similar phrase that is not polytheistic in meaning.

> The last noun is unarticulated (in the abs. state), and is exactly comparable with, and a literal reminiscence of Gen. 41:38, where the heathen Pharaoh calls Joseph 'a man in whom there is a spirit of Deity,' or rather 'a divine spirit.' Here, as in Gen., the pl. for God, אלהין [*'lhyn*], is not . . . a polytheistic expression, *i.e.*, 'gods,' and it is . . . the Aram. equivalent of JHWH's epithet in Jos. 24:19, אֱלֹהִים קְדֹשִׁים [*'ĕlōhîm qḏōšîm*].[94]

Although Montgomery's appeal to Genesis 41:38 lacks the adjective, "holy," the grammar of Joshua's passage is a close match to what we have here.

> But Joshua said to the people, "You cannot serve the LORD, for He is a holy God (אֱלֹהִים קְדֹשִׁים [*'ĕlōhîm q^{e}ḏōšîm*]). He is a jealous God; He will not forgive your transgressions nor your sins." (Jos. 24:19)

In light of Nebuchadnezzar's previous statement referring to Belteshazzar as "the name of my god," it seems best to understand the phrase as reflecting Nebuchadnezzar's syncretistic beliefs at the time of the narrative: merging aspects of his previous pagan beliefs with a growing understanding of Daniel's One True God.[95]

> The expression *^{e}lahîn qaddishîn* could be rendered as a singular according to good Hebrew analogies, cf. Jos. 24:19. But it is equally correct to say that the terms used could be translated "holy gods"—plural. We favor the latter because so many other indications point to the fact that the king never forsook his polytheistic viewpoint.[96]

> The word "spirit" . . . as used here by a person of pagan background, is not a reference to the Holy Spirit, but it is the king's way of identifying the point of contact within Daniel by which this holy God could make the necessary revelation.[97]

> Nebuchadnezzar speaks of the *holy* gods, he means by the expression the ἀγαθοδαίμονες [*agathodaimones*] as opposed to the κακοδαίμονες [*kakodaimones*], using the word *holy* of the good gods, probably from his conversation with Daniel on the subject.[98]

Considering the factors above, the majority of translations take the phrase as a plural denoting pagan deities ("spirit of the holy gods:" ESV, HCSB, KJV, NASU, NET, NIV84, TNK) rather than a reference to the One True God (NKJV, LXX[99]).

Regardless of whether Nebuchadnezzar's concept of God at this time was accurately informed, he recalled Daniel's spiritual connection with God as revealed by his performance in chapter 2. Darius the Mede will also recognize the "excellent spirit" within Daniel when he considers setting him over the realm (Dan. 6:3▸). Nebuchadnezzar's and Darius' assessment of Daniel is similar to Pharaoh's assessment of Joseph (Gen. 41:38).

> The only other person so characterized in Scripture is Joseph, whom Pharaoh says is "a man in whom is a spirit of gods" . . . (Gen. 41:38). That Daniel preserves this comment signals that he is drawing a parallel between Joseph and himself. Both were taken to a foreign land against their will. Both were called before the king to interpret a dream. Both had been successful at dream interpretation when the native wise men failed. Both served in high positions under pagan kings. . . . Joseph told of "seven years" of low harvests and famine (Genesis 41). Daniel speaks of "seven times" during which God will judge Nebuchadnezzar (Dan. 4:13▸).[100]

See *Joseph and Daniel*.

Daniel's reputation will be further enhanced by his interpretation of the dream in this chapter as well as his probable role preserving the kingdom during the king's sickness. The impact Daniel's spirituality had upon Nebuchadnezzar was significant in that he evidently shared it with the queen who subsequently related it to Belteshazzar.

> There is a man in your kingdom in whom is the Spirit of the Holy God. And in the days of your father, light and understanding and wisdom, like the wisdom of the gods, were found in him; and King Nebuchadnezzar your

> father—your father the king—made him chief of the magicians, astrologers, Chaldeans, and soothsayers. (Dan. 5:11)

Daniel's stellar reputation was such that Ezekiel mentions him by name (Eze. 28:3).[101]

> Of interest is the statement concerning the prince of Tyrus, "Behold, thou art wiser than Daniel; there is no secret that they can hide from thee" (Eze 28:3). This statement, which the critics work hard to explain, as it confirms a sixth-century Daniel, also supports the idea that Daniel's fame had spread far and wide.[102]

Any believer who yields to the Spirit of the Living God dwelling within him[103] will gain the attention of others due to his spiritual insight and understanding.[104]

3.4.9 - Daniel 4:9

Belteshazzar

See *Meaning of Names*.

chief of the magicians

> Another noteworthy fact is that after thirty years Daniel was still "chief" of the king's counselors ("magicians"), which evidences that he must have performed his duties admirably.[105]

Spirit of the Holy God

See commentary regarding this phrase at *Daniel 4:8*.

no secret troubles you

Daniel's ability to reveal secrets is mentioned in God's criticism of the king of Tyre given through Ezekiel.

> Son of man, say to the prince of Tyre, 'Thus says the Lord GOD: "Because your heart is lifted up, And you say, 'I am a god, I sit in the seat of gods, In the midst of the seas,' Yet you are a man, and not a god, Though you set your heart as the heart of a god. . . . **Behold, you are wiser than Daniel! There is no secret that can be hidden from you! . . .**" ' (Eze. 28:2-3) [emphasis mine]

explain to me the visions of my dream that I have seen, and its interpretation[106]

Explain to me the visions of my dream, חֶזְוֵי חֶלְמִי [*ḥezwê ḥelmî*] ("[the] appearance/apparition of [the] dream of me"), has been variously interpreted. Some translators render this phrase as if the king is asking the vision itself be revealed, along with its interpretation (KJV,[107] ESV,[108] NASU[109]).

Because Nebuchadnezzar relates the dream in the very next verse, others understand the phrase in other ways: "**Here is** my dream; interpret it for me" [emphasis mine] (NIV84);[110] "**Consider** my dream that I saw and set forth its interpretation" [emphasis mine] (NET);[111] "**Explain** to me the visions of my vision which I saw, and its interpretation" [emphasis mine] (HCSB);[112] "**Tell me the meaning** of my dream vision that I have seen" [emphasis mine] (TNK).[113]

The notes in the MT propose a variation to חֶזְוֵי [*ḥezwê*] of אֲחַוֵּה [*ʾăḥaûēh*], "declare" and list an alternate reading as an interjection חֲזִי [*ḥăzî*], "lo."[114]

3.4.10 - Daniel 4:10

A tree in the midst of the earth . . . its height was great

Trees frequently appear as symbols within Scripture. The godly are compared to flourishing, fruitful trees (Ps. 1:3; Ps. 52:8; 92:13; Pr. 11:28; Hos. 14:5-7). The power of the wicked is said to spread itself like a tree (Ps. 37:35).

In this passage, the various aspects of the tree "represented [Nebuchadnezzar's] exceedingly prosperous condition, the height of his exaltation, the extent of his dominions and renown, the splendor of his kingdom, the multitude of his subjects who received protection from him, and the peace and plenty they enjoyed."[115] The location of the tree, "in the midst of the earth," indicated the central role Babylon occupied in the affairs of that day.[116]

> In several of his inscriptions Nebuchadnezzar had boasted about the peaceful shelter and abundance of food that he had provided for his subjects through Babylon. Indeed, in these boasts he used language descriptive of a tree when referring to his rule through Babylon. In one inscription he said, "The produce of the lands, the product of the mountains, the bountiful wealth of the sea within her I received. Under her everlasting shadow I gathered all men in peace. Vast heaps of grain beyond measure I stored up within her." In another inscription he declared, "Under her everlasting shadow I gathered all men in peace. A reign of abundance, years of plenty I caused to be in my land."[117]

Ezekiel uses similar symbols in a riddle given to the house of Israel (Eze. 17:1-10) wherein an eagle, symbolizing Nebuchadnezzar (Eze. 17:12), crops a branch from a cedar in Lebanon, symbolizing Israel's leadership (Eze. 17:12), and plants it by abundant waters (deported to Babylon) where it prospered. Thereafter, the newly-planted branch bends toward another eagle, symbolizing Pharaoh of Egypt (Eze. 17:15), but God indicates the new planting will wither for its actions (Eze. 1:10): Israel's last king, Zedekiah, would be taken captive to Babylon (Eze. 17:20-21) where he subsequently died (see *King #1 - Zedekiah (Mattaniah)*, Jer. 52:9-11). Ezekiel then relates that God will take a branch from the high cedar and plant it "on the mountain height of Israel" where it will become a majestic cedar, providing shade and a dwelling place for birds of every sort (Eze. 17:23). This appears to be a prediction of Israel's future restoration in the Millennial Kingdom—at the time of the final stone kingdom within Nebuchadnezzar's dream in chapter 2.[118]

> Thus says the Lord GOD: "I will take also one of the highest branches of the high cedar and set it out. I will crop off from the topmost of its young twigs a tender one, and will plant it on a high and prominent mountain. On the mountain height of Israel I will plant it; and it will bring forth boughs, and bear fruit, and be a majestic cedar. Under it will dwell birds of every sort; in the shadow of its branches they will dwell. And all the trees of the field shall know that I, the LORD, have brought down the high tree and exalted the low tree, dried up the green tree and made the dry tree flourish; I, the LORD, have spoken and have done it." (Eze. 17:22-24)

As in this passage, a government is symbolized by a tree. The spreading of the tree—its extent—denotes its influence. As the branches extend, the shadow projected by the tree represents the protection afforded to the birds (people) beneath it. The height of the tree represents the power and strength of the government (Amos 2:9).

In another passage, Ezekiel warns Pharoah by using comparable symbols to relate the pride and fall of Assyria (to Nebuchadnezzar's Babylon).[119]

> Son of man, say to Pharaoh king of Egypt and to his multitude: 'Whom are you like in your greatness? Indeed **Assyria was a cedar in Lebanon, With fine branches that shaded the forest, And of high stature**; And its top was among the thick boughs. The waters made it grow; Underground waters gave it height, With their rivers running around the place where it was planted, And sent out rivulets to all the trees of the field. Therefore **its height was exalted above all the trees of the field**; Its boughs were multiplied, And its branches became long because of the abundance of water, As it sent them out. **All the birds of the heavens made their nests in its boughs; Under its branches all the beasts of the field brought forth their young; And in its shadow all great nations made their home.** Thus it was beautiful in greatness and in the length of its branches, Because its roots reached to abundant waters. The cedars in the garden of God could not hide it; The fir trees were not like its boughs, And the chestnut trees were not like its branches; No tree in the garden of God was like it in

> beauty. I made it beautiful with a multitude of branches, So that all the trees of Eden envied it, That were in the garden of God.' "Therefore thus says the Lord GOD: '**Because you have increased in height**, and it set its top among the thick boughs, **and its heart was lifted up in its height**, therefore I will deliver it into the hand of the mighty one of the nations, and he shall surely deal with it; I have driven it out for its wickedness. And aliens, the most terrible of the nations, have **cut it down and left it**; its branches have fallen on the mountains and in all the valleys; its boughs lie broken by all the rivers of the land; and **all the peoples of the earth have gone from under its shadow** and left it. On its ruin will remain all the birds of the heavens, And all the beasts of the field will come to its branches— So that no trees by the waters may ever again exalt themselves for their height, nor set their tops among the thick boughs, that no tree which drinks water may ever be high enough to reach up to them. For they have all been delivered to death, To the depths of the earth, Among the children of men who go down to the Pit.' " (Eze. 31:2-14) [emphasis mine]

Ironically, much of the symbolism describing Assyria's downfall at the hand of Babylon reappears in this dream, warning of a similar personal fate that awaits Nebuchadnezzar in his pride.

Speaking through the prophet Isaiah, God uses trees as symbols representing the lofty pride of man which will be brought low in the day of the Lord.

> For the day of the LORD of hosts Shall come upon **everything proud and lofty, Upon everything lifted up**— And it shall be brought low—**Upon all the cedars of Lebanon that are high and lifted up, And upon all the oaks of Bashan**; Upon all the high mountains, And upon all the hills that are lifted up; Upon every high tower, And upon every fortified wall; Upon all the ships of Tarshish, And upon all the beautiful sloops. **The loftiness of man shall be bowed down, And the haughtiness of men shall be brought low**; The LORD alone will be exalted in that day. (Isa. 2:12-17) [emphasis mine]

The judgment of Nebuchadnezzar's pride in this chapter foreshadows the general judgment of man's pride at the time of the end. See *Foreshadowing the Great Tribulation*.

Jesus draws upon symbols from such Old Testament passages in his parables concerning the kingdom of God ("kingdom of heaven" in Matthew) and the shelter provided by its branches.

> Another parable He put forth to them, saying: "The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed, which a man took and sowed in his field, which indeed is the least of all the seeds; but when it is grown it is greater than the herbs and **becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and nest in its branches**. (Mat. 13:31-32) [emphasis mine]

> Then He said, "What is the kingdom of God like? And to what shall I compare it? It is like a mustard seed, which a man took and put in his garden; and it grew and **became a large tree, and the birds of the air nested in its branches**." (Luke 13:18-19) [emphasis mine]

> Then He said, "To what shall we liken the kingdom of God? Or with what parable shall we picture it? It is like a mustard seed which, when it is sown on the ground, is smaller than all the seeds on earth; but when it is sown, it grows up and **becomes greater than all herbs, and shoots out large branches, so that the birds of the air may nest under its shade**." (Mark 4:30-32) [emphasis mine]

3.4.11 - Daniel 4:11

Its height reached to the heavens . . . could be seen to the ends of all the earth[120]

> To Daniel's original audience of Judean exiles, this would have signaled that the tree represented Babylon and its hubris, since this is parallel to the description of the plan for the tower of Babel (Gen. 11:4).[121]

> Higher than any on earth; expressive of his dominion over all nations and people of the earth; or of his ambition of deity itself; and so Saadiah illustrates it by Isa. 14:14. "I will ascend above the heights of the clouds etc."[122]

See commentary on *Daniel 4:10*.

3.4.12 - Daniel 4:12

Its fruit abundant, and in it *was* food for all

Nebuchadnezzar Dreams

123

The beasts and birds found both protection and provision from the tree.[124] In its ability to provide provision, the tree imitates the ultimate tree: the Tree of Life.

> In the middle of its street, and on either side of the river, was the tree of life, which bore twelve fruits, each tree yielding its fruit every month. The leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. (Rev. 22:2)

> The similarity with the tree in the city of God in Revelation is significant . . . (Rev. 22:2). . . . Babylon is depicted as the "cosmic tree" of life and prosperity, yet it is the false tree of life that resides in the false garden in the city on earth whose builder and maker is Nebuchadnezzar; the false messiah. Babylon offers food and protection, but it cannot offer life everlasting.[125]

the beasts of the field found shade under it[126]

Beasts frequently represent nation states within Scripture (Ps. 80:13; Isa. 30:6; 35:8-9; 56:9; Jer. 2:15; 4:7; 5:6; 8:17; 12:9-10; Eze. 34:25-30; 39:18; Dan. 7:3-7; Hos. 13:7; Nah. 2:11-13; Zec. 11:3; Rev. 13:1-2) and it seems probable that such is the case here,[127] even though Nebuchadnezzar's realm was previously said to extend over literal beasts and birds in distinction from men.

> You, O king, are a king of kings. For the God of heaven has given you a kingdom, power, strength, and glory; and wherever the **children of men** dwell, or **the beasts of the field** and **the birds of the heaven**, He has given them into your hand, and **has made you ruler over them all**—you are this head of gold. (Dan. 2:37-38) [emphasis mine]

> The various nationalities that came under Babylonian dominance are symbolized by the creatures for which it provides food and shelter.[128]

> The birds and the beasts would represent the kingdoms that have been subdued and brought under Nebuchadnezzar's authority.[129]

The shade provided by the tree is an important element of the symbolism: in the Middle East shade provided protection from sun's heat (Job 7:2; Ps. 91:1; 121:5; Isa. 4:6; 25:4; 32:2; Lam. 4:20; Hos. 14:7; Jonah 4:5-6). Shade also describes finding protection under the authority of a greater power (Gen. 19:8; Ps. 17:8; 36:7; 57:1; 63:7). The beasts found shelter in the tree's shade while the birds found shelter among the branches. The most important function of government may be in view: an antidote to anarchy.

> [The beasts of the field had shadow under it] the inhabitants of the several Heathenish nations under him, and even those that were most savage, were protected in their lives and properties by him; so princes should be a screen, a protection to their subjects . . .[130]

The divinely-appointed role of government is the enforcement of justice. After Noah and his family departed the Ark, God instituted the death penalty for murder and placed responsibility for its enforcement squarely in man's hands (Gen. 9:5-6). Paul explained this timeless responsibility in his letter to the church at Rome.

> Let every soul be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and the authorities that exist are appointed by God. Therefore whoever resists the authority resists the ordinance of God, and those who resist will bring judgment on themselves. For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to evil. Do you want to be unafraid of the authority? Do what is good, and you will have praise from the same. For he is God's minister to you for good. **But if you do evil, be afraid; for he does not bear the sword in vain; for he is God's minister, an avenger to execute wrath on him who practices evil**. Therefore you must be subject, not only because of wrath but also for conscience' sake. (Rom. 13:1-5) [emphasis mine]

> God appointed the existence of governments in the world for this purpose—to be like trees on whose fruits all men feed, and under whose shadow they rest. . . . it is better to live under the most cruel tyrant than without any government at all. Let us suppose all to be on one equal level, what would such anarchy bring forth? . . . God principally wished to shew, by this figure, with what intention and with what political order he desires the world to be governed; and why he sets over it kings and monarchies and other magistrates. Then he desired to shew, *secondly*, although tyrants and other princes forget their duty, it is still divinely enjoined upon them, and yet God's grace always shines forth in all governments. . . . Such protection is needful, if we reflect upon the great pride natural to all, and the blindness of our self-love, and the furiousness of our lusts. As this is the case, God shews, in this dream, how all orders among us need the protection of magistrates; while *pasture and food and shelter* signify the various forms of usefulness which political order provides for us.[131]

birds of the heavens dwelt in its branches

See commentary on *Daniel 4:10*.

3.4.13 - Daniel 4:13

and there was a watcher, a holy one

Watcher is עִיר [*ʿîr*], "watcher, sentinel, one who is awake and so acts as a guard and protector . . ."[132] The term can describe a being who is clever or intelligent.[133]

The phrase translated by the NKJV as, *a watcher, a holy one*, is עִיר וְקַדִּישׁ [*ʿîr wᵉqaddîš*], which the KJV translates as, *a watcher and an holy one*, giving rise to the belief by Clarke that two individuals are meant.[134] Against this view, we find the single decree (or sentence) of this chapter is issued by "the watchers" who are described as "holy ones." This is why most translations understand the phrase as describing a single individual who is both watchful and holy (ESV, HCSB, NASU, NET, NIV84, NKJV, TNK). "A *hendiadys* for 'a holy watcher, a watcher who is holy.' "[135]

The emphasis of the term *watcher* appears to be on powers of observation and wakefulness. "It is not a sentinel that is thought of but one that does not sleep . . . a being called 'a wakeful and holy one,' *ʿîr wᵉqaddêsh*, literally, 'a wakeful one and holy.' "[136] The effectiveness of the *watcher* in his task is made possible by his lack of dependence upon food and sleep.

> They are not subject to slumber, they are not nourished by either food or drink, but live a spiritual life; hence they have no use for sleep. . . . God has them at hand to fulfill his bidding, and destines them to the performance of his commands, hence they are called "watchers." (Ps. 103:20.)[137]

> Theodoret says that the name is given to an angel, to denote that the angel is without a body - ασωματον [*asōmaton*] - "for he that is encompassed with a body is the servant of sleep, but he that is free from a body is superior to the necessity of sleep."[138]

> עִיר [*ʿîr*] is not to be combined with צִיר [*ṣîr*], a messenger, but is derived from עוּר [*ʿûr*], to watch, and corresponds with the Hebr. עֵר [*ʿēr*], Sos. 5:2, Mal. 2:12, and signifies not keeping watch, but *being watchful*, one who is awake, . . .[139]

We know some of God's heavenly servants have the ability to minister continuously without sleep. Consider the four living creatures (ζῷα [*zōa*]) attending God's throne.[140]

> The four living creatures, each having six wings, were full of eyes around and within. **And they do not rest day or night**, saying: "Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, Who was and is and is to come!" (Rev. 4:8▸) [emphasis mine]

In this aspect, the *watcher* has abilities similar to God, "Behold, He who keeps (from שָׁמַר [*šāmar*], "to guard, watch over") Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep" (Ps. 121:4).

Numerous passages within Scripture emphasize the watchfulness of both God and His servants as they guard and participate in bringing to pass His declared will in history.[141]

> The root of the idea is not unbiblical. . . . [compare] the eyes of the Cherubs (Eze. 1:18) and 'the seven, which are the eyes of the Lord, which run to and fro through the whole earth,' Zec. 4:10. Still closer is Isa. 62:6 with its summons to שׁמרים [*šmrym*], 'the Watchers,' and המזכירים את־יהוה [*hmzkyrym ʾt–yhwh*] 'the Remembrancers of the Lord,' 'to give him no rest' . . . There may indeed be an implied contrast to this notion in Ps. 121, according to which 'He that keepeth Israel neither slumbers nor sleeps.'[142]

Most probably, the *watcher* is an order of angelic being. Without need of sleep, he is able to watch continuously, like the living creatures around God's throne (Rev. 4:8▸). Watchers are described as holy (Dan. 4:13▸, 17▸) as are angels (Deu. 33:2; Dan. 8:13▸).[143] The *watcher* appears to normally abide in heaven from which he came forth (Dan. 4:13▸). In Zechariah, watchful angels are described in very similar terms (Zec. 1:10-11). The word *watcher* is used in later writings to designate angels.[144] Theodotion simply transliterates [the term phonetically] as ιρ [*ir*],[145] but the OG translates the word as ἄγγελος [*angelos*], *an angel*, both here and in Dan. 4:23▸—as does the Stone edition of the Tanakh.[146] Another piece of evidence in favor of understanding watchers to be angels is their influence over a political affair similar to angels elsewhere in the book.

> The Book of Daniel reveals the close connection between the earth and the "Spirit World." In Dan. 9:10▸ we read of the visit of the angel Gabriel to Daniel, and in Dan. 10:4-12▸ of other heavenly beings. In Eph. 6:11-12 we are told to put on the whole "Armor of God," for, "we wrestle not against flesh and blood (earthly beings), but against 'Principalities,' against 'Powers,' against the 'Rulers of the Darkness of this World,' against 'Spiritual Wickedness' in high (heavenly) places." There are three heavens spoken of in the Scriptures. The first is the atmosphere of our earth, the third is the Heaven where God dwells, and the second is an intermediate heaven where the "Principalities and Powers of Evil," comprising the "Kingdom of Satan" dwell. Satan is the "PRINCE" of the "Powers of the Air," and he has many subordinate Princes who are delegated to do his obstructive work. Two of them are mentioned by Daniel, the "PRINCE OF PERSIA" and the "PRINCE OF GRECIA." Dan. 10:13▸, 20▸. From this it would look as if Satan had a delegated Prince for every nation to superintend his work there. So great and powerful are these Princes that it takes the power and strength of "MICHAEL" the Archangel, the Commander-in-Chief of the "Armies of Heaven," to overcome them. Dan. 10:13▸; Jude 1:9; Rev. 12:7-9▸.[147]

Clough suggests *watcher* was a term familiar to Nebuchadnezzar which he naturally associated with the watchful role of the heavenly being in his dream.

> A watcher . . . is a term taken from Babylonian and Persian political culture and applied to the angelic realm. A watcher was a system that they would set up during the early days of Nebuchadnezzar's kingdom of informants throughout the kingdom, constantly patrolling the area. . . . Now the military would send patrols out into the

> villages, their job was constantly patrol, over and over, watching for bands of invading hordes from across the boundaries of the empire, also watching for theft in the market place and sort of acting as a state police. And these men would patrol back and forth and they came to be known as the "watchers." Now in the book of Daniel the term "watcher" with all of its imagery is borrowed and then used and applied to the angelic realm.[148]

Barnes suggests the term found its origin in Nebuchadnezzar's familiarity with eastern beliefs.

> The term "watchers," as applied to the celestial beings, is of Eastern origin, and not improbably was derived from Persia. "The seven Amhaspands received their name on account of their great, holy eyes, and so, generally, all the heavenly Izeds watch in the high heaven over the world and the souls of men, and on this account are called the watchers of the world." - *Zendavesta*, as quoted by Bertholdt, in loc. The *Bun-Dehesh*, a commentary on the *Zendavesta*, contains an extract from it, which shows clearly the name and object of the watchers in the ancient system of Zoroaster. It runs thus: "Ormuzd has set four 'watchers' in the four parts of the heavens, to keep their eye upon the host of the stars."[149]

> The question is raised whether Nebuchadnezzar is speaking according to his pagan beliefs or in terms of revelation. Or, wording the issue more pointedly: Did God give this revelation to the king in terms of heathen notions that were familiar to Babylonians generally or in terms of revelation of the truth which the king was, nevertheless, well enough able to understand? . . . One such assumption is that in revealing truth God had to resort to the use of terms of error by speaking of beings that actually had no existence as though they existed. We cannot believe that divine revelation, even in dreams, needs to resort to such doubtful expedients to achieve its ends. Another such assumption is that God could not convey correct conceptions to ignorant man through truth as readily as through error.[150]

Having appeared in Daniel, the term found subsequent use in various apocryphal writings and Jewish literature, including the *Genesis Apocryphon* from Qumran.[151]

coming down from heaven

The normal abode of the *watcher* was in heaven, from where his authority and that of the subsequent decree originate (Dan. 4:17▸ cf. Dan. 4:26▸) as well as the voice declaring Nebuchadnezzar's judgment (Dan. 4:31▸). The *watcher* is likely among the many angels who comprise the "army of heaven" (Dan. 4:35▸).

> The LORD has established His throne in heaven, And His kingdom rules over all. Bless the LORD, you His angels, Who excel in strength, who do His word, Heeding the voice of His word. Bless the LORD, all you His hosts, You ministers of His, who do His pleasure. (Ps. 103:19-21)

3.4.14 - Daniel 4:14

cried aloud

Aloud is from חַיִל [*ḥayil*], with "a loud voice . . . forceful shout."[152] The force of the cry underscores the certainty and authority with which his commands are to be obeyed. The strength of the angel's proclamation recalls the manner Nebuchadnezzar's government previously decreed worship of the idol erected on the plain of Dura (Dan. 3:4▸). Another angel will "cry mightily" at Babylon's demise under God's judgment at the end of the age (Rev. 18:2▸).

Chop down the tree

Chop down is קַצְּצוּ [*qaṣṣiṣû*]: pael stem, 2nd-person imperative verb, "You: chop [it] down!"

"To whom . . . is this proclamation addressed? . . . Keil takes the verbs as impersonal. I am inclined to follow Keil. The force of the verbs would then be best expressed in English by the passive, e.g., *the tree shall be cut*

down, etc."[153]

The tree, previously standing so high and influential, is to be brought down to the ground. As in many other passages, this speaks of God's judgment of the tree that failed to bear good fruit (Mat. 3:10; 7:17-20; 21:19-20; Luke 3:9; 13:7-9) The tree is said to represent Nebuchadnezzar (Dan. 4:22▸) and, by extension, we take it to represent the Babylonian kingdom he ruled.

> 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.[154]

Goldingay sees typological similarities between this tree and the cross of Christ.

> It will eventually be a very different tree, one which more effectively links earth and heaven and displays itself —or rather displays the one it bears—before earth and heaven; a tree which, moreover, also has to become a tree of shame—but not for its own shortcomings—before it can be a tree of glory. That tree will offer life, security, and provision in fuller senses—though the fuller sense must not exclude the physical senses which are this vision's concern, and which are God's own concern. . . . here a royal figure is taken from being the lord of all and source of life for all to being the least of all, unable even to sustain his own life. (The real tree of life will indeed bear such a man.)[155]

Let the beasts get out from under it and the birds from its branches

The tree will no longer provide habitat for the beasts and birds (representing peoples, nations) that previously benefited from its shelter. See commentary on *Daniel 4:26*.

3.4.15 - Daniel 4:15

leave the stump and roots in the earth[156]

The stump and roots is עִקַּר שָׁרְשׁוֹהִי [*ʿiqqar šārᵉšôhî*] denoting the *stump* (above ground) and *root* (below ground), or the combination of terms can convey: "deepest root or possibly very deep root, i.e., the two synonyms combine for emphasis or superlative."[157]

> The word *ʾiqqar* is a bit uncertain. Some assign the meaning "root" to it. Then "the root of its roots," by a kind of superlative, would be the taproot, *Hauptwurzel* (*K. W.*). That seems a bit strange. Better would be the other meaning, "stock" of its roots, and that would mean the stump with its roots (so *Luther*), which is surely clearer than the expression "the stump of his roots" (*A. V.*).[158]

The NET Bible renders the phrase as "leave its taproot in the ground."[159]

The tree is never said to regain its previous status and influence, but it will not die completely. "The symbol of a stump as hope for the future that remains despite divine judgment (Isa. 6:13; 11:1; Job 14:7)."[160] "עִקָּר [*ʿiqqār*], the still thrifty stump, like מָעֲבֶת [*māʿeḇeṯ*], Isa. 6:13, or גֵּזַע [*gezēʿ*], Isa. 11:1; Job 14:8."[161]

> For there is hope for a tree, If it is cut down, that it will sprout again, And that its tender shoots will not cease. Though its root may grow old in the earth, And its stump may die in the ground, Yet at the scent of water it will bud And bring forth branches like a plant. (Job 14:7-9)

See commentary on *Daniel 4:26*.

***Bound* with a band of iron and bronze**

Many suggestions have been made concerning the symbolism of this phrase:

> This expression may be regarded as applicable either to the cut-down tree, or to the humbled monarch. If applied to the former, it would seem that the idea is, that the stump or root of a tree, deemed so valuable, would be carefully secured by an enclosure of iron or brass, either in the form of a hoop placed round the top of the stump, to preserve it from being opened or cracked by the heat of the sun, so as to admit moisture, which would rot it; or around the roots, to bind it together, with the hope that it would grow again; or it may refer to a railing or enclosure of iron or brass, to keep it from being plowed or dug up as worthless. In either case, it would be guarded with the hope that a tree so valuable might spring up again. If applied to the monarch - an explanation not inconsistent with the proper interpretation of the passage - it would seem to refer to some method of securing the royal maniac in bonds of iron and brass, as with the hope that his reason might still be restored, or with a view to keep him from inflicting fatal injury on himself.[162]

> The significance of this metal clamp has given rise to many interpretations, the most common one of which since [Jerome] is that all madmen are bound . . . VLeng. proposed the rationalistic idea that the bond was to keep the tree from splitting, which would be satisfactory if there were evidence that such a practice was followed in ancient arboriculture. Prince thinks that it figures in general Nebuchadnezzar's confinement. Others find in it an allegorical meaning. . . . It is best to follow Rashi . . . to the effect of the symbolism that Nebuchadnezzar should not be removed.[163]

> Some of the principal interpretations may be noted: 1) . . . a figure of speech for the stern and crushing sentence under which the king is to lie . . . 2) the band was to be placed around the tree in order to keep it from splitting . . . 3) the bond of darkness which would overshadow the king's spirit . . . 4) the chain with which madmen were wont to be bound . . . 5) . . . the withdrawal of free self-determination through the fetter of madness . . . cv. Ps. 107:10; Job 36:8 . . .[164]

Some suggest Nebuchadnezzar's affliction was such he required restraint so as to avoid harming others or, more likely, himself.[165] In the same vein, Steinmann observes Daniel omits any explanation of the band in his interpretation, suggesting Daniel did not want to explain the negative implication of this symbolism to the king.[166] Others suggest the band represents a physical restraint consisting of a fence or railing to separate the king from others during his malady.[167] Since the passage gives no indication the king became raving mad, another suggestion understands the band as figurative of the loss of self-determination, a symbol of the madness itself, with which the king will be "bound."[168] Yet another view has the band denoting the preservation of the stump: a representation of the promise Nebuchadnezzar would be restored.[169]

Howe observes that the metals of the band match those representing two of the kingdoms in Nebuchadnezzar's dream of chapter two.

> It is interesting that iron and bronze, the two metals symbolic of the third and fourth kingdoms, are used. Although Babylon falls to the Medes and the Persians, Babylon as an entity continues to exist, and Darius the Mede is appointed as the ruler of Babylon under this second kingdom. However, under the rule of the Greeks and the Romans, Babylon does not continue as a separate entity, and the seat of government shifts toward the west. This band may be symbolic of the fact that the stump will be held together until the rise of the bronze and iron kingdoms.[170]

Let it be wet with the dew of heaven

Let it be wet is יִצְטַבַּע [*yiṣṭabba'*], a third-person, masculine, singular verb that some translations render as applying to Nebuchadnezzar rather than the stump: *Let **him** be wet* (ESV, NASU, NIV84, HCSB, TNK). Whether this verb applies to the stump (impersonal) or the man (personal), in the next phrase the emphasis has definitely shifted to Nebuchadnezzar himself—whom the tree/stump represents. Barnes suggests the figure of dew falling upon the stump represents the ongoing watering of the tap root[171] to preserve it for subsequent restoration.[172] More likely, the subject having changed from the figure of a stump to the man himself, and in light of the following phrase, the wetting with dew conveys Nebuchadnezzar's insensitivity during his malady.

> The subject changes from the tree to the man, and so we ventured to translate: "And he [not it] shall be moist with the dew of heaven." For it would be an idle statement to relate that a stump was bedewed: that's too

> obvious for record. But this man shall descend to such a brutish condition that he shall not know enough to keep under cover at night, or he shall mind the night dews as little as do the oxen.[173]

The latter interpretation is supported by Daniel's subsequent recollection of the case to Belshazzar.

> Then he was driven from the sons of men, his heart was made like the beasts, and his dwelling was with the wild donkeys. They fed him with grass like oxen, and **his body was wet with the dew of heaven**, till he knew that the Most High God rules in the kingdom of men, and appoints over it whomever He chooses. (Dan. 5:21▸) [emphasis mine]

let him graze with the beasts

Let him graze is חֲלָקֵהּ [*ḥălāqēh*], "to reside in a certain place or physical lot, with the focus on where he will live . . . [or] behave, live (like), with the focus on the behavior that would be his lot in life."[174] The idea is that Nebuchadnezzar's lot and activity during the period of his disorder will resemble that of the beasts: he will 'become' like a beast. "Let his portion be with the beasts,"[175] "let him share with the beasts,"[176] "let him live with the animals,"[177] "share . . . with the animals."[178]

The message of the watcher now provides a partial interpretation: the *tree* represents a *man*.

See commentary on *Daniel 4:16*.

3.4.16 - Daniel 4:16

Let his heart be changed from _that_ of a man

Let his heart is לִבְבֵהּ [*liḇḇēh*], "the faculty of reasoning, thought, and understanding"[179] (Dan. 5:21▸; Hos. 7:11).

> The word for "mind" is *lᵉḇaḇ* (lit., "heart," a term that in Scripture refers to the inner self as the seat of moral reflection, choice of the will, and pattern of behavior). It includes not only the mental processes but also the feelings, affections, and emotions, along with all the motivational factors leading to decisions and responses to life situations.[180]

let him be given the heart of a beast

Beast is חֵיוָה [*ḥêwâ*], the same word appearing throughout the Aramaic portions of Daniel for both real quadraped animals (e.g., Dan. 2:38▸) and animal-like composites appearing within revelatory visions (e.g., Dan. 7:3▸, 5▸, 6▸, 7▸), including the Antichrist (Dan. 7:11▸). The LXX renders *beast* by θηρίον [*thērion*]: the same word describing the Antichrist and False Prophet in the book of Revelation (Rev. 13:4▸, 11▸).

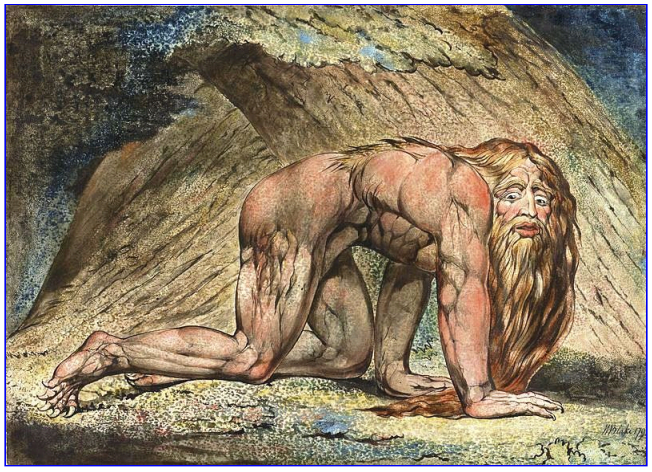
Note the irony of the manner God will judge Nebuchadnezzar. Beasts were originally placed under Nebuchadnezzar's dominion (Dan. 2:38▸). Now he would become like one of them.

> 'I have made the earth, the man and the beast that are on the ground, by My great power and by My outstretched arm, and have given it to whom it seemed proper to Me. And now I have given all these lands into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, My servant; and the beasts of the field I have also given him to serve him. (Jer. 27:5-6)

> Having portrayed himself as superhuman (Dan. 3:1-6▸; 4:30▸), he became subhuman; having set up his own statue to be worshipped as the image of a god, he forfeited life as [man made in] the image of God (Gen. 1:26-27) and the last remnants of true glory (cf. Rom. 3:23).[182]

> The affliction likewise ran in direct contrast with the offence of which it was the punishment. The king's self-congratulation was, in principle, an ungodding of the Deity, and he was visited with a dehumanizing of the man.[183]

Nebuchadnezzar, the Beast



181

Not only would Nebuchadnezzar behave like the beasts over which God had given him dominion, he would lose the ability to recognize and respond to God—the very characteristic separating man from animal.

> Recognition of God is the essential difference between a man and a beast, if one may speak now in a sort of practical way of the truth intended to be taught by the history. I apprehend that we are shown by the fact, if we read it typically, that the Gentile powers would give up the recognition of God in their government. They might use His name outwardly, but as for any owning of God as the source of all they possessed, it would completely pass from their minds; and so it has.[184]

The clear message of Scripture is this: *in their attempt to rule independently of God, men resemble the very beasts they were originally given dominion over.*

> What a picture this is of world powers going their own proud way and then enduring the judgment of beastly dictators. It is madness of the worst sort to spurn the clear word of God . . .[185]

> He would be more than man; God, therefore, justly, makes him less than man. An acting over again of the fall; Adam, once lord of the world and the very beasts (Gen. 1:28; so Nebuchadnezzar Dan. 2:38), would be a god (Gen. 3:5); therefore he must die like the beasts (Ps. 82:6; 49:12).[186]

> In all this we see a picture of Gentile power in its alienation from God and bestial character. What madness have not rulers and nations been guilty of who have trampled the word of God beneath their feet and despised His mercy and grace, refusing subjection to His government![187]

Through this affliction, God intends: *first*, to reveal to Nebuchadnezzar the true nature of his prideful inner self; and, *second*, to reveal to the world the beastly character of the godless dominions Babylon typifies. See *Man: Image of God or Beast?*

Various medical terms describe conditions similar to Nebuchadnezzar's affliction.[188]

> The illness described in Daniel, however, constitutes a rare form of *monomania*, a condition of mental imbalance in which the sufferer is deranged in one significant area only. The particular variety of monomania described is known as *boanthropy*, another rare condition in which Nebuchadnezzar imagined himself to be a cow or a bull, and acted accordingly.[189]

> The next moment he was reduced to an animal, with the mind of a beast and a form of insanity called monomania, which means that one part of normal human functioning doesn't work while all the rest is operating. Specifically, this is called *lycanthropy*, which comes from two words, *lycos*, meaning wolf, and *anthropos*, man.[190]

> This malady, in which men regard themselves as beasts and imitate their manner of life, is called *insania zoanthropica*, or, in the case of those who think themselves wolves, *lycanthropia*.[191]

> Nebuchadnezzar would soon apparently suffer from a mental disorder called "zoanthropy". This is a mental malady that causes a human being to believe that he is physically a member of some species of animal (from the Greek words *zoon* which means "animal" and *anthropos* which means "man"; thus an "animal man"). The

> king's disorder is sometimes referred to as "boanthropy" which is a type of mental illness where the afflicted person believes they are an ox, or a cow, or some other bovine.[192]
>
> Etymologically, "lycanthropy" refers to the illness of a human who behaves like a wolf or dog. It is derived from the Greek λύκος [*lykos*], "wolf," plus ἄνθρωπος [*anthrōpos*], "man, human being." The illness in which a person displays more general behavior like that of any animal is "zoanthropy," from the Greek ζῷον [*zōon*], "animal, creature," plus ἄνθρωπος [*anthrōpos*], "man, human being." . . . The specific malady here is more properly called boanthropy, a human behaving like a bovine. (This term derives from the combination of βοῦς [*bous*], "head of cattle, ox, bull," plus ἄνθρωπος [*anthrōpos*], "man, human being.") The best known case of this kind of insanity in the modern era was that of King George III of Great Britain.[193]

Since Nebuchadnezzar's affliction will cause him to graze with the beasts of the field (Dan. 4:23) and eat grass like oxen (Dan. 4:25), the preferred medical term for his affliction would seem to be *boanthropy* (ox-like), not *lycanthropy* (wolf-like).[194]

Nebuchadnezzar's affliction is similar to other cases in medical history.

> A great many doctors spend an entire, busy professional career without once encountering an instance of the kind of monomania described in the book of Daniel. The present writer, therefore, considers himself particularly fortunate to have actually observed a clinical case of boanthropy in a British mental institution in 1946. The patient was a man in his early twenties, who reportedly had been hospitalized for about five years. His symptoms were well-developed on admission, and diagnosis was immediate and conclusive. He was of average height and weight with good physique, and was in excellent bodily health. His mental symptoms included pronounced anti-social tendencies, and because of this he spent the entire day from dawn to dusk outdoors, in the grounds of the institution. He was only able to exercise a rather nominal degree of responsibility for his physical needs, and consequently was washed and shaved daily by an attendant. During the winter of 1946-47, when the writer observed him, he wore only light underclothing and a two-piece suit, with or without a sweater, during his daily peregrinations. The attendant reported to the writer that the man never wore any kind of raincoat or overcoat, and that he had never sustained such ill effects as coryza, influenza or pneumonia. His daily routine consisted of wandering around the magnificent lawns with which the otherwise dingy hospital situation was graced, and it was his custom to pluck up and eat handfuls of the grass as he went along. On observation he was seen to discriminate carefully between grass and weeds, and on inquiry from the attendant the writer was told that the diet of this patient consisted exclusively of grass from the hospital lawns. He never ate institutional food with the other inmates, and his only drink was water, which was served to him in a clean container so as to make it unnecessary for him to drink from muddy puddles. The writer was able to examine him cursorily, and the only physical abnormality noted consisted of a lengthening of the hair and a coarse, thickened condition of the finger-nails. Without institutional care the patient would have manifested precisely the same physical conditions as those mentioned in Daniel 4:33. After having passed through a difficult and debilitating period occasioned by the Second World War and its aftermath, the writer was soberly impressed by the superb physical condition of the patient. His skin exhibited all the clinical indications of a healthy body; his muscles were firm and well-developed, his eyes were bright and clear, and he appeared to manifest a total immunity to all forms of physical disease. According to the attendant he was quiet in his behavior, reasonably cooperative for one so far divorced from reality, and never damaged institutional property. From the foregoing it seems evident that the author of the fourth chapter of Daniel was describing quite accurately an attestable, if rather rare, mental affliction.[195]
>
> P. Keck[196] reports that studies "suggest that lycanthropy, though unusual, is very much alive in the twentieth century." Persons involved in Keck's studies believed themselves to be a wide assortment of animals—wolves, gerbils, dogs, birds, cats, rabbits, tigers, and an unidentified creature.[197]
>
> The last work [Reil, *Rhapsodien Über die Anwendung der psychischen Kurmethode auf GeisteszerrÜttungen*, pp. 296, 336 et seq.] contains many interesting examples of insanity, in which the patients believed themselves transformed into dogs, wolves, bears, cats, etc., and were able to imitate the calls of those animals with surprising exactness.[198]

> D. H. Tuke, in his *Dictionary of Psychological Medicine*, page 5, says that "the complete loss of personal identity, and the conviction of being changed into one of the lower animals, accompanied frequently by a corresponding belief on the part of the beholders, is one of the most remarkable facts which the psychological history of the race reveals." In the article on Lycanthropy, page 752 of the same dictionary, he cites a well–accredited case of a man who imagined himself to be a wolf, and attempted to act like one, as late as 1852 A.D.[199]

Clarke suggests a similarity between Nebuchadnezzar's affliction and the record of the demoniac in the gospels (Mark 5:2-15; Luke 8:27-33),[200] but there is nothing in the description of Nebuchadnezzar's illness to suggest the involvement of demonic oppression or possession or that his behavior became violent as a result. Nor is there evidence of exorcism in association with Nebuchadnezzar's restoration (Dan. 4:34▸).

In has been suggested the OT spelling of Nebuchadnezzar's name, may allude to his affliction with animal-like behavior. See commentary on *Daniel 1:1*. Various historical writings may bear witness to a recollection of Nebuchadnezzar's malady. See *Similar Historical Writings*.

We believe it is no accident God gives Nebuchadnezzar, as *first* ruler during the Times of the Gentiles, the heart of a *beast*. Can anyone doubt God's design when Scripture refers to the *last* ruler during the Times of the Gentiles as *the beast* (Rev. 13:1-4▸)? We observe numerous parallels between Nebuchadnezzar's situation and that of the Antichrist during the Tribulation.

- **Man and Beast** - Both leaders combine attributes of man and beast. "Here is wisdom. Let him who has understanding calculate **the number of the beast**, for it is **the number of a man**: His number is six hundred and sixty-six" [emphasis mine] (Rev. 13:18▸).
- **Delusion** - Like those who will worship the Antichrist at the time of the end (2Th. 2:12), God afflicts Nebuchadnezzar with a strong delusion. "Nebuchadnezzar's madness symbolizes the peoples who will be under the power of Antichrist during the Tribulation . . . God shall send them strong delusion . . . (2Th. 2:12)."[201] "The nations have been mad—as utterly bereft of all true reason as was the demented king of Babylon. But the day is nearing when God, in His grace, is going to end all this, and deliver a groaning world from the evils of selfish despotism and national jealousies. Christ's personal return from heaven will conclude the long period of Gentile misrule."[202]
- **Afflicted Seven Years** - The duration of Nebuchadnezzar's affliction matches the last week of Daniel's *Seventy Weeks*, the period of the Tribulation. "Nebuchadnezzar's great humiliation in becoming a beast for seven times (seven years), points us to the end of this Gentile age once more. Apostasy from God will be the great characteristic of that end. There will be no more looking up to God, but the attitude of the beast will be the attitude of the nations. We see much of this already. They mind earthly things and become the 'earth-dwellers' so frequently mentioned in the Book of Revelation. Madness and bestiality will seize upon the Gentiles, after the One who hinders, the Holy Spirit is removed."[203]
- **Pride Overthrown** - God judges the prideful boasting of both (Dan. 4:30▸; 7:8▸, 11▸, 20▸, 25▸; Rev. 13:5▸). "The major purpose of this chapter must definitely be kept in mind, the purpose indicated by our caption 'The Overthrow of the Pride of Worldly Empires.' It is not so much the individual who is under consideration, Nebuchadnezzar, the king, but this monarch in so far as he exemplifies the spirit of worldly empires. Such pride is characteristic of empires and particularly of empire builders. But it is equally reprehensible in all and doomed to an ultimate overthrow."[204] "The contest between God and Nebuchadnezzar is a broad illustration of God's dealings with the entire human race and especially the Gentile world in its creaturely pride and failure to recognize the sovereignty of God."[205] "In Nebuchadnezzar we see a picture of all Gentile power—its departure from God, its degradation and bestial character, and its final subjugation to God in the Time of the End, when Christ shall return in glory, and all nations shall prostrate themselves before Him, owning His righteous and benevolent sway."[206] "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."[207] "what was then literally true of him individually, became morally true of the Gentile powers as a whole. The character of the Gentiles all through would be without intelligence of God and without subjection to Him."[208]

- **Divine Deliverance** - "The beginning of Gentile empire is only the foreshadowing of what will be the closing scene. For as there was then deliverance by divine power at the beginning, so there will be by and by; and this specially found in connection with the faithful of Israel, the Jews. I do not mean, of course, with the Jews in their present state; because now a Jew remaining such is an enemy of God. But this will not always be the case. The time is coming when the seed of Abraham, without ceasing to be Jews, will be converted to God and receive the Messiah, according to the prophetic word."[209]

See *Foreshadowing the Great Tribulation*.

seven times

Times is עִדָּנִין [*ʿiddānîn*], "time, a period of time, as a definite unit: year (Holladay, KB, BDB, NAB, Hermeneia (Collins))."[210] The term appears with a definite number only here and in Dan. 4:20, 22, 29 (*seven times*). It appears in a summation formula in Dan. 7:25 (*time and times and half a time*). Elsewhere, it denotes time in general or a specific point in time (Dan. 2:8, 9, 21; 3:5, 15). The LXX renders it as ἑπτὰ καιροὶ [*hepta kairoi*], *seven seasons* (indefinite periods), but the OG is more specific in its interpretation, ἑπτὰ ἔτη [*hepta etē*], *seven years*.[211]

Various suggestions have been made concerning the time period indicated by the phrase *seven times*.

Some have looked for indirect confirmation of this period from the historical records of Nebuchadnezzar's time, but nothing definitive has come to light.[212] It is a well known practice of empires and their royal families to suppress these sorts of potentially embarrassing episodes.[213]

Among those who suggest the phrase may denote a period of less than seven years we find: Keil, who finds it difficult to believe Nebuchadnezzar could regain his sanity after a period as long as seven years;[214] Payne, who believes a seven year period of insanity cannot be reconciled with historical records (but see above);[215] Hippolytus, and Unger, who suggest the possibility that *time* refers to either a one-quarter or one-half year period, with reference to the seasons.[216]

Calvin suggests that *seven times* is to be understood symbolically, as denoting a sufficient enough time to punish the king.[217] Similar to Calvin's suggestion, Leupold views *seven times* as a general marker for a period of some divine activity.[218] Zöckler takes *seven times* to denote seven years, but then explains years are not to be understood literally.[219] Kelly suggests *times* may be symbolic: the period of Nebuchadnezzar's affliction is meant to represent a much longer period of beastly rule by the Gentile kingdoms of which he stands as head.[220] Steinmann finds the absence of the term *year* in Daniel's interpretation as indicating the time period cannot be a literal seven years.

> Since there are many parallels between Daniel in this account and Joseph, who interpreted Pharaoh's dream as portending two periods of "seven years" (see Genesis 41), we might expect Daniel too to refer to "seven years" when he interprets Nebuchadnezzar's dream. However, when Daniel interprets Nebuchadnezzar's dream, he continues to use the phrase "seven times" (Dan. 4:22, 29) from Dan. 4:13, and not "seven years," which we would have expected if the "times" in Dan. 4:13 really represented years. It seems that Daniel purposely avoids the term "year" (absent from Daniel 4) when interpreting the dream. By doing so he draws a distinction between his situation and Joseph's. . . . the "seven times" are best taken to refer to an indeterminate, but clearly delimited period of time that was sufficient for God to accomplish his purpose to reform Nebuchadnezzar. It could have been seven years, but it just as easily could have been seven seasons, seven months, or seven periods in an unknown divine reckoning of time needed to re-create Nebuchadnezzar as a contrite and more humble monarch.[221]

Various factors convince us the phrase *seven times* is best interpreted as a period of *seven years*.

- Daniel 7 indicates the saints will be given into the hands of the little horn for *time and times and half a time*: or a period of three-and-a-half *times*. This period is elsewhere described as half a week (of seven years, Dan. 9:27), forty-two months (Rev. 11:2; 13:5), and one thousand two hunded and sixty days (Rev. 11:2; 12:14).[222]
- Although the duration of the term *week* in Daniel 9:27 has yet to be discussed (see commentary on *Daniel 9:27*), equivalent time indicators in the book of Revelation suggest *time* in the context of Daniel's prophetic revelation describes a period of one year.[223]
- The seven times are said to *pass over* Nebuchadnezzar (Dan. 4:25). If this is an oblique reference to annual cycles based on the heavens (located *over* Nebuchadnezzar—see the reference to the dew *of heaven*)—then the period could denote seven solar cycles, each lasting one year.
- An affliction lasting seven years would enhance the typological fit between the period of Nebuchadnezzar's madness and its representation of the final week of global madness under the Antichrist during the Tribulation (mentioned above).
- A seven-year period provides ample time for the changes in the condition of Nebuchadnezzar's hair and nails (Dan. 4:33).
- The OG indicates the time period (twice) as being ἔτη ἑπτά [*etē hepta*] (*years seven*)[224]

We are in agreement with numerous interpreters who conclude *seven times* denotes *seven years*, including: Barnes,[225] Calvin,[226] Clarke,[227] Clough,[228] Combs,[229] Constable,[230] Darby,[231] Dean,[232] Fausset,[233] Gaebelein,[234] Gill,[235] Greene,[236] Hughes,[237] Ironside,[238] Jerome,[239] Josephus,[240] Larkin,[241] McGee,[242] Mills,[243] Montgomery,[244] Seiss,[245] Smith,[246] Walvoord,[247] and the NET Bible.[248]

pass over him

Over him is עֲלוֹהִי [*ʿălôhî*], from the Aramaic, עַל [*ʿal*], which can denote *authority over*.[249] The equivalent Hebrew term, עַל [*ʿal*], can also refer to "a spatial position upon another object"[250] and could refer to an astronomical cycle, such as the solar year, manifesting in the sky above. The LXX renders it as ἀλλαγήσονται ἐπ΄ αὐτόν [*hallagēsontai ep auton*], *changes upon him*, where *changes* can denote "to cause a difference by altering the nature or character of something."[251] This provides additional support for interpreting the period of Nebuchadnezzar's malady as seven years as it may indicate seven annual cycles.

3.4.17 - Daniel 4:17

This decision

Decision is בְּגִזְרַת [*biḡzēraṯ*], "an authoritative, announced unilateral decision."[252]

by the decree of the watchers . . . by the word of the holy ones

Decree is from פִּתְגָם [*piṯḡām*], "a formal decision."[253]

> As far as the word פתגמא [*pṯḡmʾ*], is concerned, it signifies "word" in Chaldee; but here I think it properly used for "edict," as in the first chapter of Esther (Est. 1:20). . . . Daniel makes them subscribe to the decree, and afterwards uses the word *demand*. And this suits the sense well enough; because the angels urge God by their prayers to humble all mortals and to exalt himself alone. . . . hence angels continually seek from God the casting down of all the proud, and that he will not permit himself to be defrauded of his proper rights. . . . Angels seek from God by continual prayers to declare his own power to mortals, and thus to lay prostrate the proud who think to excel by their own power and industry, or else by chance, or by the help of men. To induce

> God to punish men for their sacrilegious deeds, the angels desire him to prostrate them, and thus to shew himself to be not only the king and ruler of heaven, but also of earth.[254]

As servants of God's will, the *watchers* declare and enforce the decree, but they themselves are not its ultimate source.[255]

> We read of heavenly councils elsewhere in the Scripture, cf. 1 Kings 22 and Job 1. What part do angels play in such assemblies? Is their participation futile and meaningless? Hardly, if they are beings of a higher order. Though, in the last analysis, God's will must prevail, they find themselves in fullest accord with His plans and will to do what He desires to have done.[256]

> It is clear in 1K. 22:19-23 that angels may express various proposals, but God has the final authority and makes the final decision about what history shall transpire, and he then decrees what the angels are to do to carry out his will (cf. Heb. 1:7, 14).[257]

A similar concept is related by Isaiah.

> [God] fulfills the oracles of his prophetic servants and brings to pass the **announcements of his messengers** [מַלְאָכָיו [*mal'āḵâyw*], possibly, 'His angels'], who says about Jerusalem, 'She will be inhabited,' and about the towns of Judah, 'They will be rebuilt, her ruins I will raise up,' (Isa. 44:26, NET) [emphasis mine]

In the seventh chapter, Daniel sees a heavenly court seated upon multiple thrones making judgment. There are multiple participants in the judgment, yet the final ruling is ultimately according to the will of the Ancient of Days (Dan. 7:22▸). Similarly, this decree announced by the *watchers* is the "decree of the Most High" (Dan. 4:24▸).[258]

> Nowhere else in Scripture do we find a clear example of an angelic council that collaborates to make decisions of judgment upon mankind. We do, however, have an example of angels attending a heavenly court in which they participate and dialogue with God about divine decisions . . . (1K. 22:19-23). Yet here the angels are not acting independently of the Lord, and the final decision is his (note v. 23—"the LORD has proclaimed disaster against you"). This strengthens the conclusion in Dan. 4:17▸ that the decision to bring judgment upon Nebuchadnezzar may have been made in a heavenly court attended by angels, but the final verdict was God's.[259]

In the phrase, *the decree . . . the word*, the terms *decree* and *word* appear to describe the same judgment. Therefore, *the watchers* and *the holy ones* refer to one and the same group of angelic beings, who are both watchful and holy in character. See commentary on *Daniel 4:13*.

that the living may know

When the judgment falls upon Nebuchadnezzar, it will demonstrate God's ability to bring the predicted sentence.

> **The LORD is known by the judgment He executes**; The wicked is snared in the work of his own hands. Meditation. Selah (Ps. 9:16-18) [emphasis mine]

> I will execute great vengeance on them with furious rebukes; and **they shall know that I am the LORD**, when I lay My vengeance upon them. (Eze. 25:17) [emphasis mine]

the Most High rules in the kingdom of men

Divine rule extends, not only over God's kingdom in heaven, but over the ongoing reign of sinful men. Even during the Times of the Gentiles, while no Jewish king sits upon David's throne, God remains sovereign over the affairs of all kings and nations (2K. 19:28; Ezra 6:22; 7:27; Job 12:23; Isa. 37:29; Eze. 38:4, 10; Dan. 2:21▸, 37▸; 4:31-32▸; 5:21▸; Rev. 17:17▸).

> The king's heart is in the hand of the LORD, Like the rivers of water; He turns it wherever He wishes. (Pr. 21:1)

God's control over kings is well-illustrated in an event closely associated with the book of Daniel: God influences Cyrus to initiate laying the foundation for the Jewish temple (Isa. 44:28). Often, divine influence over the affairs of kings (for the benefit of God's people and plan) occurs without the direct knowledge of the ruler (Isa. 45:4-5). Pilate, not knowing God's divine purpose, mistakenly believed he controlled the fate of Jesus.

> Then Pilate said to Him, "Are You not speaking to me? Do You not know that I have power to crucify You, and power to release You?" Jesus answered, "**You could have no power at all against Me unless it had been given you from above.** Therefore the one who delivered Me to you has the greater sin." (John 19:10-11 cf. Acts 2:23) [emphasis mine]

See commentary on *Daniel 2:21*, *Daniel 2:37*, and *Daniel 4:25*.

Gives it to whomever He will

The sovereignty of God extends to every millimeter of the universe during every millisecond of history. "God is in control of who is in control."[260] God is not the author of evil. Neither can His ultimate intention be thwarted through the imagined independence of sin.[261]

> This does not mean that He approves of all they do or of the kind of people they are. Certainly He disapproves strongly on both counts concerning most rulers. But He reserves control so that no person is allowed into office whom He rejects, in view of the circumstances then existing.[262]

Wise rulers will recognize the power and authority they wield is not their own: they are mere stewards of an authority granted by God.

> For exaltation comes neither from the east Nor from the west nor from the south. But God is the Judge: He puts down one, And exalts another. (Ps. 75:6-7)

> By me kings reign, And rulers decree justice. By me princes rule, and nobles, All the judges of the earth. (Pr. 8:15-16)

> For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to evil. Do you want to be unafraid of the authority? Do what is good, and you will have praise from the same. For **he is God's minister** to you for good. But if you do evil, be afraid; for he does not bear the sword in vain; for **he is God's minister**, an avenger to execute wrath on him who practices evil. (Rom. 13:3-4) [emphasis mine]

Evil rulers are no less subject to God's ultimate control and purpose. Even the Pharaoh of Egypt, in hardening his own heart, ultimately served the purpose of God.[263]

> But indeed for this purpose I have raised you up, that I may show My power in you, and that My name may be declared in all the earth. (Ex. 9:16)

the lowest of men

Lowest is from שְׁפַל [*šᵉpāl*], "ones not of noble or royal class, implying a class of persons lacking resource."[264]

> The word translated *lowliest* means *humblest*, and Nebuchadnezzar's father, Nabopolassar, claimed to be of very humble origin [Boutflower, *In and Around the Book of Daniel*, p. 37]. In one of his inscriptions Nabopolassar referred to himself as follows: "in my littleness, the son of a nobody," "of me, the insignificant, who among men was not visible," "I, the weak, the feeble" [*Ibid*., p. 90]. These statements implied that Nabopolassar was not of royal birth and did not count in society before he became king.[265]

> These last words are a remarkable reference to Nebuchadnezzar's humble family origin. This lowly origin was otherwise unknown until the discovery of an inscription made by his father, Nabopolassar. . . . In this inscription, Nabopolassar reveals that he was not of royal birth, "the son of a nobody" (an expression found in Assyrian inscriptions to signify non-royal birth). He also indicates that he was not important in social circles . . . it constitutes strong evidence for the historical accuracy of Daniel.[266]

> It is not by human ordering, or by arrangements among men. It is not by hereditary right; not by succession; not by conquest; not by usurpation; not by election, that this matter is finally determined; it is by the decree and purpose of God. He can remove the hereditary prince by death; he can cause him to be set aside by granting success to a usurper; he can dispose of a crown by conquest; he can cut off the conqueror by death, and transfer the crown to an inferior officer; he can remove one who was the united choice of a people by death, and put another in his place. So the apostle Paul says, "There is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God" Rom. 13:1.[267]

In many historic situations, God has chosen to elevate the meek and humble to positions of authority and influence (Luke 1:52; 1Cor. 1:27). Consider Joseph (Gen. 41:41-44), Mordecai (Est. 10:3), David (1S. 16:11; 2S. 7:8; 1Chr. 17:7; Ps. 78:70),[268] Daniel and his friends, and believers in Christ (Rom. 8:17; Rev. 2:26-27▸).[269]

> The LORD makes poor and makes rich; He brings low and lifts up. He raises the poor from the dust And lifts the beggar from the ash heap, To set them among princes And make them inherit the throne of glory. "For the pillars of the earth are the LORD's, And He has set the world upon them. (1S. 2:7-8)

> Who is like the LORD our God, Who dwells on high, Who humbles Himself to behold The things that are in the heavens and in the earth? He raises the poor out of the dust, And lifts the needy out of the ash heap, That He may seat him with princes— With the princes of His people. (Ps. 113:5-8)

Rulers like Nebuchadnezzar, who ignore God's sovereignty, are at risk of being deposed. "He breaks in pieces mighty men without inquiry, And sets others in their place" (Job 34:24).

3.4.18 - Daniel 4:18

Belteshazzar

See *Meaning of Names*.

all the wise *men* . . . are not able

See commentary on *Daniel 4:7*.

but you *are* able

Having exhausted the resources of his wise men, Nebuchadnezzar recalls the similar situation of his previous vision in chapter 2. During the training of Daniel and his companions, "God gave them knowledge and skill in all literature and wisdom; and Daniel had understanding in all visions and dreams" (Dan. 1:17▸). These skills, along with a prayer vigil to God, allowed Daniel to declare the interpretation of the previous dream.

> Inasmuch as you saw that the stone was cut out of the mountain without hands, and that it broke in pieces the iron, the bronze, the clay, the silver, and the gold-the great God has made known to the king what will come to pass after this. The dream is certain, and its interpretation is sure. (Dan. 2:45▸)

the Spirit of the Holy God *is* in you[270]

Spirit of the Holy God is רוּחַ־אֱלָהִין קַדִּישִׁין [*rûaḥ–ʾĕlāhîn qaddîšîn*]. See commentary regarding this phrase at *Daniel 4:8*.

Nebuchadnezzar understood the reason Daniel was able to interpret his previous dream: he was indwelt by the Spirit of God Who revealed what no man could otherwise know.

> But there is a God in heaven who reveals secrets, and He has made known to King Nebuchadnezzar what will be in the latter days. Your dream, and the visions of your head upon your bed, were these . . . (Dan. 2:28▸)

Accurate spiritual interpretation (and prediction) only occurs when the Spirit of God moves His chosen instruments. "For prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit" (2Pe. 1:21).

> The dream of Nebuchadnezzar is full of clues as to its meaning, but of all the people in Nebuchadnezzar's court, only the lone Judean who trusts Yahweh can interpret them, because he alone has been enlightened by God instead of blinded by living in darkness and being trained in occult methods of divination.[271]

3.4.19 - Daniel 4:19

astonished for a time

Astonished is אֶשְׁתּוֹמַם [*eštômam*] from שְׁמַם [*šᵉmam*], "be in a state of horror, with the focus on fear or terror . . . the meaning of this verb is influenced by the pairing of the verb בְּהַל [*bᵉhal*] (*troubled*) in the very next phrase."[272] OG renders *astonished* by φοβηθεὶς τρόμου [*phobētheis tromou*], *fear of trembling*.

For a time is כְּשָׁעָה חֲדָה [*kᵉšāʿâ ḥăḏâ*] *one moment*, "a brief, indefinite interval of time."[273] Both LXX and OG render it as ὥραν μίαν [*hōran mian*], *one hour*.

> Means literally "about an hour," but by synecdoche must mean something like "quite a time." To have the man of God stand appalled for an hour is preposterous. To reduce the meaning of the phrase to "for a moment" is impossible.[274]

his thoughts troubled him

Troubled is יְבַהֲלֻנֵּה [*yᵉḇahălunnēh*], from בְּהַל [*bᵉhal*], "frighten, trouble; in context to various degrees, from alarm to terror."[275]

Daniel was deeply disturbed by the dream such that his concern was apparent to the king and he hesitated to give the interpretation, even though he understood its meaning. "While the faithful are afraid though they feel God to be propitious, yet the impious sleep in their security, and are unmoved and unterrified by any threats."[276]

Some suggest Daniel was fearful of reprisal by the king after explaining its negative implications.[277] Since we know Daniel to be a man of prayer (Dan. 6:10-11▸; 9:3-4▸, 17▸, 20-21▸), he undoubtedly felt genuine concern for Nebuchadnezzar and regularly interceded with God on his behalf.[278]

Daniel was acquainted with the writings of Jeremiah (Dan. 9:2▸) and would have followed God's instructions to the nation:

> Thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, to all who were carried away captive, whom I have caused to be carried away from Jerusalem to Babylon: Build houses and dwell in them; plant gardens and eat their fruit. Take wives and beget sons and daughters; and take wives for your sons and give your daughters to husbands, so that they may bear sons and daughters-that you may be increased there, and not diminished. And **seek the peace of the city where I have caused you to be carried away captive, and pray to the LORD for it; for in its peace you will have peace**. (Jer. 29:4-7) [emphasis mine]

> God had deafly taught the Jews this, by means of Jeremiah, Pray ye for the prosperous state of Babylon, because your peace shall be in it (Jer. 29:7). . . . until the time predicted by the Prophet had elapsed, it was not lawful either to indulge in hatred against the king, or to invoke God's wrath upon him. They knew him to be the executor of God's just vengeance, and also to be their sovereign and lawful ruler.[279]

From his own experience and the predictions of Jeremiah, Daniel understood it was God Who had placed Israel in captivity under the authority of Babylon. God had granted him and his companions favor, leading to their advancement into important positions within the government as a means to ensure the safety of his countrymen during the captivity. His thoughts were probably troubled out of personal concern for Nebuchadnezzar[280] as well as a concern for the impact the predictions of the dream might have upon the Jews. After all, Israel was one of the "beasts of the field" who "found shade under" the tree of Nebuchadnezzar's rule (Dan. 4:10▸). Who could say what evil might befall the Jews once the tree was chopped down?[281]

> Thoughts of these coming events "terrified" (better, "alarmed") Daniel, not only because the prophet seemed genuinely to like and respect the Babylonian monarch but because of the effect this situation could have had on others, particularly the Jewish people. Nebuchadnezzar evidently had treated the Jews well throughout most of his reign. If he were deposed, there would be no guarantee of a like-minded ruler.[282]

> [Daniel] sees what a devastating crisis this is going to be for the nation.[283]

Walvoord suggests Daniel's astonishment was, in part, due to the evidence God had heard his prayers on behalf of the king and was drawing him to the truth.

> Daniel, a man of prayer, undoubtedly prayed for Nebuchadnezzar and eagerly sought some evidence of God's working in his heart. While the experience of Nebuchadnezzar in chapter 4 was not what Daniel had anticipated, the outcome must have approximated Daniel's fondest hope.[284]

On other occasions when Daniel received divine revelation, the experience proved troubling—even overwhelming. Perhaps similar thoughts and feelings contributed to his reaction here.

> This is the end of the account. As for me, Daniel, **my thoughts greatly troubled me**, and my countenance changed; but I kept the matter in my heart. (Dan. 7:28▸) [emphasis mine]

> And I, Daniel, fainted and was sick for days; afterward I arose and went about the king's business. **I was astonished by the vision**, but no one understood it. (Dan. 8:27▸) [emphasis mine]

> And suddenly, one having the likeness of the sons of men touched my lips; then I opened my mouth and spoke, saying to him who stood before me, "My lord, **because of the vision my sorrows have overwhelmed me**, and I have retained no strength. For how can this servant of my lord talk with you, my lord? As for me, no strength remains in me now, nor is any breath left in me." (Dan. 10:16-17▸) [emphasis mine]

Belteshazzar, do not let the dream or its interpretation trouble you

Perhaps the king thought back a number of years to the events of chapter 2 when the lives of Daniel, his companions, and the wise men of Babylonian were at risk. The king had not threatened the wise men this time, but he may have misinterpreted Daniel's reaction as fear for his own life rather than disturbance over the dream's implications concerning the king. Or, he may have simply meant to encourage Daniel to feel comfortable in giving the interpretation, no matter what it might imply: good or bad. Since the dream troubled the king himself (Dan. 4:5▸), Nebuchadnezzar must have expected the interpretation of the dream to include bad news.

My lord, *may* the dream concern those who hate you

Daniel begins his interpretation by preparing the king for the bad news to follow. "This kind of wish, used elsewhere in the OT (1S. 25:26; 2S. 18:32), is a subtle signal that the dream does not bear good news for the Babylonian ruler."[285] This is not merely a formal response—an attempt to mitigate negative repercussions that

may come to Daniel for delivering the bad news to the king. Daniel is genuinely grieved on Nebuchadnezzar's behalf concerning the meaning of the dream.[286]

> This was the distinctive feature of the true prophets of God: though they often had to predict judgments, they were nevertheless grieved when any of God's creatures were chastised.[287]
>
> Daniel encourages us here to long for God to have compassion on world rulers, specifically the wicked ones, and he encourages the world to assume that judgment is never inevitable.[288]
>
> Let us learn, therefore, from the Prophet's example, to pray for blessings on our enemies who desire to destroy us, and especially to pray for tyrants if it please God to subject us to their lust; for although they are unworthy of any of the feelings of humanity, yet we must modestly bear their yoke, because they could not be our governors without God's permission; and not only for wrath, as Paul admonishes us, but for conscience' sake, (Romans 13:5,) otherwise we should not only rebel against them, but against God himself.[289]

its interpretation concern your enemies

The phrase *concern your enemies* has been variously translated: *to thine enemies* (KJV); *for your enemies* (ESV, HCSB); *to your adversaries* (NASU, NIV84); *applied to your adversaries* (NET); *for your foes* (TNK). Daniel underlines the bad news to come: he would prefer that the dream's interpretation applied to the king's enemies instead of the king. Some suggest Daniel meant the dream is *to the advantage of* the king's enemies.

> It has been correctly pointed out by *Kliefoth* that a more proper translation would be: "The dream is for thy enemies (or haters)." That would mean: this is a dream that would please your enemies; what it portends they would surely like to see fulfilled upon you. The second half is parallel in meaning: "its interpretation for thy foes." To catch this different meaning of the remark of Daniel we have ventured to translate the first word "a dream" though the article is used because that suggests what we have in mind: Such is the type of dream your adversaries would surely like to have come to pass.[290]
>
> "My lord," says Daniel, "the dream is to them that hate thee," what does he mean by that, that they caused it? No, in the Aramaic the word "to" with the preposition is "to the advantage of," this dream is to the advantage of your enemy . . .[291]

3.4.20 - Daniel 4:20

The tree which you saw

See commentary on *Daniel 4:10*.

whose height reached to the heavens

See commentary on *Daniel 4:10*.

3.4.21 - Daniel 4:21

its fruit abundant, in which *was* food for all

See commentary on *Daniel 4:12*.

under which the beasts of the field dwelt

Nebuchadnezzar's vision from God is consistent with what God had revealed through Jeremiah: "And now I have given all these lands into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, My servant; and the beasts of the field I have also given him to serve him" (Jer. 27:6). See commentary on *Daniel 4:12*.

in whose branches the birds of the heaven had their home

See commentary on *Daniel 4:10*.

A Tree with Food for All

292

3.4.22 - Daniel 4:22

it *is* you, O king

As in Nebuchadnezzar's earlier dream in the second chapter, the king might have already suspected he was the tree since the dream worried him (Dan. 2:3). In both instances, Daniel confirms the king's suspicion that the dream concerns his own fate.

> You, O king, are a king of kings. For the God of heaven has given you a kingdom, power, strength, and glory; and wherever the children of men dwell, or the beasts of the field and the birds of the heaven, He has given them into your hand, and has made you ruler over them all—you are this head of gold. (Dan. 2:37-38)

reaches to the heavens[293]

This statement has ominous overtones as it recalls the extent of mankind's pride leading to God's judgment at the Tower of Babel.

> And they said, "Come, let us build ourselves a city, and a tower whose top is in the heavens; let us make a name for ourselves, lest we be scattered abroad over the face of the whole earth." (Gen. 11:4)

your dominion to the end of the earth

See commentary on *Daniel 4:1*.

3.4.23 - Daniel 4:23

a watcher, a holy one

See commentary on *Daniel 4:13*.

Chop down the tree and destroy it

As Nebuchadnezzar's influence had risen to great heights so had his pride necessitating a response from heaven.

> We would have healed Babylon, But she is not healed. Forsake her, and let us go everyone to his own country; For her judgment reaches to heaven and is lifted up to the skies. (Jer. 51:9)

If Nebuchadnezzar remained on the same prideful path, he and his kingdom would experience a fate similar to Assyria and Egypt: his "tree" would be chopped down (Eze. 31:3-14).

> I have seen the wicked in great power, And spreading himself like a native green tree. Yet he passed away, and behold, he was no more; Indeed I sought him, but he could not be found. (Ps. 37:35-36)

> Behold, the Lord, The LORD of hosts, Will lop off the bough with terror; Those of high stature will be hewn down, And the haughty will be humbled. He will cut down the thickets of the forest with iron, And Lebanon will fall by the Mighty One. (Isa. 10:33-34)

The pride of Nebuchadnezzar and Neo-Babylonia typifies Babylon at the end of history under the Antichrist: "For her sins have reached to heaven, and God has remembered her iniquities" (Rev. 18:5). See *Foreshadowing the Great Tribulation*.

leave its stump and roots in the earth

See commentary on *Daniel 4:15*.

***bound* with a band of iron and bronze**

See commentary on *Daniel 4:15*.

let it be wet with the dew of heaven

See commentary on *Daniel 4:15*.

let him graze with the beasts of the field

See commentary on *Daniel 4:15*.

till seven times pass over him

The *seven times* are said to *pass over* Nebuchadnezzar. This may imply each *time* period denotes an annual cycle followed by the sun and stars when viewed from the earth. See commentary on *Daniel 4:16*.

3.4.24 - Daniel 4:24

this is the interpretation

Interpretation is from פְּשַׁר [*pᵉšar*]. See commentary on *Daniel 2:4*

the decree of the Most High

Here we find the "decree of the watchers" originates with the Most High God.

> It was not a thing of chance; it was not ordered by idol gods; it was not an event that occurred by the mere force of circumstances, or as the result of the operation of secondary laws: it was a direct Divine interposition - the solemn purpose of the living God that it should be so.[294]
>
> Remember the former things of old, For I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is none like Me, Declaring the end from the beginning, And from ancient times things that are not yet done, Saying, **'My counsel shall stand, And I will do all My pleasure,'** Calling a bird of prey from the east, The man who executes My counsel, from a far country. Indeed I have spoken it; I will also bring it to pass. I have purposed it; I will also do it. "Listen to Me, you stubborn-hearted, Who are far from righteousness . . ." (Isa. 46:9-12) [emphasis mine]

See commentary on *Daniel 4:17*.

3.4.25 - Daniel 4:25

They shall drive you from men

The question arises as to who *they* are?[295] Some have suggested this refers to the royal court surrounding the king who isolated him during his time of mental illness. This is unlikely because *they* make him eat grass and wet him with the dew of heaven.[296] The pronoun *they* (also in *Daniel 4:32*) is not meant to refer to a specific group of individuals. Instead, it should be understood as an impersonal passive form: *you will be driven*.[297] The pronoun *they* is therefore indefinite, indicating the will of God is behind the matter.

> [That they shall drive thee from men] . . . Saadiah interprets this of the angels: it may be rendered impersonally or passively, as in Dan. 4:33, "thou shalt be driven from men"; not by his family, his wife and children; or by his nobles, who are afterwards said to seek him; but by the most high God, and to show his power over him; and it may be by means of his ministering angels; or he was driven by his own fancy and imagination, which was suffered of God to prevail over him, judging himself not a man, but a beast; and so it was most agreeable to him to live with beasts, and not men.[298]

> Literally, "(to) you they are driving away from men," this clause illustrates the common Aramaic use of the preposition לְ [*lā*] to introduce what semantically is the direct object ("you") and the typical Aramaic use of an impersonal plural verb (the participle טָרְדִין [*ṭār^{e}ḏîn*]) that is best rendered as a passive, with the object as its subject: "you will be driven away." Such impersonal plural verbs are especially common when there is an implication that the action is done ultimately by God or in accord with his will.[299]

See the similar use of *they* at Daniel 7:5.

Unlike Job's young mockers (Job 30:1-8)[300], Nebuchadnezzar is not physically driven from among men by other individuals. It is his madness, at the hand of God, that *drives* him from among the sane to wander outdoors with the beasts.[301]

> All that may be implied when it is said that he "was driven from men, and did eat grass as oxen," etc., may have been that this was his "propensity" in that state; that he had this roving disposition, and was disposed rather to wander in fields and groves than to dwell in the abodes of men; and that he was driven "by this propensity," not "by men," to leave his palace, and to take up his residence in parks or groves - anywhere rather than in human habitations. This has been not an uncommon propensity with maniacs, and there is no improbability in supposing that this was permitted by those who had the care of him, as far as was consistent with his safety.[302]

> Perhaps, because of his royal position, Nebuchadnezzar was hidden in a secluded park so his true condition could be hidden from the populace.[303]

your dwelling shall be with the beasts of the field

Nebuchadnezzar would dwell with the beasts of the field because his heart had been made like them (Dan. 4:16). The phrase *beasts of the field* refers to grazing animals, such as oxen and wild donkeys (Dan. 5:21).

> "Wild animals" would better be translated "the animals of the field," a literal rendering of the Aramaic. Nebuchadnezzar would live outside in the fields among grazing animals, particularly cattle ("eat grass like cattle"). Certainly the monarch would not live among lions, tigers, and wild animals of that sort.[304]

His preference for the out-of-doors recalls the demoniac of the gospels who dwelt among the tombs and in the mountains:

> And when He [Jesus] had come out of the boat, immediately there met Him out of the tombs a man with an unclean spirit, **who had his dwelling among the tombs**; and no one could bind him, not even with chains, because he had often been bound with shackles and chains. And the chains had been pulled apart by him, and the shackles broken in pieces; neither could anyone tame him. And always, night and day, **he was in the mountains and in the tombs**, crying out and cutting himself with stones. (Mark 5:2-5) [emphasis mine]

Unlike the demoniac, there is no indication Nebuchadnezzar's affliction involved unclean spirits or required physical restraint during his madness. Neither is there any indication his restitution involved an exorcism of any sort: both the affliction and subsequent remedy appear to be by the direct hand of God (Dan. 4:34▸).

They shall make you eat eat grass like oxen

See the discussion above concerning the identity of *they*.

During the period of his affliction, the king would live much like an ox, dining upon grass and other plants of the field.

> The collective noun עֵשָׂב [*ʿăśaḇ*] is often translated "grass," but like its Hebrew cognate עֵשֶׂב [*ʿēśeḇ*], it can refer to a variety of "plants" or "herbage" . . . especially those eaten by people or animals.[305]

> As for the king's diet, it may not have consisted solely of "grass," for the Aramaic word *ʿăśab* also includes vegetables and other herbs.[306]

For a time, Nebuchadnezzar who was made in the image of God, would experience the mental disposition of behemoth. "Look now at the behemoth, which I made along with you; **He eats grass like an ox**" [emphasis mine] (Job 40:15). See *Man: Image of God or Beast?* See commentary on *Daniel 4:15*.

They shall wet you with the dew of heaven

See the discussion above concerning the identity of *they*.

Like the beasts Nebuchadnezzar would dine alongside, he would lack the common sense to seek shelter at night. In his mental state, he would be impartial to both sweltering heat and freezing cold.[307]

> At night Nebuchadnezzar would not come inside like a man but would remain in the open field. Consequently in the mornings he would be "drenched with the dew of heaven."[308]

seven times shall pass over you

When disciplined by God, the depth and duration of the discipline reflect our slowness to respond. The period is precisely predicted by God and proves to be the necessary amount of time required for Nebuchadnezzar to come to his senses.

See commentary on *Daniel 4:16* and *Daniel 4:23* concerning "seven times."

till you know

Nebuchadnezzar had this in common with many rulers through history: he failed to acknowledge that all rule ultimately obtains authority from God.[309]

> Nebuchadnezzar is promised that he can be king from the point he acknowledges that actually he is not, because God is.[310]

> Andrew Melville reminded James VI, when he was asserting his rights, that Scotland had another King "of whose kingdom King James is neither Lord nor Head, but subject" . . .[311]

Even though the king would be afflicted with madness, his reason would not be impaired to such a degree as to preclude his ability to repent.

> Repentance was possible because with this particular malady, many times a person might reason quite well in certain areas even though exhibiting animal characteristics. For example, in one modern study a man who believed himself to be a cat for a period of over thirteen years was gainfully employed.[312]

the Most High rules in the kingdom of men

God's rule is not only in the world above or in the world to come, but in *this world*, in the *kingdom of men*.[313] Daniel's earlier interpretation of the king's dream in chapter 2, revealed a divinely-established sequence of kingdoms. The truth that "[God] removes kings and raises up kings" should have been evident to Nebuchadnezzar by now, but it was not. Such is the blinding power of pride! The prideful inability of rulers to discern the hand of God in the events of their realms is not unique to Nebuchadnezzar: it will characterize Gog and the kings allied with the final Gentile ruler, the Beast.

> . . . 'Thus says the Lord GOD: "Behold, I am against you, O Gog, the prince of Rosh, Meshech, and Tubal. **I will turn you around, put hooks into your jaws, and lead you out**, with all your army, horses, and horsemen, all splendidly clothed, a great company with bucklers and shields, all of them handling swords." . . . Thus says the Lord GOD: "On that day it shall come to pass **that thoughts will arise in your mind**, and you will make an evil plan: You will say, 'I will go up against a land of unwalled villages; I will go to a peaceful people, who dwell safely, all of them dwelling without walls, and having neither bars nor gates." ' (Eze. 38:3-4, 10-11) [emphasis mine]
>
> For **God has put it into their hearts to fulfill His purpose**, to be of one mind, and to give their kingdom to the beast, until the words of God are fulfilled. (Rev. 17:17▸) [emphasis mine]

See commentary on *Daniel 4:17*.

gives it to whomever He chooses

See commentary on *Daniel 4:17*.

3.4.26 - Daniel 4:26

they gave the command

The command was given by the *holy watchers*, but did not originate with them. See commentary on *Daniel 4:17*.

leave the stump *and* roots . . . your kingdom shall be assured to you

The stump and roots are left so the plant may sprout again, but the tree will never regain its towering height. Even though Nebuchadnezzar would personally be restored and his kingdom preserved during his affliction, the influence of the tree (the power of the kingdom of Babylon) is destined to wane. Nebuchadnezzar would die and his reign come to an end. Soon thereafter, Babylon would fall to Medo-Persia (Dan. 5:31▸): the head of gold would give way to the chest and arms of silver (Dan. 2:32▸); the lion with two wings would be followed by the bear (Dan. 7:5▸). During the period that Nebuchadnezzar was personally 'felled', the beasts and birds would retain temporary shelter within the kingdom, but they would ultimately lose their protection when Babylon fell to Medo-Persia.

This prediction is remarkable to anyone familiar with history concerning the volatility and intrigue surrounding the reign of powerful leaders and their empires. There would be no subterfuge, coup, or rebellion during the period Nebuchadnezzar was absent from his throne.[314] This unusual result was according to the Word of God, no doubt involving the efforts of Daniel and others within the royal court on behalf of the incapacitated king. See commentary on *Daniel 4:36*.

The meaning of the dream follows a well-established pattern within Scripture. After declaring God's judgment, a promise of restoration and reconciliation follows.[315]

after you come to know

In this pregnant phrase, we find the purpose of the predicted judgment: Nebuchadnezzar's restoration was dependent upon his repentance and acknowledgement of God's rule. As is often the case in Scripture, we find human responsibility (the need for repentance by Nebuchadnezzar) taught alongside divine sovereignty (the period of judgment has been decreed as "seven times").[316]

> Scripture furnishes numerous instances where God's sovereignty and human free will interplay with each other. Both are biblical teachings. To try to alter either one in an attempt at rational reconciliation is to attempt to escape human finitude. Such attempts will never succeed. Valid principles of understanding what God has said in His Word will not permit it.[317]

Heaven rules

This is a figure of speech known as a metonymy.[318] "By an obvious metonomy 'the heavens' are mentioned for the King of the heavens. In the New Testament the same metonomy occurs; see Mat. 21:25; Luke 15:18."[319]

> Daniel, in using the expression *the heavens do rule*, is not accepting the Babylonian deification of heavenly bodies, as he makes clear in Dan. 4:25▸ that "the most High" is a person. He is probably only contrasting divine or heavenly rule to earthly rule such as Nebuchadnezzar exercised, with the implication that Nebuchadnezzar's sovereignty was much less than that of "the heavens."[320]

3.4.27 - Daniel 4:27

let my advice be acceptable to you

Calvin suggests Daniel's entreaty reflects a concern over how the king might respond to the interpetation. "As to Nebuchadnezzar sending for him, this was not a daily thing, nor did he do this, because he wished to submit to his doctrine. Daniel therefore remembers the kind of person with whom he was treating, when he tempers his words and says, *may my counsel be acceptable to thee!*"[321] More likely, Daniel is motivated out of a legitimate concern and care for the well-being of the king and his kingdom. See commentary on *Daniel 4:19*.

break off your sins

Daniel boldly claims King Nebuchadnezzar has sinned and fallen short of the glory of God (Rom. 3:23).

> The prophet does not shrink from forthrightly calling the king's attention to "your sins" and "your iniquities" and his need to "break away from" them.[322]

> This advice carries in it a tacit charge of sins, and a reproof for them; which shows the faithfulness of Daniel.[323]

The prophet Isaiah declares the same to be true of all men—including you and I, dear reader.

> You meet him who rejoices and does righteousness, Who remembers You in Your ways. You are indeed angry, for we have sinned-In these ways we continue; And we need to be saved. **But we are all like an unclean thing, And all our righteousnesses are like filthy rags; We all fade as a leaf, And our iniquities, like the wind, Have taken us away. And there is no one who calls on Your name, Who stirs himself up to take hold of You**; For You have hidden Your face from us, And have consumed us because of our iniquities. (Isa. 64:5-7) [emphasis mine]

> The best of men are only men at their very best. Patriarchs, prophets, and apostles,—martyrs, fathers, reformers, puritans—all, all are sinners, who need a Saviour: holy, useful, honourable in their place,—but sinners after all.[324]

Not only was Nebuchadnezzar a *man*, he was a *very powerful man*. He occupied a position offering numerous opportunities to sin, and for the negative affects of sin to be amplified upon others within his realm.[325]

> Probably, like most Oriental despots, Nebuchadnezzar had oppressed the poor by forcing them to labor in his great public works without adequate remuneration.[326]

> It is fairly to be inferred from this that the life of the monarch had been wicked - a fact which is confirmed everywhere in his history. He had, indeed, some good qualities as a man, but he was proud; he was ambitious; he was arbitrary in his government; he was passionate and revengeful; and he was, doubtless, addicted to such pleasures of life as were commonly found among those of his station.[327]

Break off your sins is וְחֲטָיָךְ בְּצִדְקָה פְּרֻק [*waḥăṭâāk bᵉṣiḏqâ pᵉruq*], "the sins of you in/with/by righteousness cease." Here we enter upon a controversy as to how this phrase is to be interpreted and, consequently, what Daniel meant by his recommendation to the king. Some translations interpret the phrase as if Daniel were urging the king to offset his sins by performing other righteous acts—to compensate for his wickedness and "balance the ledger" of his iniquity through good works. Consider how this passage is rendered by the LXX, "**atone** for thy sins by alms, and *thine* iniquities by compassion on the poor" [emphasis mine][328]. The TNK, rejecting the concept of original sin,[329] is similar: "**Redeem your sins** by beneficence and your iniquities by generosity to the poor." [emphasis mine][330]

> The *Septuagint* and *Vulgate* translate not so well, "redeem," which is made an argument for Rome's doctrine of the expiation of sins by meritorious works.[331]

> Those who use this text as evidence for a doctrine of salvation by works take the word to mean "redeem," translating the phrase, "redeem your sins by well-doing." It is true that the meaning "redeem" [for "break off"] is used in the Septuagint and Vulgate versions, but this meaning seems to have arisen only later, in post-Old Testament time. The meaning in Daniel's day clearly was "break with." . . . Daniel was telling the king to correct his sinful life by conducting himself righteously. The passage cannot be used to defend the teaching that the soul can be redeemed or sins expiated by acts of charity.[332]

> The ordinary and common meaning of the word is not to redeem, but to break, to break off, to abandon. It is the word from which our English word "break" is derived - Germ., "brechen." Compare Gen. 27:40, "that thou shalt break his yoke;" Ex. 32:2, "Break off the golden ear-rings;" Ex. 32:3, "And all the people brake off the golden ear-rings;" Ex. 32:24, "Whosoever hath any gold let them break it off;" 1K. 19:11, "A great and strong wind rent the mountains;" Zec. 11:16, "And tear their claws in pieces;" Eze. 19:12, "her strong rods were broken." The word is rendered in our common version, "redeem" once Ps. 136:24, "And hath redeemed us from our enemies." It is translated "rending" in Ps. 7:2, and "deliver" in Lam. 5:8. It does not elsewhere occur in the Scriptures. The fair meaning of the word is, as in our version, to break off and the idea of redeeming the soul by acts of charity or almsgiving is not in the passage, and cannot be derived from it.[333]

The clear teaching of Scripture is that no man is able to pay for the sins of any other man, much less his own.[334]

> Those who trust in their wealth And boast in the multitude of their riches, None of them can by any means redeem his brother, Nor give to God a ransom for him- For the redemption of their souls is costly, And it shall cease forever- (Ps. 49:6-8)

Daniel is urging the king to demonstrate repentance by turning from his sin. This is akin to the command of Jesus to the Pharisees of his day and recognizes true repentance is *demonstrated through action*.

> Therefore **bear fruits worthy of repentance**, and do not think to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our father.' For I say to you that God is able to raise up children to Abraham from these stones. And even now the ax is laid to the root of the trees. Therefore every tree which does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. (Mat. 3:8-10) [emphasis mine]

> I redeem my sins before my neighbor, if after I have injured him, I desire to become reconciled to him, I acknowledge my sins and seek for pardon. If, therefore, I have injured his fortunes, I restore what I have unjustly taken, and thus redeem my transgression. But this does assist us in expiating sin before God, as if the beneficence which I put in practice was any kind of expiation.[335]

by *being* righteous . . . by showing mercy to the poor[336]

By being righteous is בְּצִדְקָה [*bᵉṣiḏqâ*], by "proper action as related to moral and ethical considerations."[337]

Poor is from עֲנֵה [*ʿănēh*], including both the poor and those who are oppressed.[338]

Some have interpreted this phrase as teaching the way of attaining righteousness before God is doing good deeds to offset one's bad deeds. At its core, the concept posits a God Who accepts or rejects men on the balance of whether their meritorious works outweigh their sinful acts. But the thrust of biblical teaching concerning righteousness is it begins within, *as a matter of the heart*—outward deeds merely reflect the inward reality of a repentant heart motivated toward God. While the distinction may seem subtle, it is critical, else we embrace religious systems teaching one can earn heaven through attaining a long enough ledger of good deeds.

> In the Hebrew OT, the cognate צְדָקָה [*ṣᵉḏāqâ*] usually refers to "righteousness," that is, a holy and acceptable condition before God as he imputes his own holiness and righteousness to the believer through faith. By metonymy it can also refer to "righteous deeds" done by God that display his righteousness or done by believers as the fruit of faith . . . Such righteous actions can include almsgiving, and in postbiblical Hebrew צְדָקָה [*ṣᵉḏāqâ*] often has that more specific meaning (see Jastrow). Here, however, it must mean *righteousness in the heart that leads to good deeds*.[339]
>
> This passage is treated in the Apology of the Augsburg Confession, Art. III, p. 131ff. (Mueller's edition), though from a different point of view. The thing that made the passage a matter of controversy was the translation of the Vulgate: *Peccata tua eleemosynis redime et iniquitates tuas misericordiis pauperum*, "**Cancel thy sins by deeds of charity** and thine iniquities by deeds of kindness to the poor." This unfortunate translation resulted from the *Greek* which had said about the same thing; and this translation in turn was based on a postbiblical use of the term *tsidhqah* or Hebrew, *tsedhaqah*, which meant "almsgiving." . . . to claim that "righteousness" here means "good works," as some unhesitatingly do in the face of the much better sense that our interpretation offers, has the appearance of being an attempt to try to prove the canonical Scriptures at variance with themselves. Where the principle is still held that Scripture must be interpreted by Scripture, there the obvious fact carries weight that *tsedhaqah* can nowhere else in the Scriptures of the Old Testament be shown to have the meaning "good works" as even critical writers freely concede. [emphasis mine][340]
>
> The only interpretation of צְדָקָה [*ṣiḏqâ*] allowed by the context and general usage is "righteous deportment" to be observed by the king toward his subjects, in contrast with his former tyranny and arbitrary domination.[341]
>
> Those expositors who find that this passage recommends and prescribes work righteous conduct, and especially the giving of alms, as in itself meritorious, do violence to the words. Such expositors are the Rabbins, who generally ascribe an almost magical virtue to alms-giving, and who press every possible passage of Scripture to support their view, especially those containing the term צְדָקָה [*ṣᵉḏāqâ*], which is by them rendered "well doing, alms-giving" (cf. Buxtorf, *Lex*. p. 1,891 et sq.); further, the Roman Catholic exegetes, who are accustomed, since Bellarmine's detailed exposition of this passage (l. II. *pœnitentia*, c. 6; cf. 50:4. 100:6), to employ it as one of the principal proof-texts for their anti-evangelical theory of justification and sanctification . . .[342]
>
> צְדָקָה [*ṣᵉḏāqâ*] nowhere in the O.T. means *well-doing* or *alms*. This meaning the self-righteous Rabbis first gave to the word in their writings. Daniel recommends the king to practise righteousness as the chief virtue of a ruler in contrast to the unrighteousness of the despots . . . To this also the second member of the verse corresponds. As the king should practise righteousness toward all his subjects, so should he exercise mercy toward the oppressed, the miserable, the poor. Both of these virtues are frequently named together, e.g., Isa. 11:4, Ps. 72:4, Isa. 41:2, as virtues of the Messiah[343]

It is on this critical point where biblical Christianity differs from the distortions of Roman Catholicism and Rabbinic Judaism. The truth that no man can earn righteousness before a holy God is "ground zero" in God's

plan: the foot of the cross. *This is the scandal of the cross* (Isa. 53:4; 1Cor. 1:23; 1Cor. 2:2; Gal. 5:11; Heb. 13:13), the very reason there was no other way: the One Righteous Man had to die (Mat. 26:39-42). This all-important distinction regarding the way righteousness is attained before God separates biblical Christianity from every other works-based system of belief on the planet. This was the cry of Paul's heart concerning his brethren, the Jews.

> Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is that they may be saved. For I bear them witness that they have a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge. **For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and seeking to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted to the righteousness of God.** For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes. (Rom. 10:1-4) [emphasis mine]

God's desire that Nebuchadnezzar behave righteously, expressed through the prophet Daniel, is of great importance because of the king's position of influence. It is God's intention that leaders represent His own righteous character by the way they rule. Leaders are placed in their position by God with the weighty responsibility of upholding righteousness within the culture (Rom. 13:1-5). "The throne ennobles no man: to be properly filled, the man must be noble."[344]

> It is not for kings, O Lemuel, It is not for kings to drink wine, Nor for princes intoxicating drink; **Lest they drink and forget the law, And pervert the justice of all the afflicted**. (Pr. 31:4-5) [emphasis mine]

> As various able writers on the laws of the Theocracy have shown, that the nearer governments adopt, and carry out, the great principles underlying the Theocracy, the purer and more elevated is the civil polity, and the greater strength, security and happiness is imparted to all classes, rulers and ruled. The reverse of this holds true as exemplified in the history of nations; for the greater the departure from those principles, the more oppressive and ruinous has been the result.[345]

Instead of ruling with righteousness, benefiting their subjects, many leaders throughout history contribute to the oppression and affliction of the vulnerable for the sake of their own vanity, fueled by a rapacious thirst for greater power and control.[346] This well-worn path involving the abuse of power had been tread by Nebuchadnezzar.

> [Nebuchadnezzar] looked at his kingdom in terms of how well it promoted and displayed his own power and glory, not in terms of the purpose for which God had ordained it.[347]

> Nebuchadnezzar was a noted builder. Often kings showed little consideration to those who did the work on building projects, with hundreds dying of extreme heat and difficult conditions. Nebuchadnezzar was probably guilty of this lack of concern, like others.[348]

> Instead of kings standing for God, and acting as His representatives to maintain justice and judgment in the earth, do we not find pride and self-will, covetousness and self-seeking, generally controlling them? All this is pictured by the debasement of Nebuchadnezzar, when his heart was changed to the heart of a beast, and he was driven forth to eat grass like the oxen of the fields.[349]

> A great national empire such as Nebuchadnezzar's is the political equivalent to the Indian god Vishnu, who was supposed to be the Preserver of human life but whose huge image was traditionally carried in processions on a giant wheeled throne that crushed anything that got in its path: the juggernaut that is supposed to be preserver and provider easily becomes crusher and destroyer, totalitarian and absolute in its demands (Aukerman, *Valley*, 50-51).[350]

The tendency of rulers to abuse their power is aptly-demonstrated by both Jewish and Gentile history. God vested authority in the line of Davidic kings who were to rule in a manner reflecting His righteous rule. Within only a generation, the misrule of leadership led to the division of Israel into northern and southern factions (1K. 11:11-13, 31-39). Neither of these factions produced righteous kings with any consistency leading to the downfall of the northern kingdom of Israel to Assyria (1K. 14:15-16; 2K. 15:29; 17:6, 23; 18:10-11; Amos 7:11, 17), followed by the fall of the southern kingdom of Judah to Babylon (see *Twilight of Judah (Southern Kingdom)*). Fundamentally, the fall of Jewish rule was God's judgment upon leaders who failed to rule righteously and abused their power.

> Thus says the LORD: "Go down to the house of the king of Judah, and there speak this word, and say, 'Hear the word of the LORD, O king of Judah, you who sit on the throne of David, you and your servants and your people who enter these gates! Thus says the LORD: "Execute judgment and righteousness, and deliver the plundered out of the hand of the oppressor. Do no wrong and do no violence to the stranger, the fatherless, or the widow, nor shed innocent blood in this place. . . . But if you will not hear these words, I swear by Myself," says the LORD, "that this house shall become a desolation." ' " (Jer. 22:1-3, 5)

> Thus says the Lord GOD: "Enough, O princes of Israel! Remove violence and plundering, execute justice and righteousness, and stop dispossessing My people," says the Lord GOD. (Eze. 45:9)

The fall of the southern kingdom with its throne of David introduced the Times of the Gentiles—a lengthy period of history when Gentile dominion will also prove itself utterly corrupt. The inability of any human government—tainted by original sin—to produce lasting, righteous rule will find remedy when the only righteous man who ever walked the earth returns to govern as king over all the earth.

> 'Behold, the days are coming,' says the LORD, 'that I will perform that good thing which I have promised to the house of Israel and to the house of Judah: In those days and at that time I will cause to grow up to David A Branch of righteousness; He shall execute judgment and righteousness in the earth. In those days Judah will be saved, And Jerusalem will dwell safely. And this is the name by which she will be called: **THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS**.' (Jer. 33:14-16) [emphasis mine]

One of the ways righteous rule is demonstrated is through extending mercy to the less fortunate within society who are unable to fend for themselves. Righteous rulers recognize the common lot of humanity: that they themselves are no different before God than the poorest of the poor and as much in need of grace in God's sight. "Showing mercy to the poor reflects God's own generosity toward all. If the king would do this, it would be a tacit acknowledgement that he himself is no better before God than the lowliest of the poor. Indeed, all people are mere beggars before God."[351] This duty to the poor is universal.[352] "Blessed is he who considers the poor; The LORD will deliver him in time of trouble. The LORD will preserve him and keep him alive, And he will be blessed on the earth; You will not deliver him to the will of his enemies" (Ps. 41:1-2). Even so, those in power bear greater responsibility because they have greater authority to extend help and institute impartial judgment (Lev. 19:15; Pr. 18:5).

Perhaps there may be a lengthening of your prosperity

Whenever we encounter a passage wherein God decrees righteous judgment, we must remember the balancing truth that God is not only *just*, but *merciful and loving*. If we over-emphasize any of God's attributes to the detriment of others, then we have distorted God and our understanding of His person will be deficient. And so it is within this passage: God has decreed judgment, but Daniel emphasizes the impending judgment may yet be averted if the king repents and forsakes his wicked behavior.

> Daniel . . . knew that the judgments of God were directed against men according to their conduct, and that punishment threatened could only be averted by repentance; cf. Jer. 18:7ff.; Jonah 3:5ff.; Isa. 38:1f.[353]

> Since he had previously pronounced the sentence of God, which of course cannot be altered, how could he exhort the king to deeds of charity and acts of mercy towards the poor? This difficulty is easily solved by reference to the example of King Hezekiah, who Isaiah had said was going to die; and again, to the example of the Ninevites, to whom it was said: "Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be destroyed" (Jonah 3). And yet the sentence of God was changed in response to the prayers of Hezekiah and the city of Nineveh, not by any means because of the ineffectualness of the judgment itself but because of the conversion of those who merited pardon. Moreover in Jeremiah God states that He threatens evil for the nation (Jer. 23), but if it does that which is good, He will alter His threats to bestow mercy.[354]

When God predicted the destruction of Jerusalem and Judah by Micah the prophet, King Hezekiah responded positively and God relented (Jer. 26:17-19), even granting the king additional years to live (2K. 20:3-6). Perhaps

the most familiar case of God relenting from a threatened destruction is found in the account of Jonah and Nineveh.

> So the people of Nineveh believed God, proclaimed a fast, and put on sackcloth, from the greatest to the least of them. Then word came to the king of Nineveh; and he arose from his throne and laid aside his robe, covered himself with sackcloth and sat in ashes. And he caused it to be proclaimed and published throughout Nineveh by the decree of the king and his nobles, saying, Let neither man nor beast, herd nor flock, taste anything; do not let them eat, or drink water. But let man and beast be covered with sackcloth, and cry mightily to God; yes, let every one turn from his evil way and from the violence that is in his hands. Who can tell if God will turn and relent, and turn away from His fierce anger, so that we may not perish? Then God saw their works, that they turned from their evil way; and God relented from the disaster that He had said He would bring upon them, and He did not do it. (Jonah 3:5-10)

God desires redemption and restoration over punishment. Our God is neither the unresponsive stone monolith of a pagan idol nor a capricious or vindictive megalomaniac. The responsive heart of God toward repentance is a motive underlying intercession: why else would we fervently intercede before God if He were not a God Who desires and responds to repentance (Eze. 22:29-31)? God's merciful patience is demonstrated by His delaying a full year before bringing judgment upon the unrepentant king (Dan. 4:29▸). God responded to intercession by Moses to lift the judgments upon Pharaoh's Egypt (Ex. 8:29-30; 9:33; 10:18). When Israel was disobedient in the wilderness and the Lord threatened to consume them, intercession by Moses and Aaron turned His hand from judgment (Ex. 32:11-14, 30-32; Num. 12:13-14; 14:13-20; 16:44-48; Deu. 9:18-29; 10:10). God delayed the judgment of Israel at the hand of Assyria when Amos interceded on behalf of the nation (Amos 7:1-6). The Scriptures are replete with passages emphasizing God's preference for people to repent so He might withhold judgment.[355]

> "Again, when a wicked man turns away from the wickedness which he committed, and does what is lawful and right, he preserves himself alive. Because he considers and turns away from all the transgressions which he committed, he shall surely live; he shall not die." . . . "Therefore I will judge you, O house of Israel, every one according to his ways," says the Lord GOD. "Repent, and turn from all your transgressions, so that iniquity will not be your ruin. Cast away from you all the transgressions which you have committed, and get yourselves a new heart and a new spirit. For why should you die, O house of Israel? **For I have no pleasure in the death of one who dies**," says the Lord GOD. "Therefore turn and live!" (Eze. 18:27-32) [emphasis mine]

There is no wickedness, no heinous crime, no evil person beyond the reach of repentance and God's grace. The wicked kings Ahab and Manasseh provide two examples.

> So it was, when Ahab heard those words, that he tore his clothes and put sackcloth on his body, and fasted and lay in sackcloth, and went about mourning. And the word of the LORD came to Elijah the Tishbite, saying, "See how Ahab has humbled himself before Me? Because he has humbled himself before Me, I will not bring the calamity in his days. In the days of his son I will bring the calamity on his house." (1K. 21:27-29)

> And the LORD spoke to Manasseh and his people, but they would not listen. Therefore the LORD brought upon them the captains of the army of the king of Assyria, who took Manasseh with hooks, bound him with bronze fetters, and carried him off to Babylon. Now when he was in affliction, he implored the LORD his God, and humbled himself greatly before the God of his fathers, and prayed to Him; and He received his entreaty, heard his supplication, and brought him back to Jerusalem into his kingdom. Then Manasseh knew that the LORD was God. (2Chr. 33:10-13)

How difficult it must have been for Elijah to deliver God's message of encouragement to his enemy, the wicked King Ahab! We are all in need of God's mercy and grateful when He responds to our repentance. And how easy we are offended when God extends grace to others whom we judge to be less deserving then ourselves (Mat. 18:24-35)! It is this very goodness of God—so good that it offends our senses when directed toward others—that should lead us to repentance (Rom. 2:4).

God will always respond to repentance, so long as it is *genuine*: God cannot be fooled when it comes to matters of the heart.[356]

> "Now, therefore," says the LORD, "Turn to Me with all your heart, With fasting, with weeping, and with mourning. **So rend your heart, and not your garments**; Return to the LORD your God, For He is gracious and merciful, Slow to anger, and of great kindness; And He relents from doing harm." (Joel 2:13) [emphasis mine]

> The instant I speak concerning a nation and concerning a kingdom, to pluck up, to pull down, and to destroy it, if that nation against whom I have spoken turns from its evil, I will relent of the disaster that I thought to bring upon it. And the instant I speak concerning a nation and concerning a kingdom, to build and to plant it, if it does evil in My sight so that it does not obey My voice, then I will relent concerning the good with which I said I would benefit it. (Jer. 18:7-10)

It is crucial for our spiritual well-being to recognize when repentance is needed. These times represent opportunities for restoration—or for judicial hardening in judgment. Those who fail to repent harden their hearts and increase the risk of experiencing God's wrath.[357] Where repentance remains lacking or insincere, there can come a "point of no return," beyond which, even if a highly-favored intercessor such as Noah, Moses, Job, Ezekiel, Samuel, or Daniel was to intervene, God's judgment cannot be averted (Jer. 15:1; Eze. 9:8-10; 14:14, 20).

3.4.28 - Daniel 4:28

All *this* came

This pregnant verse relates the sad results of Nebuchadnezzar's failure to heed Daniel's warning to repent. Nebuchadnezzar did not appreciate that Daniel, in relating the dream and its interpretation, was speaking by inspiration of the Holy Spirit: *the dream and its interpretation were the prophetic word of God* concerning the future awaiting the unrepentant king.

> God is not a man, that He should lie, Nor a son of man, that He should repent. Has He said, and will He not do? Or has He spoken, and will He not make it good? (Num. 23:19)

> Yet surely My words and My statutes, Which I commanded My servants the prophets, Did they not overtake your fathers? "So they returned and said: 'Just as the LORD of hosts determined to do to us, According to our ways and according to our deeds, So He has dealt with us.' " (Zec. 1:6)

> Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will by no means pass away. (Mat. 24:35)

upon King Nebuchadnezzar

At this verse, the narration switches from that of the king (in the first-person) to that of an objective observer relating the period of the king's madness (in the third-person).[358]

> This entire section is written in the third person whereas all the rest of the edict is in the first person. This need not strike us as strange. In fact, as long as the consciousness of the ego of the king was dimmed, if not entirely submerged, he perceived nothing of what had really happened to him and consequently could not report concerning this period. It matters little, as far as we are concerned, whether the king himself for this reason reported objectively about himself what others told him had transpired, or whether he let his scribe do it for him.[359]

3.4.29 - Daniel 4:29

At the end of twelve months

God delayed judgment for a full year so Nebuchadnezzar might respond to Daniel's advice to reform his ways, yet he remained unrepentant. Here we see a general principle of God: He provides warning in advance of judgment. The delay between the warning and the judgment to follow reflects His enormous patience and mercy, as well as His preference for restoration over punishment. God held back the global flood for over a century while Noah preached to an unresponsive generation (Gen. 6:3 cf. 2Pe. 2:5).

> Why does it look like God assigns men a hopeless task? Why does he tell Noah to go ahead and preach, even though He knows that no one is going to [respond] . . . Why did God send Moses to Pharaoh when he knows that all it's going to do is harden Pharaoh's heart? Because one of the principles of judgment . . . is grace before judgment. Now here's a startling point; the preaching that looks hopeless, before the Exodus, before Noah's flood, before this test of adversity, same principle to all three, this concept of grace before judgment is what brings the judgment.[360]

God's eventual judgment is based on two factors: *first*, there is judgment due for godless behavior; *second*, the need of judgment confirmed by lack of repentance.

> Nevertheless I have a few things against you, because [1] you allow that woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess, to teach and seduce My servants to commit sexual immorality and eat things sacrificed to idols. And [2] I gave her time to repent of her sexual immorality, and she did not repent. (Rev. 2:20-21)

As history makes plain, this temporary suspension of God's judgment rarely produces repentance. Generally, it is misinterpreted or abused, and even used as a reason to mock God.

> As to the space of time here denoted, it shews how God suspended his judgments, if perchance those who are utterly deplorable should be reclaimed; but the reprobate abuse God's humanity and indulgence, as they make this an occasion of hardening their minds, while they suppose God to cease from his office of judge, through his putting it off for a time.[361]

> Because the sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil. (Ecc. 8:11)

Yet, the delay between God's warning and the judgment testifies of His enormous patience and preference for restoration.

> The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but **is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance**. But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in which the heavens will pass away with a great noise, and the elements will melt with fervent heat; both the earth and the works that are in it will be burned up. (2Pe. 3:9-10) [emphasis mine]

Nebuchadnezzar, like all who find themselves in positions of power and influence, found it difficult to bow his knee in humility and repent. Even when powerful leaders such as Nebuchadnezzar *know* there is truth in the message of impending judgment, the cost of personal repentance proves too high and they resist the opportunity provided by God.

> And after some days, when Felix came with his wife Drusilla, who was Jewish, he sent for Paul and heard him concerning the faith in Christ. Now as he reasoned about righteousness, self-control, and the judgment to come, Felix was afraid and answered, "Go away for now; when I have a convenient time I will call for you." (Acts 24:24-25)

> This same reluctance of pagan Gentile rulers to believe in the true God is reflected in the NT in the accounts concerning Paul's interactions with Felix (Acts 24:22-26) and Agrippa (Acts 26:28-31). It continues to this day as those in positions of political, cultural, intellectual, or institutional power may be the ones least able to recognize their need for the forgiveness of sins, and most reluctant to acknowledge that all they possess has been given to them by God and is to be used for his glory.[362]

> But it is hard for rich and great men, in the midst of their glories, powers, flatteries and cares, to be true and faithful to all that they know, feel and confess of their duty and of what is right and proper. The Saviour and His apostles have remarked upon the great difficulty of such to enter the kingdom of heaven. And Nebuchadnezzar was not an exception.[363]

See commentary on *Daniel 5:22*.

he was walking about the royal palace

About the royal palace is עַל־הֵיכַל מַלְכוּתָא [*ʿal–hêḵal malḵûṯāʾ*], "*upon* the royal palace." Nebuchadnezzar may have been walking on the flat roof of his palace (cf. 2S. 11:2), from where he would be afforded an unobstructed view of the notable features of the city.[364] He may have been walking amidst the famous hanging gardens he had built for his wife.[365] "The palace roof was the scene of the fall of another king (2S. 11:2)."[366] See commentary on *Daniel 4:30*.

3.4.30 - Daniel 4:30

The king spoke

The boastful words of the first king of the Times of the Gentiles typify those that will be spoken by their final king (Dan. 7:8, 11, 20, 25; 11:36; Rev. 13:5-6).

[367]

See commentary on *Daniel 7:8*.

great Babylon, that I have built

When Nebuchadnezzar spoke these words, Babylon was at the historical apex of its influence and wealth. It is doubtful any other city in the world could compare with the grandeur, beauty, power, and might of Babylon.

Building Inscription of Nebuchadnezzar

368

> Babylon was one of the preeminent cities of history and during Nebuchadnezzar's reign undoubtedly was the most magnificent (and probably the largest) city on earth. Herodotus, the ancient Greek historian, visited Babylon about one hundred years after Nebuchadnezzar's time and was overwhelmed by its grandeur.[369] Over two hundred years later, Alexander the Great planned to make the city the headquarters for his vast empire. . . . Babylon was a rectangularly shaped city surrounded by a broad and deep water-filled moat and then by an intricate system of double walls. The first double-wall system encompassed the main city. Its inner wall was twenty-one feet thick and reinforced with defense towers at sixty-foot intervals while the outer wall was eleven feet in width and also had watchtowers. Later Nebuchadnezzar added another defensive double-wall system (an outer wall twenty-five feet thick and an inner wall twenty-three feet thick) east of the Euphrates that ran the incredible distance of seventeen miles and was wide enough at the top for chariots to pass. . . . Eight gates provided access to the city, the most celebrated of which was the Ishtar Gate on the north side. This was a massive double tower rising to a height of forty feet and decorated with dragons of Marduk and bulls of Hadad. . . . A bridge (ca. four hundred feet long) spanned the

> Euphrates River and connected the east and west parts of the city. [R. Koldewey, *The Excavations at Babylon* (London: Macmillan, 1914), 197.][370]
>
> The complete length of this bridge [spanning the Euphrates], as far as we have made it out, amounted to 123 metres, and the pier lengths of 21 metres may have exceeded the breadth of the roadway very considerably. The piers are 9 metres wide and are placed 9 metres apart. . . . Herodotus . . . , Diodorus . . . , and others speak of this bridge. . . . Diodorus calls special attention to the peculiar shape of the piers, which is specially adapted to the requirements of the current. . . . This is the most ancient stone bridge of which we have any record, and its well-deserved fame is evident from the fact that it was the only one remarked on in the scanty reports of the ancient historians.[371]
>
> The city was dominated by a seven-story ziggurat (step pyramid), 288 feet high, known as the Tower of Babylon. Nearly 60 million fired bricks were used to construct this huge tower, and on top of it stood the Temple of Marduk (E-temen-an-ki, "house of the foundation of heaven and earth"), containing a solid gold statue of Marduk, which weighed 52,000 pounds (according to fifth-century B.C. Greek historian Herodotus.)[372]
>
> The city, even in circumference, was the greatest of any in the ancient East, Nineveh itself not excepted, which in other respects rivalled Babylon. . . . when compared with [other walled cities] Babylon takes the first place, both for ancient and modern times, as regards the extent of its enclosed and inhabited area.[373]

In his great pride, Nebuchadnezzar seems to have attributed the greatness of Babylon solely to his own efforts. But history records his predecessors had already undertaken impressive construction projects at the site.

> Though the king seems to have gone too far, in ascribing the building of it to himself; at least he was not the original builder of it; for it was built many hundreds of years before he was born, by Nimrod or Belus, who were the same, Gen. 10:10, and was much increased and strengthened by Semiramis, the wife of his son Ninus; therefore to her sometimes the building of it is ascribed; but inasmuch as it might be in later times greatly neglected by the Assyrian kings, Nineveh being the seat of their empire; Nebuchadnezzar, when he came to the throne, and especially after he had enriched himself with the spoils of the conquered nations, greatly enlarged, beautified, and fortified it.[374]
>
> All historians agree in the account of the city being built by Semiramis. A long time after this event, Nebuchadnezzar proclaims his own praises in building the city. The solution is easy enough. We know how earthly kings desire, by all means in their power, to bury the glory of others, with the view of exalting themselves and acquiring a perpetual reputation. Especially when they change anything in their edifices, whether palaces or cities, they wish to seem the first founders, and so to extinguish the memory of those by whom the foundations were really laid. We must believe, then, Babylon to have been adorned by King Nebuchadnezzar, and so he transfers to himself the entire glory, while the greater part ought to be attributed to Semiramis or Ninus. Hence this is the way in which tyrants speak, as all usurpers and tyrants do, when they draw towards themselves the praises which belong to others.[375]

Even so, during his reign Nebuchadnezzar embarked upon enormous and extensive construction projects further enhancing the city.

> Besides building his own palace, he reconstructed two temples to Marduk in Babylon and one to Nebo in Borsippa; he also restored fifteen other temples in the capital city and erected the two great outer walls.[376]
>
> Babylon was a distinguished city before his day. Ninus and Semiramis are said to have done much to make it illustrious. But the Babylon of Nebuchadnezzar was tenfoldmore what he found it than the Rome of Augustus Caesar was more than the preceding Rome of the Republic, or than the Paris of the Napoleons was more than the Paris of the First Revolution. . . . The old Babylon occupied but one side of the river; Nebuchadnezzar re-formed it on that side, and extended it to equal greatness on the other, connecting the two with splendid bridges, lining the river with walls and gates, and surrounding the whole with tremendous enclosures, such as perhaps never existed anywhere but there.[377]

> Nebuchadnezzar in the Grotefend cylinder . . . designates . . . a palace intended both for government and for administration, in these words: "In those days I built the palace, the seat of my kingdom, the bond of the vast assemblage of all mankind, the dwelling-place of joy and gladness, where I . . . laid its foundations on Earth's wide breast with bitumen and bricks, mighty trunks of cedars I brought from Lebanon, the bright forest, for its roofing, I caused it to be surrounded with a mighty wall of bitumen and brick, the royal command, the lordly injunction I caused to go forth from it."[378]

The most well-known project completed by Nebuchadnezzar was construction of the famous *Hanging Gardens of Babylon*, considered one of the wonders of the world.

> The old palace of the kings of Babylon stood on the east side of the river Euphrates, over against it, as Dean Prideaux [*Connexion*, etc. part 1. B. 2. p. 102.] observes; on the other side of the river stood the new palace Nebuchadnezzar built. The old one was four miles in circumference; but this new one was eight miles, encompassed with three walls, one within another, and strongly fortified; and in it were hanging gardens, one of the wonders of the world, made by him for the pleasure of his wife Amyitis, daughter of Astyages king of Media; who being taken with the mountainous and woody parts of her native country, and retaining an inclination for them, desired something like it at Babylon.[379]

> These were elevated gardens, high enough to be seen beyond the city walls. They boasted many different kinds of plants and palm trees. Ingenious hoists had been contrived by which to raise water to the high terraces from the Euphrates River. It is believed that the gardens were made by the king especially for the enjoyment of his wife, who had been raised in the mountains of Media.[380]

Archaeology confirms the Bible's record of Nebuchadnezzar's building projects.

> The archaeological excavations in Babylon have produced inscriptions that tell of Nebuchadnezzar's great building activities. The East India House inscription, now in the British Museum, has six columns of Babylonian writing telling of the stupendous building operations the king carried on in enlarging and beautifying Babylon. He rebuilt more than twenty temples in Babylon and Borsippa and directed construction work on the docks and defenses of the city. Many of the bricks taken out of Babylon in the archaeological excavations bear the name and inscription of Nebuchadnezzar stamped on them.[381]

The Greek historian, Herodotus, wrote of Babylon's glory.[382]

> When Cyrus had made all the mainland submit to him, he attacked the Assyrians. In Assyria there are many other great cities, but the most famous and the strongest was Babylon, where the royal dwelling had been established after the destruction of Ninus [606 B.C. Ninus = Nineveh]. Babylon was a city such as I will now describe. It lies in a great plain, and is in shape a square, each side fifteen miles in length; thus sixty miles make the complete circuit of the city. Such is the size of the city of Babylon; and it was planned like no other city of which we know. Around it runs first a moat deep and wide and full of water, and then a wall eighty three feet thick and three hundred thirty three feet high.[383]

The Jewish historian, Josephus, mentions additional historians who wrote of Babylon's glory.

> Now Berosus makes mention of his actions in the third book of his Chaldaic History, where he says thus: —"When his father Nebuchodonosor [Nabopollassar] heard that the governor whom he had set over Egypt, and the places about Celesyria and Phoenicia, had revolted from him, while he was not himself able any longer to undergo the hardships [of war], he committed to his son Nebuchadnezzar, who was still but a youth, some parts of his army, and sent them against him. So when Nebuchadnezzar had given battle, and fought with the rebel, he beat him, and reduced the country from under his subjection, and made it a branch of his own kingdom; but about that time it happened that his father Nebuchodonosor [Nabopollassar] fell ill, and ended his life in the city of Babylon, when he had reigned twenty-one years; and when he was made sensible, as he was in a little time, that his father, Nebuchodonosor [Nebopollassar], was dead, and having settled the affairs of Egypt, and the other countries, as also those that concerned the captive Jews, and Phoenicians, and Syrians, and those of the Egyptian nations, and having committed the conveyance of them to Babylon to certain of his friends, together with the gross of his army, and the rest of the ammunition and provisions, he went himself hastily,

> accompanied with a few others, over the desert, and came to Babylon. So he took upon him the management of public affairs, and of the kingdom which had been kept for him by one that was the principal of the Chaldeans, and he received the entire dominions of his father, and appointed, that when the captives came, they should be placed as colonies, in the most proper places of Babylonia; but **then he adorned the temple of Belus, and the rest of the temples, in a magnificent manner, with the spoils he had taken in the war. He also added another city to that which was there of old, and rebuilt it, that such as would besiege it hereafter might no more turn the course of the river, and thereby attack the city itself: he therefore built three walls round the inner city, and three others about that which was the outer, and this he did with burnt brick. And after he had, after a becoming manner walled the city, and adorned its gates gloriously, he built another palace before his father's palace, but so that they joined to it; to describe the vast height and immense riches of which, it would perhaps be too much for me to attempt; yet, as large and lofty as they were, they were completed in fifteen days. He also erected elevated places for walking, of stone, and made it resemble mountains, and built it so that it might be planted with all sorts of trees. He also erected what was called a pensile paradise, because his wife was desirous to have things like her own country, she having been bred up in the palaces of Media**." Megasthenes also, in his fourth book of his Accounts of India, makes mention of these things, and thereby endeavors to show that this king [Nebuchadnezzar] exceeded Hercules in fortitude, and in the greatness of his actions; for he saith, that he conquered a great part of Libya and Iberia. Diocles also, in the second book of his Accounts of Persia, mentions this king; as does Philostratus, in his Accounts both of India and Phoenicia, say, that this king besieged Tyre thirteen years, while at the same time Ethbaal reigned at Tyre. These are all the histories that I have met with concerning this king. [emphasis mine][384]

There was a time when the Bible stood alone in attributing much of Babylon's glory to the building efforts of Nebuchadnezzar.

> The accuracy of this boast by Nebuchadnezzar . . . has thus been brilliantly confirmed through archaeological excavation, for it was not previously known that he was personally responsible for rebuilding so much of the city. Ancient historians had referred to him only as a great general and conqueror. Robert H. Pfeiffer of Harvard University, a leading representative of the liberal wing of Old Testament scholarship in America a generation ago, frankly admitted: "We shall presumably never know how our author learned that the new Babylon was the creation of Nebuchadnezzar (Dan. 4:30), as the excavations have proved.."[385]

for a royal dwelling

לְבֵית מַלְכוּ [*lᵉḇêṯ malḵōû*], "for a house of kingship." "Jerusalem, owing to its Theocratic relationship, containing the throne of David, being the capital of the Messianic King, being the place where God will dwell again, etc., is called '*the house of the Lord*,' Psalm 122, Zechariah 8, etc., just as Nebuchadnezzar designated the city Babylon (Daniel 4:30) '*the house of the Kingdom*.' "[386]

by my mighty power

By my mighty power is בְּתֻקֶף חִסְנִי [*biṯqāp ḥisnî*], "by the strength of my forceful rule (or wealth)."[387]

One reason pride is such a serious sin is because it misappropriates the glory due God and attributes it to self. Nebuchadnezzar failed to recognize that his accomplishments and station in history had their origin in God's purpose.[388]

> The reason also must be noticed why God declares war on all the proud, *because* we cannot set ourselves up even a little, without declaring war on God; for power and energy spring from him. Our life is in his hands; we are nothing and can do nothing except through him. Whatever, then, any one assumes to himself he detracts from God.[389]

Whether wisdom, might, or riches, *all* we possess comes from God and is subject to His will.

> Thus says the LORD: "Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, Let not the mighty man glory in his might, Nor let the rich man glory in his riches; But let him who glories glory in this, That he understands and knows Me, That I am the LORD, exercising lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness in the earth. For in these I delight," says the LORD. (Jer. 9:23-24)

Nebuchadnezzar's self-adulation is like many powerful rulers throughout history, such as the Pharaoh of Egypt and the king of Assyria, whose pride also resulted in God's judgment.

> Speak, and say, 'Thus says the Lord GOD: "Behold, I am against you, O Pharaoh king of Egypt, O great monster who lies in the midst of his rivers, Who has said, 'My River is my own; **I have made it for myself**.' " (Eze. 29:3) [emphasis mine]

> Therefore it shall come to pass, when the LORD has performed all His work on Mount Zion and on Jerusalem, that He will say, "I will punish the fruit of the arrogant heart of the king of Assyria, and the glory of his haughty looks." For he says: "**By the strength of my hand I have done it, And by my wisdom**, for I am prudent; Also I have removed the boundaries of the people, And have robbed their treasuries; So I have put down the inhabitants like a valiant man. My hand has found like a nest the riches of the people, And as one gathers eggs that are left, I have gathered all the earth; And there was no one who moved his wing, Nor opened his mouth with even a peep." **Shall the ax boast itself against him who chops with it? Or shall the saw exalt itself against him who saws with it?** As if a rod could wield itself against those who lift it up, Or as if a staff could lift up, as if it were not wood! (Isa. 10:12-15) [emphasis mine]

The Apostle Paul explained to the church at Corinth one reason why God prefers to work through the hands of the weak rather than the powerful.

> But God has chosen the foolish things of the world to put to shame the wise, and God has chosen the weak things of the world to put to shame the things which are mighty; and the base things of the world and the things which are despised God has chosen, and the things which are not, to bring to nothing the things that are, **that no flesh should glory in His presence**. (1Cor. 1:27-29) [emphasis mine]

When God accomplishes great things at the hand of those who appear foolish, weak, base, and despised, it is obvious the work is of God and not of those He chooses to work through. "In the sacred Canticle of the Virgin, He casts down the proud from their seat, and exalts the abject and the humble (Luke 1:52)."[390] When God works through those who are powerful, such as King Nebuchadnezzar, there is a much greater chance of His glory being misappropriated.

for the honor of my majesty[391]

Archaeological remains bear witness to the vanity and self-glorification motivating Nebuchadnezzar's building projects.

> *Charles* offers a very appropriate quotation from *Prince* to this effect: "Nearly every cuneiform document now extant dating from this monarch's reign treats, not of conquest and warfare, like those of his Assyrian predecessors, but of the building and restoration of the walls, temples, and palaces of his beloved city of Babylon."[392]

> Many of the bricks taken out of Babylon in the archaeological excavations bear the name and inscription of Nebuchadnezzar stamped on them. One of the records of Nebuchadnezzar sounds almost like the boast that Daniel recorded . . . Dan. 4:30; it reads, "The fortifications of Esagila and Babylon I strengthened and established the name of my reign forever" (BAB, 479: PMOT, 302).[393]

> Sir Henry Rawlinson writes : "I have examined the bricks in situ belonging, perhaps, to one hundred different towns and cities in the neighborhood of Bagdad, and I never found any other legend than that of Nebuchadnezzar, son of Nabopolassar, king of Babylon."[394]

How frequently the first-person pronoun, "I," occurs in inscriptions extolling Nebuchadnezzar's accomplishments!

> A great wall which like a mountain cannot be moved *I* made of mortar and brick. . . . Its foundation upon the bosom of the abyss . . . its top *I* raised mountain high. *I* triplicated the city wall in order to strengthen it, *I* caused a great protecting wall to run at the foot of the wall of burnt brick. . . . Upon the great gates strong bulls . . . and terrible serpents ready to strike, *I* placed. . . . A third great moat-wall . . . *I* built with mortar and brick . . . The produce of the lands, the products of the mountains, the bountiful wealth of the sea, within [Babylon] *I* gathered. . . . The palace . . . *I* rebuilt in Babylon with great cedars *I* brought from Lebanon, the beautiful forest to roof it. . . . Huge cedars from Lebanon, their forest with my clean hands *I* cut down. With radiant gold *I* overlaid them, with jewels *I* adorned them. (J. Thompson 1982a:191-193)[395]

> *I* did what no earlier king had done . . . *I* caused a mighty wall to be built on the east side of Babylon. *I* dug out its moat, and *I* built a scarp with bitumen and bricks. A mighty wall *I* built on its edge, mountain high. *I*ts broad gateways *I* set within it and fixed in them double doors of cedar wood overlaid with copper. . . . *I* surrounded it with mighty floods, as in the land with the wave-tossed sea. . . . *I*n order that no breach should be made in it, *I* piled up an earthen embankment by it, and encompassed it with quay walls of burnt brick. The bulwark *I* fortified cunningly and made the city of Babylon into a fortress . . .[396]

Like Babel of old, through his building projects, Nebuchadnezzar sought to make a name for himself (Gen. 11:4). With time, his great accomplishments caused his heart to be lifted up and his spirit to be hardened by pride—necessitating his removal from the throne (Dan. 5:20▸).

It is impossible to overstate the Bible's emphasis upon this *foundational* sin. Everywhere one turns in Scripture, pride is the subject of warning and condemnation.[397]

> Pride is number one on God's hate list. "These six things doth the LORD hate: yea, seven are an abomination unto him: A proud look . . ." (Pr. 6:16, KJV).[398]

> Solomon Schimmel explains that through the centuries Christian theologians and devoted writers classified pride as the 'deadlist' of the seven deadly sins. He refers to the medieval writer Gregory the Great, saying, 'Gregory did not include pride as one of the seven cardinal sins, but rather considered that it breeds the seven, which in turn breed a multitude of other vices. It is not difficult to see how pride leads to the other sins.' [Solomon Schimmel, *The Seven Deadly Sins: Jewish, Christian, and Classical Reflections on Human Psychology*, 3:4][399]

Perhaps the most dangerous aspect of pride is the subtlety with which it takes root.

> It seems to you no serious wrong to be a little appreciative of your talents, your learning, your honors, your beauty, your accomplishments "to look admiringly upon the lands you have acquired, the houses you have built, the reputation you have made, the fortune you have won" to indulge a little self-complacency over what you have made of your life and opportunities; but while the feeling of self-laudation is forming in your secret heart, who knows what judgments are ready to break forth and crush all your glorying into the dust?[400]

Pride is a potential snare for all, especially for those gifted with an unusual measure of talent, wisdom, or success (Eze. 28:17). Jonathan Edwards, the great philosopher and theologian of the early 18th century,[401] fought with this besetting sin.

> In this context of declaring his exceeding sinfulness, Edwards offered some reflections on the differences between his mature faith and that of his early years. "It is affecting to me" he remarked, "to think, how ignorant I was, when I was a young Christian, of the bottomless, infinite depths of wickedness, pride, hypocrisy and deceit left in my heart." Particularly, the mature Edwards lamented, with insight on his most besetting sin (which he was not the only one to notice), "I am greatly afflicted with a proud and self-righteous spirit; much more sensibly, than I used to be formerly. I see that serpent rising and putting forth its head, continually, everywhere, all around me."[402]

> One item of advice to the young woman was surely a commentary on his ongoing battle with the most subtle of his own sins. "Remember" he wrote, "that pride is the worst viper that is in the heart, the greatest disturber of the soul's peace and sweet communion with Christ; it was the first sin that ever was, and lies lowest in the foundation of Satan's whole building." Pride, he continued, was the sin "the most difficultly rooted out, and is the most hidden, secret and deceitful of all lusts, and often creeps in, insensibly, into the midst of religion and sometimes under the disguise of humility."[403]

Another dangerous aspect of pride is it's blinding affect, impairing the ability to recognize pitfalls lying ahead: the overestimation of one's abilities leads to a failure to realistically assess the future (Pr. 16:18; 18:12). Pride can easily take control when one's gifting exceeds one's character. Hence the biblical injunction to avoid placing a novice into a high position (1Ti. 3:6). This is why the Bible places greater emphasis upon *character* than *gifting*.

Ultimately, pride is a form of insanity—a disconnection from reality.

> Pride is a form of insanity. Nebuchadnezzar's experience highlights and illustrates an important principle in the relationship between pride and insanity. Pride is actually a form of insanity. Insanity is a condition in which one loses touch with reality, living in an unreal world. Sanity is seeing things as they are and then living appropriately.[404]

This is apparent in the actions of the ultimate mad genius: *Satan*. The apex of God's creation and formerly full of wisdom (Eze. 28:12-15), he embarked upon a program of self-deification (Isa. 14:14). When immense gifting turns against God, immense folly—even insanity—results. How else can one explain the *creature* undertaking war with the *Creator* (Rev. 16:13-14)?

> See Nebuchadnezzar, the mighty builder of Babylon, creeping on the earth, devouring grass like oxen, until his nails had grown like bird's claws, and his hair like eagle's feathers. Dan. 4:33. Pride made the boaster a beast, as once before it made an angel a devil. God hates high looks, and never fails to bring them down. All the arrows of God are aimed at proud hearts. O Christian, is thine heart haughty this evening? For pride can get into the Christian's heart as well as into the sinner's . . .[405]

In its elevation of self, pride fails to appreciate the temporal and fragile nature of life: that God alone inhabits eternity and all else ultimately fades from memory.

> Those who trust in their wealth And boast in the multitude of their riches, None of them can by any means redeem his brother, Nor give to God a ransom for him- For the redemption of their souls is costly, And it shall cease forever- That he should continue to live eternally, And not see the Pit. For he sees wise men die; Likewise the fool and the senseless person perish, And leave their wealth to others. **Their inner thought is that their houses will last forever, Their dwelling places to all generations; They call their lands after their own names. Nevertheless man, though in honor, does not remain; He is like the beasts that perish.** (Ps. 49:6-12) [emphasis mine]

> God is able to humble them; he has various ways of doing it. Such as are proud of their outward beauty, or the strength of their bodies, he can, by sending a disease upon them, make their beauty to consume like a moth, and weaken their strength in the way; such as are elated with their wealth and substance, and with honours conferred upon them, or dignity they are raised to, he can soon strip them of all their riches by one providence or another, and bring down those that stand in slippery places of honour and dignity to destruction in a moment; and such as pride and plume themselves with their wit and knowledge, the natural endowments of their mind, he can take away their reason and understanding from them, as he did from this monarch, and put them upon a level with brutes: such who behest of their own righteousness and good works, and trust in themselves, that they are righteous and holy persons, and despise others; and think to be justified and saved by them, and not to be beholden to any other, but be their own saviours; these the Lord, by his Spirit, can humble, by showing them the impurity of their nature; their impotence to that which is spiritually good; the imperfection of their best righteousness to justify them in his sight; so that they shall appear to be polluted and defiled creatures, who thought themselves very holy; and to be very weak and insufficient of themselves, to do anything spiritually good, who gloried in the power and strength of their free will; and see that their best works are no other than

> filthy rags, and to be renounced in the business of their justification and salvation: in short, he humbles by showing them that all their temporal good things are owing to the good providence of God, . . .[406]

3.4.31 - Daniel 4:31

While the word was still in the king's mouth

Job understood the sudden way God's judgment can intervene to pop any perception of sufficiency.

> For he has oppressed and forsaken the poor, He has violently seized a house which he did not build. "Because he knows no quietness in his heart, He will not save anything he desires. Nothing is left for him to eat; Therefore his well-being will not last. **In his self-sufficiency he will be in distress**; Every hand of misery will come against him. **When he is about to fill his stomach, God will cast on him the fury of His wrath, And will rain it on him while he is eating.**" (Job 20:19-23) [emphasis mine]

a voice fell from heaven

Although there are times when the voice of God is audible,[407] we are mainly to infer that the message of the voice, however conveyed, found its source and authority in heaven.

> The record, although sufficiently circumstantial, is but a summary, and affords no trustworthy indications to show whether this φωνὴ ἐξ οὐρανοῦ [*phōnē ex ouranou*] was produced by the mediation of psychological or of physical causes. The leading fact to be observed is merely that the powerfully excited king was compelled to recollect the warning formerly conveyed in the dream, . . .[408]

> It may have been God's own voice, as at Christ's baptism (Mat. 3:17), the Transfiguration (Mat. 17:5), and the Triumphal Entry (John 12:28); or it may have been the voice of an angel.[409]

3.4.32 - Daniel 4:32

See commentary on *Daniel 4:15*, *Daniel 4:16*, *Daniel 4:23*, and *Daniel 4:25*.

they shall drive you[410]

See commentary on *Daniel 4:25* concerning the pronoun, *they*.

3.4.33 - Daniel 4:33

ate grass like an oxen

See commentary on Dan. 4:16.

his body was wet with the dew of heaven

See commentary on *Daniel 4:15*.

till his hair had grown like eagles' ***feathers*** **and his nails like birds'** ***claws***

During Nebuchadnezzar's affliction, his hair and fingernails were no longer trimmed. "In his madness, he may have resisted anyone trying to cut his hair or trim his nails."[412] His hair grew to resemble the features of a bird of prey[413] and his nails became claw-like.[414]

> All the circumstances of Nebuchadnezzar's case, says Dr. Mead (*Medica Sacra*, ch. vii), agree so well with hypochontriasis, that to me it appears evident the Almighty God brought this dreadful distemper upon him, and

> under its influence he ran wild into the fields: then fancying himself transformed into an ox, he fed on grass, after the manner of cattle; and **through neglect of himself, his hair and nails grew to an excessive length, so that the latter became thick and crooked, resembling birds' claws**. [emphasis mine][415]

Long Fingernails of Chinese Doctor (1920)

Nebuchadnezzar's nails grew to be significantly longer than normal, but were unable to reach an extreme length if he crawled on all fours during the period of his affliction.[416]

3.4.34 - Daniel 4:34

411

at the end of the time

Bible chronologists estimate that Nebuchadnezzar's affliction came to an end approximately one year before his death,[417] in 563 B.C.[418]

Archaeologists have yet to unearth an official account of the period of Nebuchadnezzar's illness, but this is not surprising.[419]

> Baldwin notes that information concerning Nebuchadnezzar's last thirty years is sparse,[420] and no record of the king's illness has been found in Babylonian annals. Yet such a humiliating experience certainly would have been omitted from official accounts, for "corroboration of it [the illness] can hardly ever be expected from archaeology, for royal families do not leave memorials of such frailties." ([Montgomery, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Book of Daniel*, 220-221])[421]

lifted my eyes to heaven

Lifting the eyes is mentioned first, implying it signified an awareness, even in his afflicted condition, of a dependence upon heaven.

> This phrase does not merely design his looking up to the heavens, and viewing them from his bodily eyes; but his sense and consideration of the divine Majesty in heaven, his praying to him, lifting up the eyes being a prayer gesture, and his devotion towards him.[422]

This is when Abraham found the divinely-provided ram caught in a thicket by its horns (Gen. 22:13) and Jacob received divine revelation concerning how to multiply his flocks (Gen. 31:10). This is the foundation of repentance: acknowledging our inadequacy and turning to embrace God's evaluation of our condition (Luke 15:16-17). In recognizing God, Nebuchadnezzar no longer occupied the place of a beast.

> The ability to recognize God is the fundamental difference between beasts and men. In any age, the glory of man is to recognize God and to take his place relative to the Sovereign of the universe.[423]

In our own time, uncritical acceptance of the Theory of Evolution is laying the groundwork for ever-more-beastly behavior among men. Contrary to the Word of God, evolutionary theory demotes man to nothing more than a highly-evolved beast. The denial of man's uniqueness from the created beasts—man *alone* possesses the image of God (Gen. 1:26)—has opened the floodgates to all manner of mischief. Otherwise thoughtful and highly-educated judges now consider granting legal rights and even personhood to animals. Meanwhile, the creation and termination of human life is seen as little more significant than of beasts.[424] It seems inevitable evolutionary philosophy will continue to feed the growing apostasy and confused thinking from which the ultimate "beastly human" will spring forth to rule the world: the Antichrist. See *Man: Image of God or Beast?*

Looking up is the antithesis of pride. "As long as you are proud you cannot know God. A proud man is always looking down on things and people: and, of course, as long as you are looking down, you cannot see something that is above you."[425]

my understanding returned to me[426]

Understanding is from מַנְדְּעָ [*manda'*], "sanity, understanding which focuses on proper thought processes."[427]

> It would not be unnatural, on the supposition that he was deprived of reason at the very instant that a voice seemed to speak to him from heaven, and that he continued wholly insane or idiotic during the long interval of seven years, that the first indication of returning reason would be his looking up to the place from where that voice seemed to come, as if it were still speaking to him. In some forms of mental derangement, when it comes suddenly upon a man, the effect is wholly to annihilate the interval, so that, when reason is restored, the individual connects in his recollection the last thing which occurred when reason ceased with the moment when it is restored.[428]

His mental condition remained altered during the entire period such that he may have been unaware of all that was happening to him and unable to repent while under the trial—only God knows. The decree indicated in advance the period of judgment would last a full seven years.

In Daniel's vision of the four beasts, it is said of the first beast (representing Babylon), "The first was like a lion, and had eagle's wings. I watched till its wings were plucked off; and it was lifted up from the earth and made to stand on two feet like a man, and a man's heart was given to it" (Dan. 7:4). The giving of a man's heart to the lion may refer to Nebuchadnezzar's restoration from his affliction.[429]

I blessed the Most High

True worship is born out of repentance and conversion.[430] To fully appreciate the good news of reconciliation with God, we must first comprehend the bad news of our situation apart from God: as enemies of God (Rom. 5:10). This fuels thankfulness and gratitude which energizes praise and worship of God.

> Bless the LORD, O my soul; And all that is within me, bless His holy name! Bless the LORD, O my soul, And forget not all His benefits: Who forgives all your iniquities, Who heals all your diseases, Who redeems your life from destruction, Who crowns you with lovingkindness and tender mercies, . . . (Ps. 103:1-4)

See commentary on *Daniel 4:37*.

3.4.35 - Daniel 4:35

the inhabitants of the earth *are* reputed as nothing

> This is to be understood not absolutely as in themselves; for as such they are something; their bodies are something in their original, and especially in their make, form, and constitution, and even in their dissolution; and their souls are yet more valuable, are of more worth than the whole world, being immaterial and immortal; but comparatively with respect to God, in whom they live, and move, and have that being they have, and by whom they are supported in it . . .[431]

> Behold, the nations are as a drop in a bucket, And are counted as the small dust on the scales; Look, He lifts up the isles as a very little thing. . . . All nations before Him are as nothing, And they are counted by Him less than nothing and worthless. (Isa. 40:15-17)

> It is He who sits above the circle of the earth, And its inhabitants are like grasshoppers, Who stretches out the heavens like a curtain, And spreads them out like a tent to dwell in. (Isa. 40:22)

no one can restrain His hand

Restrain is from מְחָא [*mᵉḥā'*], "hold back, prevent, hinder, impede."[432]

> And none can stay his hand - literally, "none can smite upon his hand" (Gesenius, "Lex."); that is, none can restrain his hand. The language is taken, says Bertholdt, from the custom of striking children upon the hand when about to do anything wrong, in order to restrain them.[433]

Nebuchadnezzar's pronouncement resembles statements by Job, who also experienced a hard lesson concerning God's sovereignty (Job 9:12; 42:1-2). The sovereignty of God is a foundational theme of Scripture, but so too is the responsibility of man in response (Mat. 26:24; Mark 14:21; Luke 22:22; Acts 2:22-24). In his affliction, Nebuchadnezzar had learned both: God *sovereignly* humbled him *until he knew* (responded with understanding) "that the Most High rules in the kingdom of men, and gives it to whomever He chooses" (Dan. 4:32).

Or say to Him, "What have You Done?"

We are tempted to question God, yet we must remember God's will must not be challenged. We may not understand it, we may chafe under it, but the vast distance in glory, power, and intellect between the Creator and His fallen creatures calls for the utmost reverence and respect on our part. To do otherwise is folly and sin (Job 40:1-4; Isa. 40:13-14; 45:9-10). This is especially true as we attempt to understand human responsibility in light of God's sovereignty. In his letter to the church at Rome, Paul confronted this issue.

> You will say to me then, "Why does He still find fault? For who has resisted His will?" But indeed, O man, who are you to reply against God? Will the thing formed say to him who formed it, "Why have you made me like this?" (Rom. 9:19-20)

Paul indicates there are some questions, in our limited intellectual capacity and out of reverence for God, we must leave unanswered.

> You may not be able to answer ultimate questions of free will, but take what God shows you and leave the rest to Him. God has the answer, 'Secret things belong unto the Lord our God' (Deu. 29:29). Habakkuk says 'the just shall live by faith' and faith sometimes means our being content not to know. The desire to know may be sheer intellectual pride. There are antinomies in the Christian faith so that the Christian must say two things at the same time—God is sovereign, man is responsible. Above all we must remember that we are standing on Holy ground. Let us be little children and humble before Him (Mat. 11:25).[434]

3.4.36 - Daniel 4:36

My counselors and nobles resorted to me

Counselors is from הַדְּבַר [*haddāḇar*], "royal official (the exact nature of duty not known) [or] adviser, counselor, minister."[436] *Nobles* is from רַבְרְבָנִין [*raḇrᵉḇānîn*], "great ones," "the aristocratic social class that had high status and access to the king."[437] *Resorted* is from בְּעָה [*bᵉʿâ*].

> The בְּעָא [*biʿāʾ*], *to seek*, does not naturally indicate that the king was suffered, during the period of his insanity, to wander about in the fields and forests without any supervision, as Bertholdt and Hitzig think; but it denotes the seeking for one towards whom a commission has to be discharged, as Dan. 2:13; thus, here, the seeking in order that they might transfer to him again the government.[438]

Critics find it incredible, in view of what history records concerning the volatility attending the reign of kings, that Nebuchadnezzar could have suffered through an extended period of madness without his rule being usurped. The preservation of Nebuchadnezzar's government during his absence and the subsequent restoration of his rule *is* historically anomalous,[439] but there are ready explanations for this unusual result.

When a king suffered from a malady or was absent from his capital, it was not uncommon for his son to serve as coregent. In the next chapter, we find Belshazzar ruling as coregent while Nabonidus is absent from Babylon.

King Solomon began his reign as coregent with his aging father, King David (1K. 1:39; 1Chr. 23:1; 29:22). King Hezekiah, his father, grandfather, and great-grandfather had coregencies with their fathers.[440]

Sanity Restored

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Jewish legend suggests Nebuchadnezzar's son, *Amēl-Marduk* may have served as king during his father's absence.[441] Another possibility is the queen, with Daniel's able and loyal assistance, served in Nebuchadnezzar's stead.[442] Daniel, who was highly-placed within the government, would have been convinced of the certainty of the predicted malady should Nebuchadnezzar fail to respond to the divine warning in repentance. Daniel would have done whatever was possible to prepare for this eventuality—especially in view of the divine-prediction of its limited period.[443] Once the divinely-predicted judgment fell, the remarkable turn of events would have convinced the counselors and nobles of the certainty of the divinely-predicted recovery: "Nevertheless leave the stump and roots in the earth . . . And let [only] seven times pass over him" (Dan. 4:15-16).[444] Any counselors and nobles who might have been tempted to exploit Nebuchadnezzar's predicament for their own advancement could have been dissuaded by the possibility of reprisal if Nebuchadnezzar recovered as predicted. Moreover, the nobles and counselors would have been motivated to preserve the status-quo, because a regime change would have likely been to their disadvantage.[445]

> [Daniel], no doubt, informed the counsellors of what the outcome of the dream would be and that Nebuchadnezzar would return to sanity. In this, God must have inclined the hearts of Nebuchadnezzar's counsellors to cooperate, quite in contrast to what is often the case in ancient governments when at the slightest sign of weakness rulers were cruelly murdered.[446]

Within any extensive and successful empire, such as was Nebuchadnezzar's Babylon, most day-to-day decisions and governmental affairs are maintained by an expansive infrastructure run by capable staff for extended periods without a monarch's personal attention.

> It's a tremendous testimony from history that little is said because the nation did not implode, probably because Nebuchadnezzar was such a fantastic administrator that the infrastructure in Babylon was under the control of people like Daniel, and Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah, and even though the king is out in the field eating grass, and doesn't come in at night and his nails have grown long like eagle's claws and his hair is down to his knees and matted and he hasn't had a bath in months, the nation continued to go forward.[447]

> Quite possibly the Chaldeans had charge of affairs. Such was the case when the king was called home from his expedition in the west. Cf. *Antiq*. 10:11:1 "—the affairs which had been managed by the Chaldeans, and the royal authority which had been preserved for him by their chief."[448]

Ultimately, Nebuchadnezzar's government was preserved during his malady simply because it was God's will. Nebuchadnezzar had experienced the severity of God's severe judgment: now he benefited from God's undeserved grace.

> God closes in on Nebuchadnezzar graciously; here's some ways He closed in graciously. He waited until Nebuchadnezzar was free of external threats so He could blast Nebuchadnezzar without losing the Babylonian Empire. The Babylonian Empire for 7 years is going to be without a leader. For seven years that country is going to go on, equal to two terms of presidency in this country, and the country rocks along because of the fantastic administration set up by Nebuchadnezzar. . . . God will protect Nebuchadnezzar; He's going to keep him from being assassinated, He's going to keep his empire in tact, and the sign of it is "leave the stump." Cut it down but save the stump.[449]

There is disagreement whether the period of Nebuchadnezzar's malady can be confirmed from the extra-biblical historical record of our day.[450] Yet, if Daniel, the king's son, the queen, and the counselors and nobles acted in concert to preserve governmental operations during this period, then we shouldn't expect evidence within the extra-biblical historical record of the king's incapacity.

excellent majesty was added to me

"God restored more to him than he lost. This is similar to the case of Job who is restored with twice what he lost."[451]

3.4.37 - Daniel 4:37

Now I, Nebuchadnezzar, praise and extol and honor the King of Heaven

Now, in comparison to when he had only limited regard for God.

It is impossible to be dogmatic on the issue, but I am among those who believe we will meet Nebuchadnezzar in heaven. I believe there is significant evidence indicating Nebuchadnezzar was converted, becoming a genuine believer in the One True God.

- **Honoring God** - On previous occasions, Nebuchadnezzar praised and honored Daniel whereas now his focus is on God alone.[452]
- **Praising God** - The praise Nebuchadnezzar directs toward God is reminiscent of the vocabulary of other believers as found in the Psalms.[453]
- **Knowing God** - "There is discernible progress in his knowledge of God. Cf. Dan. 2:47 with Dan. 3:28 and finally with Dan. 4:34-35. . . . The king acknowledges the utter sovereignty of God with respect to his won experience (Dan. 4:37b). . . . The king utters true statements concerning the omnipotence of the true God (Dan. 4:35-35). . . . The king would worship this God, whom he identifies as King of heaven (Dan. 4:37a). These reasons lead me to believe that, although the faith of Nebuchadnezzar may indeed have been weak and his knowledge meager, yet his faith was saving faith, and his knowledge true."[454]
- **Transformation** - There is significant evidence of a God-ward change in Nebuchadnezzar's world view. "Now you can immediately tell, based on what we have studied in Daniel 1-3 that something has happened. Nebuchadnezzar hasn't been talking like this. There's a complete change in this man . . ."[455] "Just compare Daniel 4:35 with Daniel 3:15, look at the difference in this man, how far he's come in twenty years. Twenty years ago this is what he was saying, 'And who is that God, that shall deliver you out of my hand.' Twenty years later he says 'none can stay His hand.' How was Nebuchadnezzar changed?"[456] "When it says, 'How great are His signs!' notice the exclamation point, there's an involvement, this is a worship. In fact, verses 1-3 depict Nebuchadnezzar in an act of worship because it's an act of praise; it's a public rehearsal of the works and words of God."[457]
- **Contrast with Belshazzar** - In the next chapter, Daniel contrasts the godly repentance of Nebuchadnezzar with Belshazzar's failure to humble himself. "But when his [Nebuchadnezzar's] heart was lifted up, and his spirit was hardened in pride, he was deposed from his kingly throne, and they took his glory from him. Then he was driven from the sons of men, his heart was made like the beasts, and his dwelling was with the wild donkeys. They fed him with grass like oxen, and his body was wet with the dew of heaven, till **he knew that the Most High God rules in the kingdom of men**, and appoints over it whomever He chooses. But you his son, Belshazzar, have not humbled your heart, although you knew all this" [emphasis mine] (Dan. 5:20-22).
- **Jeremiah** - Nebuchadnezzar developed a high regard for the prophet Jeremiah (Jer. 39:11-12). Jeremiah may have even witnessed to Nebuchadnezzar.[458]

> Six reasons support the notion that Nebuchadnezzar experienced an authentic spiritual conversion. First, Nebuchadnezzar worshiped the Most High God . . . Second, the king shows humility. . . . Third, Nebuchadnezzar embraced God's sovereignty, truth, and justice. . . . Fourth, The Most High not only restored Nebuchadnezzar, but restored him abundantly . . . Fifth, Nebuchadnezzar used Scripture in context. The monarch begins and ends his personal testimony by appealing to Scripture (Dan. 4:3, 34). Sixth, the emperor authored Scripture. Much of the epistle appears in the first person . . . In some respects, Nebuchadnezzar stands as the apostle Paul of the Old Testament . . . Both . . . initially persecuted believers. Both received special revelation from above. Both had miracles and a physical transformation accompany their conversions . . . And both can relate to an ox: Nebuchadnezzar became like an ox (Dan. 4:33) while Saul was as stubborn as an ox (he "kicked against the [ox] goads." Acts 26:14).[459]

Interpreters who believe we will meet Nebuchadnezzar in heaven include: the writers of the Augsburg Confession,[460] Benware,[461] Clarke,[462] Clough,[463] Combs,[464] Constable,[465] Dean,[466] Greene,[467] Hassler,[468] Howe,[469] Ironside,[470] Jeremiah,[471] Miller,[472] MacArthur,[473] Pentecost,[474] Rushdoony,[475] Scofield,[476] Seiss,[477] Smith,[478] Tanner,[479] Walvoord,[480] Wiseman,[481] and Wood.[482]

Other interpreters, such as Archer,[483] Calvin,[484] Hengstenberg,[485] Leupold,[486] Pusey,[487] and Steinmann, are unconvinced of Nebuchadnezzar's conversion.

> The revelatory dreams, their interpretations by Daniel, God's miraculous rescue of his servants in chapter 3, and the fulfillment of Nebuchadnezzar's dream in chapter 4 clearly have expanded the king's awareness of God's knowledge, sovereignty, power, and desire for righteous behavior. Nebuchadnezzar interprets his experiences using human reason and draws logical conclusions. However, his expressions of knowledge of God and his sovereignty do not demonstrate a personal trust in or reliance on God as the gracious God who forgives sins and grants eternal life through faith alone. Moreover, Nebuchadnezzar never even makes a clear monotheistic confession. . . . In fact, even in this letter composed after Nebuchadnezzar's restoration he refers to other gods in his description of the Holy Spirit in pagan terms as "a spirit of holy gods" (Dan. 4:5-6, 15). He also implies that Bel remains his personal deity when he refers to the name he assigned Daniel: "Daniel … whose name is Belteshazzar, like the name of my god" (Dan. 4:5). Thus there is no evidence that Nebuchadnezzar ever possessed true saving faith in the one true and triune God.[488]

If Nebuchadnezzar was saved, the first ruler of the Times of the Gentiles will be in heaven whereas the last ruler is destined for the Lake of Fire (Rev. 19:20).

Nebuchadnezzar's praise of God joins the Gentile chorus in fulfillment of numerous Old Testament predictions that Gentiles will acknowledge and praise the God of Israel (1K. 8:41-43; 2K. 5:15; Ps. 117:1; Mal. 1:11).[489]

those who walk in pride

See commentary on *Daniel 4:30*

all of whose works *are* truth, and His ways justice

> All whose works are truth - See Deu. 32:4; Ps. 33:4; Rev. 15:3. The meaning is, that all that he does is done in accordance with the true nature of things, or with justice and propriety. It is not based on a false estimate of things, as what is done by man often is. How often are the plans and acts of man, even where there are the best intentions, based on some false estimate of things; on some views which are shown by the result to have been erroneous! But God sees things precisely as they are, and accurately knows what should be done in every case.[490]

Nebuchadnezzar does not begrudge his harsh experience. He accepts God's severe punishment—probably lasting a full *seven years*—as being perfectly just. How different this is from many who ignore God when experiencing His blessings, but immediately blame Him when trouble comes their way! This seems to be additional evidence of a true change within Nebuchadnezzar's heart. Nebuchadnezzar came to understand a principle the apostle Paul subsequently expounded:

> Therefore we do not lose heart. Even though our outward man is perishing, yet the inward man is being renewed day by day. For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, is working for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory . . . (2Cor. 4:16-17)

those who walk in pride He is able to put down[491]

Put down is לְהַשְׁפָּלָה [*lᵉhašpālâ*] from שְׁפַל [*šᵉpal*] (hafel stem) *cause to be humbled*.[492]

> The significance of Nebuchadnezzar's stating this is that he was thereby admitting God's justice in the seven-year insanity he had recently experienced.[493]

Years later, Belshazzar would learn of Nebuchadnezzar's experience, but fail to benefit from it.

> But you his [Nebuchadnezzar's] son, Belshazzar, have not humbled your heart, although you knew all this. And you have lifted yourself up against the Lord of heaven. They have brought the vessels of His house before you, and you and your lords, your wives and your concubines, have drunk wine from them. And you have praised the gods of silver and gold, bronze and iron, wood and stone, which do not see or hear or know; and the God who holds your breath in His hand and owns all your ways, you have not glorified. (Dan. 5:22-23▸)

3.4.38 - Lessons from Chapter 4

The fourth chapter of Daniel contains numerous lessons we can apply in our own lives.

Lessons for Living

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- **Fallen Human Nature is Beastly** - Before coming to Christ, we are like Nebuchadnezzar: we think highly of ourselves until God reveals our pride and sinful inclinations. "Tragically it seems that human nature is such that every society has enough misfits, fanatics, sadists and murderers to run concentration camps."[495] The Bible reveals *every person* is fundamentally marred as a result of Adam's fall into sin. Sin does not make us sinners, we sin because of our fallen nature: "all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God" (Rom. 3:23); "the Scripture has confined all under sin" (Gal. 3:22); "if we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us" (1Jn. 1:8). Even when we *think* we are acting upon laudable principles, our self-centered motives betray us. It isn't that we sin in everything we do, but—apart from the work of the Holy Spirit within us—every aspect of our nature is adversely affected by Adam's disobedience (Rom. 5:12-14; 1Cor. 15:21-22; Acts 17:26). "But sinful men are full of sin; principles and acts of sin; their guilt is like great mountains, heaped one upon another till the pile is grown up to heaven. They are totally corrupt, in every part, in all their faculties; in all the principles of their nature, their understanding, and wills; and in all their dispositions and affections. Their heads, their hearts, are totally depraved; all the members of their bodies are only instruments of sin; and all their senses, seeing, hearing, tasting, etc., are only inlets and outlets of sin, channels of corruption. There is nothing but sin, no good at all. Rom. 7:18."[496] This painful reality is illustrated by Scripture's depiction of nations as beasts.[497] Like Nebuchadnezzar, we are initially convinced of our self-righteouness (Rom. 10:3). Until we acknowledge our sin, we refuse to look up and avail ourselves of God's remedy for our condition. See *The Deification of Man* and *Man: Image of God or Beast?*
- **God's Global Concern for the Lost** - "God's concern for persons in every part of the world may also be observed here. Even in pagan Babylon there was a witness—spiritual light—to the power and reality of Yahweh. Nebuchadnezzar and all his subjects were precious to the Lord and were granted a revelation capable of leading them to salvation (cf. 1 Tim 2:4)."[498] How difficult it can be for us to accept the depth of God's concern and the enormous grace He extends to others (Jonah 1:2-3; 4:10-11; Luke 4:25-28; 7:39; Acts 22:21-22).
- **Evangelization Requires Patience** - On God's part and our own. "God had spoken *once* to Nebuchadnezzar in giving him the dream of the great image of the Times of the Gentiles. But the heart of the king was wilful, and he continued to go on with his own purpose, in his pride and folly. God spoke *twice* by the marvelous

vision of the Son of God in the midst of the fiery furnace, keeping His faithful witnesses from all danger and harm. But again the proud king kept on his way, with unsubject heart and unsubdued will. Now God speaks the *third* time, and this in a most humiliating manner, to this great world-ruler's confusion before his princes."[499] "One of the interesting principles that we discover right away is that God works slowly. Between chapter 1 and chapter 4 of the book of Daniel there are anywhere between 20 and 25 years of time. So it is taking the Holy Spirit a long time, decades, to bring this one person out of total paganism to Himself."[500] "The Holy Spirit has taken at least two decades to bring Nebuchadnezzar around to Himself . . . two decades of time have been involved in this situation. He was not won by a two minute presentation of the gospel with an invitation to accept Jesus into his heart. Nebuchadnezzar was worked upon by various ways and means for many, many years."[501] "It took four teenage boys plus circumstances that were engineered by the Holy Spirit, plus 25 years; add it together and you have an entire evangelization of the world at that time, at least of the Babylonian Empire; millions of people were reached with the Word of God, with an investment of four lives and 20 years."[502]

- **The Blessing of Faithful Friends** - The preservation of Nebuchadnezzar's reign during his period of madness is extraordinary and could not have happened apart from the loyalty of his court. There can be little doubt Daniel's faithful support of the king had a great deal to do with the preservation of Nebuchadnezzar's kingdom and his restoration. "A friend loves at all times, and a brother is born for adversity" (Pr. 17:17).
- **God Opposes the Proud** - So long as we exhibit a prideful attitude, we are of little use to God. "In God we are anything he pleases, in ourselves we are nothing."[503] "God resists the proud, But gives grace to the humble" (Jas. 4:6b). "Whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted" (Mat. 23:12). The apex of Nebuchadnezzar's spiritual and personal development occurs in this chapter when he finally realizes he is nothing apart from God. See commentary on *Daniel 4:30*.
- **God Responds to Repentance** - When God gives a warning we continue to ignore, He is forced to bring judgment. "Twelve months of trial and opportunity for reform were given. God is slow in the execution of His threatenings, and very long-suffering to usward. But when wickedness has come to the full His visitations are apt to be terrifically sudden."[504] Nevertheless, once we *do* repent, He quickly responds with forgiveness and restoration. ". . . if a wicked man turns from all his sins which he has committed, keeps all My statutes, and does what is lawful and right, he shall surely live; he shall not die. None of the transgressions which he has committed shall be remembered against him; because of the righteousness which he has done, he shall live. Do I have any pleasure at all that the wicked should die?" says the Lord GOD, "and not that he should turn from his ways and live?" (Eze. 18:21-23).

For a list of New Testament passages containing references, allusions, and themes found in this chapter, see *Daniel 4 in the New Testament*.

Notes

[1] H. C. Leupold, *Exposition of Daniel* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House. 1949, 1969), 166.

[2] "It is obviously by design that this chapter precedes the downfall of Babylon itself which follows in chapter 5."—John F. Walvoord, *Daniel: The Key to Prophetic Revelation* (Chicago, IL: Moody Bible Institute. 1971), 96.

[3] The Septuagint places the events in the 18th year of Nebuchadnezzar's reign: "Ἔτους ὀκτωκαιδεκάτου τῆς Βασιλείας Ναβουξοδονοσορ [*Etous oktōkaidekatou tēs Basileias Nabouxodonosor*], *[in] year eighteen of the kingdom of Nebuchadnezzar*"—Anonymous, "Daniel (Old Greek Version)," in Alfred Rahlfs, ed., *Septuaginta: With Morphology* (Stuttgart, Germany: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft. 1996, c1979.), Dan. 4:4., but this chronological indicator appears to be spurious. "The tendency of the Septuagint text to smooth out difficulties is so well known as demonstrated, for example, by *Koenig* in his *Einleitung* that we can well understand how the early Greek translators, noting the other dates throughout the book, were struck by the absence of the dating of this chapter and sought conjecturally to supply the defect. Equally strong is the argument that the other Greek text available for the Book of Daniel, namely, that of Theodotion, also does not give any date for the chapter."—Leupold, *Exposition of Daniel*, 206.

[4] "Presumably the events in chapter 4 took place some eight or nine years before the end of the siege of Tyre in 573. (H.W.F. Saggs, *The Greatness That Was Babylon* [New York. Mentor, 1968], p. 148, estimates that the siege ended in 571 B.C.; See Eze. 26:7, which foretold this major effort against the Phoenician capital.) This would allow for a seven-year interval of mental illness, during which no major military operations were undertaken—say from 582 to 575. Perhaps it was in 583 that Nebuchadnezzar had his dream, with its sinister warning."—Gleason Leonard Archer, "Daniel," vol. 7 in Frank E. Gaebelein, ed., *The Expositor's Bible Commentary* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan. 1985), Dan. 4:4-5. "Pentecost, p. 1341, and Whitcomb, pp. 62-63, estimated that the date may have been about 570 B.C."—Thomas Constable, *Notes on Daniel* (Garland, TX: Sonic Light. 2009), 47. "Bishop Usher [*Annales Vet. Test.*, A.M. 3434] and Mr. Whiston [*Chronological Tables*, cent. 10] place it in the year of the world 3434 A.M., and before Christ 570; and so Dr. Prideaux [*Connexion*, p. 92]. Mr. Bedford [*Scripture Chronology*, par. 1, B. 2. p. 102] puts it in the year 569."—John Gill, *Exposition of the Old and New Testaments* (Broken Arrow, OK: StudyLamp Software. 1746-1763), Dan. 4:4. "[The declaration by Nebuchadnezzar] was issued in B. C. 562, the year he recovered from his insanity, and a year before his death."—Clarence Larkin, *The Book of Daniel* (Glenside, PA: Clarence Larkin Estate. 1929), Dan. 4:3. "Daniel did not date the dream and subsequent events described here, but clues in the text point to the close of Nebuchadnezzar's reign. For example, his building operations seem to have been concluded (Dan. 4:30▸), there was peace throughout the empire (Dan. 4:4▸), and possible allusions to the king's illness by Abydenus (second century B.C.) and Berosus (the third-century B.C. Babylonian priest) suggest a time late in Nebuchadnezzar's life. The king's illness began a year after the dream (cf. Dan. 4:29▸) and probably lasted seven years (discussed later). An interval of time also was needed for Nebuchadnezzar's reign after his cure (at least a year). Thus this incident must have taken place no later than the thirty-fourth year (571 B.C.) of his forty-three year reign (605-562 B.C.). Probably about thirty years had transpired between the events of chap. 3▸ and those recorded here. Daniel would now have been about fifty years of age."—Stephen R. Miller, "Daniel," in E. Ray Clendenen, Kenneth A. Mathews, and David S. Dockery, eds., *The New American Commentary* (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman. 1994), 127-128. "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."—J. Dwight Pentecost, "Daniel," in John F. Walvoord and Roy B. Zuck, eds., *The Bible Knowledge Commentary* (Wheaton, IL: SP Publications. 1983), 1:1341. "This must have occurred near the end of his long reign (605-562), for the great goal of his reign, the rebuilding of Babylon, was now accomplished (Dan. 4:30▸). If his insanity continued for seven years . . . and the dream was experienced twelve months before the insanity (Dan. 4:29▸), then this year must have been 570/569 B.C."—John C. Whitcomb, *Daniel* (Chicago, IL: Moody Press. 1985), Dan. 4:4. "The time of these events in Nebuchadnezzar's reign is not indicated, but clues which exist point toward the close of his forty-three-year rule. His extensive building operations in Babylon seem to have been concluded by the time (Dan. 4:30▸), and possible references to Nebuchadnezzar's illness from both Abydenus and Berosus . . . make it late in his life. The dream cannot be placed later than his thirty-fifth year of rule, however, for the insanity lasted seven years, and he was back on his throne for at least a short time after the recovery. These factors together place the time of the dream likely between the thirtieth and thirty-fifth year of Nebuchadnezzar's reign . . . when . . . twenty-five to thirty years had elapsed since the deliverance of the three friends from the fiery furnace."—Leon J. Wood, *A Commentary on Daniel* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock Publishers. 1998), 99.

[5] "By the fatality of the Mediaeval Christian division of chapters, generally attributed to Archbishop Langton of the 13th cent., the first three vv. of this story were attached to c. 3."—James A. Montgomery, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Book of Daniel* (Edinburgh, Scotland: T & T Clark. 1927, 1959), 223.

[6] Andrew E Steinmann, *Daniel* (St. Louis, MO: Concordia Publishing House. 2008), 63.

[7] *Tanakh: The Holy Scriptures: A New Translation of the Holy Scriptures According to the Traditional Hebrew Text* (Philadelphia, PA: Jewish Publication Society. 1997, c1985), Dan. 3:30-33.

[8] "The opening verses of this chapter logically belong at the end of the chapter since they record the conclusion of the story. But they (Dan. 4:1-3▸) are placed first and then we learn in the following verses what brought the King to these conclusions."—Paul Benware, *Daniel's Prophecy of Things to Come* (Clifton, TX: Scofield Ministries. 2007), Dan. 4:1-3.

[9] Archer, *Daniel*, Dan. 4:1-2.

[10] "They who make assertions as to how the text should be reconstructed inform us that vv. 31-33 have 'been wrongly transposed to the beginning of this chapter by the revisers of the Aramaic.' They fail to see the naturalness and the fine propriety of having the king, still deeply grateful for his restoration to sanity, begin his proclamation with an outburst of gratitude and praise."—Leupold, *Exposition of Daniel*, 172.

[11] "This chapter was written by Nebuchadnezzar himself; and was either taken out of his archives, or given by him to Daniel, who under divine inspiration inserted it into this work of his . . ."—Gill, *Exposition of the Old and New Testaments*, Dan. 4:1.

[12] "In the composition of it Nebuchadnezzar had made use of the pen of Daniel, whereby the praise of God received a fuller expression than Nebuchadnezzar would have given to it."—Carl Friedrich Keil, "Daniel," in Carl Friedrich Keil and Franz Delitzsch, *Commentary on the Old Testament* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson. 2002), 9:578. "Daniel introduces the king of Babylon as speaking — then speaks in his own name — and afterwards returns to the person of the king."—John Calvin, *Commentary on The Prophet Daniel* (Bellingham, WA: Logos Bible Software. 1998, 1561), Dan. 4:1. "It is probable that Nebuchadnezzar himself wrote it and that Daniel then included the writing in the book. Some scholars deny this and believe that Daniel was the original author, simply employing this different style for the one chapter."—Wood, *A Commentary on Daniel*, 100.

[13] "I suggest that what we have in chapter 4, Nebuchadnezzar is giving so it can become an official part of a court record, part of the chronicles of his reign."—J. Dwight Pentecost, *Class Notes on Daniel, Dallas Theological Seminary* (Spokane, WA: Ellen Kelso [transcriber]. 2006), 5.31.

[14] Albert Barnes, *Notes on the Old Testament* (New York, NY: Lewis Colby. 1847), 4:1.

[15] The flexibility with which material from the DSS is employed in an effort to dismiss the primacy and authority of the Bible is nothing short of astonishing. The "Prayer of Nabonidus" is even held to be a parallel account to the gospels: "The Prayer of Nabonidus, . . . concerned with the story of Nabonidus' cure by a Jewish exorcist who forgave his sins, provides the most telling parallel to the Gospel account of the healing of a paralytic in Capernaum whose sins Jesus declared forgiven."—Geza Vermes, *The Complete Dead Sea Scrolls in English* (New York, NY: Penguin Putnam Inc. 1962, 1997), 22.

[16] "The experience of Nebuchadnezzar has been compared by liberal critics to the 'Prayer of Nabonidus,' in Cave IV Document of the Qumran literature. . . . The prayer describes Nabonidus as being afflicted with a 'dread disease by the decree of the Most High God,' which required his segregation at the Arabian oasis of Teima for a period of seven years."—Walvoord, *Daniel: The Key to Prophetic Revelation*, 110. Examples of the liberal view follow: "The suggestion that the tradition was originally about Nabonidus was dramatically confirmed, however, by the discovery of the Prayer of Nabonidus at Qumran (Milik 1956; Cross 1984). This fragmentary text contains a first person narrative in the name of Nabonidus. The king says that he was smitten with a bad inflammation for seven years in the city of Tema, until a Jewish seer, one of the exiles, explained the situation and reproached the king for idolatry. While the precise literary relationship between this text and Daniel 4‣ remains in dispute, it it clear that 4QPrNab contains an older form of the tradition and that Daniel's identification of the king as Nebuchadnezzar is secondary."—John J. Collins, "DANIEL, BOOK OF," in David Noel Freedman, ed., *The Anchor Bible Dictionary* (New York, NY: Doubleday. c1992, 1996), 30. "[Nabonidus'] ten year stay in the desert was considered madness by many; it is the subject of an Aramaic text found among the Jews at Qumran and provides the background for Daniel 4:28-37‣ where the story is attached to the more famous Nebuchadnezzar."—Yohanan Aharoni and Michael Avi-Yonah, *The Macmillan Bible Atlas* (New York, NY: Macmillan Publishing Company. 1993), 127. "Nebuchadnezzar was never absent from office for any extended period, but the king's temporary absence here likely suggests that the model for this story is not Nebuchadnezzar but Nabonidus, the last Babylonian king (556-539 B.C.E.). He spent ten years at Teima, in the Arabian peninsula, allowing his son Belshazzar to reign as viceroy in his stead (see ch 5). The 'Prayer of Nabonidus' ($_4Q_{242}$) from Qumran presents Nabonidus's first-person account of being cured by an unnamed Jewish seer after an affliction of seven years."—Marc Berlin and Brettler, eds., *The Jewish Study Bible* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press. 1985, 2004), 1649.

[17] Roland K. Harrison, *Introduction to the Old Testament* (Peabody, MA: Prince Press. 1969, 1999), 1117-1120.

[18] Ibid., 1119.

[19] "A document entitled *The Prayer of Nabonidus*, recently discovered in the Qumran caves, . . . The prayer records an illness lasting seven years brought on by divine judgment. In it Nabonidus tells how God gave him a Hebrew exile to explain his experience who also wrote a decree in relationship to the worship of the Most High God. While there are significant differences between Dn. 4‣ and this document, it is possible (as E. J. Young held) that its author has confused the tradition about Nebuchadnezzar with Nabonidus."—Sinclair B. Ferguson, "Daniel," in D. A. Carson, ed., *New Bible Commentary (4th ed.)* (Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity Press. 1994, 1970), 753.

[20] "As pointed out by van der Woude and by Grelot, Jongeling's restoration of line 3 in the Qumran Nabonidus text, . . . 'and so I came to be li[ke the animals],' is quite gratuitous, resting on the assumption that the Qumran text conformed to Daniel 4‣.35."—Edwin M. Yamauchi, "Archaeological Backgrounds of the Exilic and Postexilic Era, Part I: The Archaeological Background of Daniel," in *Bibliotheca Sacra*, vol. 137 no. 545 (Dallas, TX: Dallas Theological Seminary. January-March 1968), 8.

[21] There are also many *dissimilarities*. "Despite the ready assumption of a common tradition between the historical Nabonidus, the Qumran Nabonidus, and Daniel's Nebuchadnezzar, there are far more dissimilarities than resemblances in these three sources."—Ibid., 7. "The similarities between this version and Daniel 4‣ appear at first to be obvious though the degree of

interdependence allowed hangs upon views of the dating of the latter. There are, however, significant differences in the rendering of the royal names, the description of the affliction, the location of the sufferer and the evidence for any literary dependence is not well established. . . . Moreover, Nabonidus is known to have been in his self-imposed exile in Teima for ten, not seven, years. Belshazzar was co-regent during his absence and there is no reason to think that Nabonidus 'was driven from his throne' before his ultimate return to Babylon *c*. 548 and his deportation to Carmania by Cyrus after Belshazzar's death in 539 B.C."—Donald J. Wiseman, *Nebuchadrezzar and Babylon* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press. 1985, 2004), 104. "The differences between the details of Nebuchadnezzar's experience and the Nabonidus prayer are striking: (1) Nabonidus's skin disease was far less serious than Nebuchadnezzar's insanity; (2) the locus of the narrative in Daniel 4 is apparently at or near Babylon rather than down in Teima; (3) the Jewish counselor, unnamed, is said to have written a letter to Nabonidus rather than advising him personally; and (4) the scope of Nabonidus's authority is said to have included 'Assyria,' an unhistorical feature never included in the Daniel account, but very likely a late, intertestamental, legendary feature. We can only conclude that it is the Nabonidus fragment that is late and legendary, and that it affords no ground for skepticism as to the historicity of Daniel 4, except for those whose bias against supernaturalism hinders objective evaluation of the evidence."—Archer, *Daniel*, Dan. 4:23-27.

[22] Unlike the vision of Daniel 2, the prayer mentions wood.

[23] Barnes, *Notes on the Old Testament*, 4:1.

[24] Flavious Josephus, "Against Apion," in Flavius Josephus and William Whiston, *The Works of Josephus : Complete and Unabridged* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson. 1996, c1987), 1.20.142-146.

[25] Barnes, *Notes on the Old Testament*, 4:1.

[26] Harrison, *Introduction to the Old Testament*, 1114-1115.

[27] Barnes, *Notes on the Old Testament*, 4:1.

[28] Eusebius of Caesarea, *Praeparatio Evangelica (Translated by Tr. E. H. Gifford in 1903, transcribed by Roger Pearse, Ipswich, UK, 2003)* (Oxford, England: Oxford University Press. ca. 313, 1903), s.v. "9.41 (226-227)."

[29] "This passage is so remarkable that I annex a translation of it, as I find it in Prof. Stuart's work on Daniel, p. 122: 'After these things' (his conquests which the writer had before referred to), 'as it is said by the Chaldeans, having ascended his palace, he was seized by some god, and speaking aloud, he said: "I, Nebuchadnezzar, O Babylonians, foretell your future calamity, which neither Belus, my ancestor, nor queen Beltis, can persuade the destinies to avert. A 'Persian mule' will come, employing your own divinities as his auxiliaries; and he will impose servitude (upon you). His coadjutor will be the 'Mede,' who is the boast of the Assyrians. Would that, before he places my citizens in such a condition, some Charybdis or gulf might swallow him up with utter destruction! Or that, turned in a different direction, he might roam in the desert (where are neither cities, nor footsteps of man, but wild beasts find pasturage, and the birds wander), being there hemmed in by rocks and ravines! May it be my lot to attain to a better end, before such things come into his mind!" Having uttered this prediction, he immediately disappeared.' This passage so strongly resembles the account in Dan. 4, that even Bertholdt (p. 296) admits that it is identical (*identisch*) with it, though he still maintains, that although it refers to mental derangement, it does nothing to confirm the account of his being made to live with wild beasts, eating grass, and being restored again to his throne."—Barnes, *Notes on the Old Testament*, 4:1.

[30] "The above-mentioned tale of Abydenus may be a legend, distorted as legends are but reminiscent of the things recorded in this chapter."—Leupold, *Exposition of Daniel*, 169. "In this Chaldean tradition Eusebius has recognised a disfigured tradition of this history; and even Bertholdt will not 'deny that this strange saying is in its main parts identical with our Aramaic record.' On the other hand, Hitz. knows nothing else to bring forward than that 'the statement sounds so fabulous, that no historical substance can be discovered in it.' But the historical substance lies in the occurrence which Daniel relates. As, according to Daniel, Nebuchadnezzar was on the roof of his palace when he was suddenly struck by God with madness, so also according to Abydenus he was ὡς ἀναβὰς ἐπι τὰ βασιλήϊα [*hōs anabas epi ta basilēia*] when seized by some god, or possessed. Here not only the time and the place of the occurrence agree, but also the circumstance that the king's being seized or bound was effected by some god, i.e., not by his own, but by a strange god. Not the less striking is the harmony in the curse which he prayed might fall on the Persian—'May he wander in the wilderness where no cities are, no human footstep, where wild beasts feed and the birds wander'—with the description of the abode of the king in his madness in Dan. 5:21 . . . the harmony of the Chaldean tradition in Abyd. with the narrative in Daniel leaves no doubt that the fact announced by Daniel lies at the foundation of that tradition, but so changed as to be adapted to the mythic glorification of the hero . . ."—Keil, *Daniel*, 9:580-581. "Note the following similarities [between the quotation by Abydenus and this passage]: 1. The extraordinary event occurred after the king's conquests and shortly before his death. 2. In both Daniel and Abydenus, the kings is on the top of his palace. 3. The king was seized by some divinity."—Edward J. Young, *The Prophecy of Daniel* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock Publishers. 1949, 1998), Dan. 4:33.

[31] Otto Zöckler, "The Book of the Prophet Daniel," in John Peter Lange, ed., *A Commentary on the Holy Scriptures: Critical, Doctrinal, and Homiletical* (New York, NY: Charles Scribner's Sons. 1880), 121-122.

[32] "The doxology (Dan. 4:3▸) agrees almost word for word with Ps. 145:13. Zoeckler, therefore, believed that the edict was composed, not by Neb., but by Dan. himself. . . . On the other hand, Hengstenberg, Keil and others believe that the theocratic language of the edict is due to the instruction and influence of Dan. . . . The edict is genuine, but it was probably prepared under the influence of Dan."—Young, *The Prophecy of Daniel*, Dan. 4:3.

[33] Monty S. Mills, *Daniel: A Study Guide to the Book of Daniel* (Dallas, TX: 3E Ministries. 1988, 1999), Dan. 4:1.

[34] "The Babylonian monarchs actually made claim to being monarchs of the whole world though they well knew that there were unexplored regions over which they exercised no authority."—Leupold, *Exposition of Daniel*, 169. "The Chaldean monarchy . . . extended over Chaldea, Assyria, Arabia, Syria, Egypt, and Libya . . ."—Jerome Smith, *The New Treasury of Scripture Knowledge* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson Publishers. 1992), Dan. 4:1. "I have made the earth, the man and the beast that are on the ground, by My great power and by My outstretched arm, and have given it to whom it seemed proper to Me. And now I have given all these lands [previously mentioned in Jer. 27:3—Edom, Moab, Ammon, Tyre, Sidon] into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, My servant; and the beasts of the field I have also given him to serve him" (Jer. 27:5-6).

[35] Robert Dean, *Lessons on Daniel* (Spokane, WA: Ellen Kelso [transcriber]. 2006), 18.210.

[36] Cyrus Ingerson Scofield, *The Scofield Study Bible* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press. 1996), Dan. 4:1.

[37] Archer, *Daniel*, Dan. 4:19b-22.

[38] "He does not mean this to be extended to Scythia, or Gaul, or other distant regions; but since his empire extended far and wide, he spoke boastingly. Thus we see the Romans, whose sway did not reach near so far, called Rome itself the seat of the empire of the whole world!"—Calvin, *Commentary on The Prophet Daniel*, Dan.4:1. "Both the Assyrian and the Babylonian kings thought of themselves as rulers over all the earth, so describing themselves in their inscriptions. Actual dominion extended only from the Zagros mountains to Egypt, but this was the known world of the day."—Wood, *A Commentary on Daniel*, Dan. 4:1.

[39] "We may wonder how Nebuchadnezzar could remember the words of his dream verbatim after eight years, but the answer is simple. We know from Est. 6:1 that it was customary for an official chronicler to keep detailed records of all court proceedings. So all Nebuchadnezzar had to do was call for the official records preparatory to issuing this royal proclamation."—Mills, *Daniel: A Study Guide to the Book of Daniel*, Dan. 4:10.

[40] Barnes, *Notes on the Old Testament*, 4:1.

[41] Archer, *Daniel*, Dan. 4:36-37.

[42] Charles Clough, *Lessons on Daniel* (Spokane, WA: Ellen Kelso, [transcriber]. 2006), 13.164.

[43] Dean, *Lessons on Daniel*, 18.210.

[44] See Ps. 117:1-2.

[45] "The same sun that softens the wax hardens the clay." "He also acts upon the reprobate, but in another manner; for he draws them headlong by means of the devil; he impels them with his secret virtue; he strikes them by a spirit of dizziness; he blinds them and casts upon them a reprobate spirit, and hardens their hearts to contumacy."—Calvin, *Commentary on The Prophet Daniel*, Dan. 4:35.

[46] James Swanson, *Dictionary of Biblical Languages With Semantic Domains : Aramaic (Old Testament)* (Oak Harbor, WA: Logos Research Systems. 1997), #10763.

[47] Merrill F. Unger, *Unger's Commentary on the Old Testament* (Chattanooga, TN: AMG Publishers. 2002), 1625-1626.

[48] The preservation of Nebuchadnezzar's rule was exceedingly unlikely given the propensity for the weaknesses of a ruler to be used to depose him. See commentary on *Daniel 4:36*.

[49] Evidence that Daniel may have instructed the current ruler concerning the permanence of God's kingdom may be found in a similar declaration made by King Darius (Dan. 6:26▸).

[50] Steinmann, *Daniel*, 251-252.

[51] Wood, *A Commentary on Daniel*, Dan. 4:3.

[52] Barnes, *Notes on the Old Testament*, 4:3.

[53] Concerning God's eternal kingdom: Ps. 10:16; 145:13; Isa. 9:7; Jer. 10:10; Dan. 2:44▸; 4:3▸; 6:26▸; 7:14▸, 18▸, 27▸; Mic. 4:7; Luke 1:33; 1Ti. 1:17; Heb. 1:8; 2Pe. 1:11; Rev. 11:15▸.

[54] Swanson, *Dictionary of Biblical Languages With Semantic Domains : Aramaic (Old Testament)*, #10717.

[55] "A king or sovereign especially of a Muslim state."—*Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary, (10th ed.)* (Springfield, MA: Merriam-Webster. 1996, c1993), s.v. "sultan."

[56] Swanson, *Dictionary of Biblical Languages With Semantic Domains : Aramaic (Old Testament)*, #10710.

[57] Ibid., #10670.

[58] Steinmann, *Daniel*, 230.

[59] Concerning seeking after peace: 2S. 20:19; Ps. 34:14; 120:6-7; Pr. 12:20; Mat. 5:9; Mark 9:50; Rom. 12:18; 14:18; 1Cor. 7:15; 2Cor. 13:11; Gal. 5:22; Eph. 4:3; Col. 3:14-15; 1Th. 5:13; 2Ti. 2:22; Heb. 12:14; Jas. 3:17-18; 1Pe. 3:11.

[60] "After he had successfully finished his wars in Syria, Egypt, etc., and the immense improvements and buildings at Babylon, and in the enjoyment of uninterrupted peace and prosperity in his palace."—Smith, *The New Treasury of Scripture Knowledge*, s.v. "Timing."

[61] Benware, *Daniel's Prophecy of Things to Come*, Dan. 4:4.

[62] H. A. Ironside, *Lectures on Daniel the Prophet*, 2nd ed (New York, NY: Loizeaux Brothers. 1953), 65-66.

[63] "The Septuagint version prefaces the verse with the words, 'In the eighteenth year of his reign Nebuchadnezzar said.' Textual evidence indicates, however, that these are not from the original."—Wood, *A Commentary on Daniel*, Dan. 4:4-5. The OG adds the phrase: "Ἔτους ὀκτωκαιδεκάτου τῆς Βασιλείας Ναβουξοδονοσορ [*Etous oktōkaidekatou tēs Basileias Nabouxodonosor*], *[in] year eighteen of the kingdom of Nebuchadnezzar*."—Anonymous, *Daniel (Old Greek Version)*, Dan. 4:4. See commentary on *Daniel 4:1*.

[64] Barnes, *Notes on the Old Testament*, 4:4.

[65] Zöckler, *The Book of the Prophet Daniel*, 109.

[66] Swanson, *Dictionary of Biblical Languages With Semantic Domains : Aramaic (Old Testament)*, #10167.

[67] See *Times of the Gentiles*.

[68] Ibid., #10217.

[69] Wood, *A Commentary on Daniel*, Dan. 4:6-7.

[70] Nosson Scherman, ed., *Tanach* (New York, NY: Mesorah Publications, Ltd. 2001), Dan. 4:4.

[71] Steinmann, *Daniel*, 231-232.

[72] Wood, *A Commentary on Daniel*, Dan. 4:6-7.

[73] Archer, *Daniel*, Dan. 4:17-18.

[74] Leupold, *Exposition of Daniel*, 174.

[75] "It should be noted that this difficulty, if such it be, is a mark of genuineness. If the account had been a mere legend, intended to glorify the pious Jew, Daniel, it would have probably have had Daniel appear first of all. The LXX does precisely this. It omits vv. 6-10a."—Young, *The Prophecy of Daniel*, Dan. 4:8.

[76] "He willingly despised Daniel, and purposely preferred the Magi. But as soon as he saw himself left in difficulties, and unable to find any remedy except in Daniel, this was his last refuge; and he now seems to forget his own loftiness while speaking softly to God's holy Prophet."—Calvin, *Commentary on The Prophet Daniel*, Dan. 4:8. "As Daniel could free him from all perplexity, the king's ingratitude is proved, because he admitted the Magi to his counsels, and neglected Daniel."—Ibid., Dan. 4:9.

[77] "The former revelations of God to the king had passed away from his heart and his memory; which was not surprising in the successful founder and ruler of a world-kingdom, if we consider that from twenty-five to thirty years must have passed away since Daniel interpreted to him his dream in the second year of his reign, and from ten to fifteen had passed since the miracle of the deliverance of the three from the burning fiery furnace. But if those earlier revelations of God were obscured in his heart by the fullness of his prosperity, and for ten years Daniel had no occasion to show himself to him as a revealer of divine secrets, then it is not difficult to conceive how, amid the state of disquietude into which the dream recorded in this chapter had brought him, he only gave the command to summon all the wise men of Babylon without expressly mentioning their president, so that they came to him first, and Daniel was called only when the natural wisdom of the Chaldeans had shown itself helpless."—Keil, *Daniel*, 9:586.

[78] "The king . . . had not forgotten Daniel. Rather, his dream apparently caused him to realize that he would suffer humiliation, and probably this humiliation would be at the hands of Daniel's God."—Young, *The Prophecy of Daniel*, Dan. 4:8.

[79] Dean, *Lessons on Daniel*, 19.223.

[80] Clough, *Lessons on Daniel*, 13.168.

[81] "You will also notice that he came in this instance without any personal summons. The reason of his coming was the same decree which had brought the others."—Joseph Augustus Seiss, *Voices from Babylon; or, The Records of Daniel the Prophet* (Philadelphia, PA: Porter & Coates. 1879), 121.

[82] "It might . . . have been that Daniel, as leader of the wise men, only considered matters the others could not manage."—Miller, *Daniel*, Dan. 4:8.

[83] Zöckler, *The Book of the Prophet Daniel*, 110.

[84] "He may have been busy assembling the wise men—or else because he chose to defer his coming till the learning of Babylon had exhausted its resources."—Leupold, *Exposition of Daniel*, 174-175. "Daniel may have deliberately delayed his coming in order to give the pagan wise men an opportunity to prove their inability before Yahweh again demonstrated his reality and power."—Miller, *Daniel*, Dan. 4:8.

[85] Wood, *A Commentary on Daniel*, Dan. 4:8.

[86] A. R. Fausset, "The Book of Daniel," in Robert Jamieson, A. R. Fausset, and David Brown, *A Commentary, Critical and Explanatory, on the Old and New Testaments* (Oak Harbor, WA: Logos Research Systems, Inc. 1997, 1877), Dan. 4:6.

[87] Walvoord, *Daniel: The Key to Prophetic Revelation*, 100.

[88] Archer, *Daniel*, Dan. 4:8.

[89] Dean, *Lessons on Daniel*, 19.223.

[90] "A close examination of the use of Elohim in the context of Genesis 1 reveals the plural form is used in an honorific or majestic way to refer to the God of Israel and is therefore not proof of a plurality of persons within the Godhead. This conclusion is based upon the following evidences: (1) The plural form of Elohim is used throughout the Genesis 1 narrative to refer to the Creator God in conjunction with singular verbs. This coincides with the normal rules for identifying a majestic plural. (2) The God of the Bible is an individual uniquely worthy of reverence due to His power and person that most especially merits the majestic plural form. On these grounds, the plural form of Elohim is not, in itself, a clear indication of plurality within the Godhead. The best and most consistent way to understand the plural form in these cases is to take it as a majestic plural. The plural form is used in Genesis 1 and throughout the OT to refer to the God of Israel (the Creator of Heaven and Earth) because it is an intensive way to acknowledge the absolute supremacy of the One True God. This does not mean that the plural form speaks against a plurality of persons within the Godhead. It simply means that one cannot reason for the Trinity on the grammatical basis of this plural form alone."—Bryan Murphy, "The Trinity in Creation," in Richard L. Mayhue, ed., *The Master's Seminary Journal*, vol. 24 no. 2 (Sun Valley, CA: The Master's Seminary. Fall 2013), 172.

[91] Steinmann, *Daniel*, 233.

[92] Archer, *Daniel*, Dan. 4:8.

[93] J. Paul Tanner, *Daniel: Evangelical Exegetical Commentary* (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press. 2020), 278.

[94] Montgomery, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Book of Daniel*, 225.

[95] "A strange description is given of Daniel, which was that 'a spirit of the holy gods' was in him. This is strange because it appears to be a combination of theologies; the polytheism of Babylon and the concept of holiness related to Israel's God."—Benware, *Daniel's Prophecy of Things to Come*, Dan. 4:8-9.

[96] Leupold, *Exposition of Daniel*, 176.

[97] Wood, *A Commentary on Daniel*, Dan. 4:8.

[98] Keil, *Daniel*, 9:586.

[99] "ὅς πνεῦμα Θεοῦ ἅγιον [*hos pneuma Theou hagion*]"—Anonymous, *Daniel (Old Greek Version)*. Brenton translates the phrase as "the Holy Spirit of God"—Lancelot C. L. Brenton, *The Septuagint with Apocrypha: Greek and English* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publications. 1851, 1992), Dan. 4:6..

[100] Steinmann, *Daniel*, 233.

[101] Against the liberal view that Ezekiel did not mention our Daniel, see *Ezekiel Mentioned a Different Daniel?*.

[102] Walvoord, *Daniel: The Key to Prophetic Revelation*, 101.

[103] Concerning the Spirit of God indwelling believers: Eze. 11:19; 36:27; 37:14; John 7:37-39; 14:23; Rom. 8:9-11; 1Cor. 2:12; 3:16; 6:19; 12:13; 2Cor. 1:22; 5:5; Gal. 3:2; 4:6; Eph. 2:22; 2Ti. 1:14; 1Pe. 1:11; 1Jn. 3:24; 4:13.

[104] "Daniel's qualification for interpreting dreams was that God dwelt within him, and this is the prerequisite for spiritual understanding today."—Miller, *Daniel*, Dan. 4:8. "If we let the spirit of God dwell in us, it won't be long until someone will be knocking at our door. They will see the difference and want some help."—David Jeremiah, *The Handwriting on the Wall: Secrets from the Prophecies of Daniel* (Dallas, TX: Word Publishing. 1992), 90.

[105] Miller, *Daniel*, Dan. 4:9.

[106] The LXX renders the phrase as ἄκουσον τήν ὅρασιν [*akouson tēn horasin*], *[you] listen [to] the vision*. [Theodotion, "Daniel (Theodotion's Translation)," in Alfred Rahlfs, ed., *Septuaginta: With Morphology* (Stuttgart, Germany: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft. 1996, c1979.), Dan. 4:9]

[107] "**Tell me** the visions of my dream that I have seen, and the interpretation thereof." [emphasis mine]—*The Holy Bible: King James Version* (Bellingham, WA: Logos Research Systems. 1900, 2009), Dan. 4:9.

[108] "**Tell me** the visions of my dream that I saw, and their interpretation." [emphasis mine]—*The Holy Bible: English Standard Version* (Wheaton, IL: Standard Bible Society. 2001), Dan. 4:9.

[109] "**Tell me** the visions of my dream that I have seen, along with its interpretation." [emphasis mine]—*New American Standard Bible: 1995 update* (La Habra, CA: The Lockman Foundation. 1995), Dan. 4:9.

[110] *The Holy Bible: New International Version* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan. 1984), Dan. 4:9.

[111] *New English Translation : NET Bible*, 1st ed (Dallas, TX: Biblical Studies Press. 1998, 2006), Dan. 4:9.

[112] *The Holy Bible: Holman Christian Standard Version* (Nashville, TN: Holman Bible Publishers. 2009), Dan. 4:9.

[113] *Tanakh: The Holy Scriptures: A New Translation of the Holy Scriptures According to the Traditional Hebrew Text*, Dan. 4:9.

[114] [A. Schenker, ed., *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia: SESB Version*, 5th (electronic ed.) (Stuttgart, Germany: German Bible Society. 1997, 2003), Dan. 4:6 (MT)] "In Dan. 4:9▸ vast trouble has been given by the statement that the king bids Dan.: *the visions of my dream which I have seen and the interpretation thereof tell*, yet at once proceeds to tell the dream himself. But the trouble is removed by the suggestion in the note to read חֲזוֹי [*ḥzwy*] ('visions-of ') as חֲזִי [*ḥzy*] 'lo,' *i.e.*, 'Here is the dream, interpret it!' "—Montgomery, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Book of Daniel*, 225.

[115] Smith, *The New Treasury of Scripture Knowledge*, Dan. 4:10.

[116] "Indicating its central position radiating imperial authority in all directions, . . . referring to the vast extent of Babylon's sway."—Unger, *Unger's Commentary on the Old Testament*, 1627. "Possibly, Babylon was regarded as the center of the earth. This position of the tree would then indicate its importance for the entire earth."—Young, *The Prophecy of Daniel*, Dan. 4:9.

[117] Renald E. Showers, *The Most High God: Commentary on the Book of Daniel* (Bellmawr, NJ: The Friends of Israel Gospel Ministry. 1982), Dan. 4:19.

[118] "This prophecy was not fulfilled when Israel returned to the land after the Babylonian Captivity. The fulfillment . . . awaits God's establishment of Israel in the Millennium under the Messiah, Jesus Christ. At that time God's kingdom will rule the world (cf. Dan. 2:44-45▸; Zec. 14:3-9, 16-17)."—Charles H. Dyer, "Ezekiel," in John F. Walvoord and Roy B. Zuck, eds., *The Bible Knowledge Commentary* (Wheaton, IL: SP Publications. 1983), Eze. 17:24.

[119] Ezekiel's passage contains an interesting twist concerning the beasts and birds initially obtaining shelter from the tree. After the tree is destroyed, the birds and beasts return to "its ruin"—implying birds of prey and voracious beast now turn on it and complete its destruction.

[120] The LLX adds, ὁ ἥλιος καί ἡ σελήνη ἐν αὐτῷ ᾠ᾽κουν καί ἐφώτιζον πᾶσαν τὴν γῆν [*ho hēlios kai hē selēnē en autō ōkoun kai ephōtizon pasan tēn gēn*], *the sun and the moon dwelt in it and they shone [upon] all the earth* while the OG describes its height by, οἱ κλάδοι αὐτοῦ τῷ μέκει ὡς σταδίων τριάκοντα [*hoi kladoi autou tō mekei hōs stadiōn triakonta*], *the shoot of it measured as thirty stadions*, a distance of approximately 6,000 yards (5,490 meters).

[121] Steinmann, *Daniel*, 234.

[122] Gill, *Exposition of the Old and New Testaments*, Dan. 4:11.

[123] *Stained glass window in St. Quintinus Cathedral in Hasselt (Belgium), Presentation: Dream of Nabu-kudurri-usur II*. Image courtesy of Reinhardhauke, 18 October 2012. Use of this image is subject to a Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 3.0 license.

[124] " 'And food for all (was found) on it.' לְצֻלָּא [*lᵉṣōllā'*], 'for all,' i.e., for all who lived under its shelter . . ."—Zöckler, *The Book of the Prophet Daniel*, 111.

[125] Thomas A Howe, *Daniel in the Preterist's Den* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock. 2008), 150.

[126] The OG adds "καὶ οὐκ ἦν ἄλλο ὅμοιον αὐτῷ [*kai ouk ēn allo homoion autō*]"—Anonymous, *Daniel (Old Greek Version)*, Dan. 4:20., *and not there was another like it*.

[127] Passages such as Isa. 30:6 and Dan. 7:3-7‣ are often used to justify a symbolic interpretation of Isa. 11:6-9 and Isa. 65:25, but the passages are different in notable ways.

[128] Steinmann, *Daniel*, 234.

[129] Pentecost, *Class Notes on Daniel, Dallas Theological Seminary*, 5.32.

[130] Gill, *Exposition of the Old and New Testaments*, Dan. 4:12.

[131] Calvin, *Commentary on The Prophet Daniel*, Dan. 4:10.

[132] Swanson, *Dictionary of Biblical Languages With Semantic Domains : Aramaic (Old Testament)*, 10541.

[133] Ludwig Koehler, Walter Baumgartner, M. E. J. Richardson, and Johann Jakob Stamm, *The Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament*, electronic ed (New York, NY: E. J. Brill. 1999.), 1946.

[134] "A watcher and a holy one - These are both angels; but, according to the Chaldean oracles, of different orders."—Adam Clarke, *Adam Clarke's Commentary on the Bible - Daniel* (Broken Arrow, OK: StudyLamp Software. 1832), Dan. 4:13.

[135] Zöckler, *The Book of the Prophet Daniel*, 111.

[136] Leupold, *Exposition of Daniel*, 180-181.

[137] Calvin, *Commentary on The Prophet Daniel*, Dan. 4:13.

[138] Barnes, *Notes on the Old Testament*, Dan. 4:13.

[139] Keil, *Daniel*, 9:587.

[140] "A class of supernatural being with similar functions as an angel, but also distinct from them (Dan. 4:10‣, 14‣, 20‣)."—Swanson, *Dictionary of Biblical Languages With Semantic Domains : Aramaic (Old Testament)*, #10541.

[141] "a holy sentinel."—*New English Translation : NET Bible*, Dan. 4:13. "He keeps guard unceasingly. So *Gordon's* translation 'guardian' is not wide of the mark."—Leupold, *Exposition of Daniel*, 181. "Gesenius ('Lex.') supposes that [the term 'watcher'] is given to them as watching over the souls of men."—Barnes, *Notes on the Old Testament*, 4:13.

[142] Montgomery, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Book of Daniel*, 232.

[143] And he said: "The LORD came from Sinai, And dawned on them from Seir; He shone forth from Mount Paran, And He came with ten thousands of saints (מֵרִבְבֹת קֹדֶשׁ [*mēriḇḇōṯ qōḏeš*], *innumerable of holy [ones]*) ; From His right hand Came a fiery law for them" (Deu. 33:2).

[144] "This word is used also by the Book of Jubilees and the Book of Enoch—pseudepigraphical writings—to designate *angels*. This fact shows merely that at a later time men rightly understood what type of being was meant."—Leupold, *Exposition of Daniel*, 181.

[145] Theodotion, *Daniel (Theodotion's Translation)*.

[146] "In the visions of my head upon my bed, I was watching and behold! a holy angel came down from heaven."—Scherman, *Tanach*, Dan. 4:10. "The matter is by decree of the angels, and the sentence is by word of the holy ones; . . ."—Ibid., Dan. 4:14.

[147] Larkin, *The Book of Daniel*, Dan. 4:12.

[148] Clough, *Lessons on Daniel*, 14.181.

[149] Barnes, *Notes on the Old Testament*, Dan. 4:13.

[150] Leupold, *Exposition of Daniel*, 182-183.

[151] "From this place is derived the name of ἐγρήγορος [*egrēgoros*] for the higher angels, who watch and slumber not, which is found in the book of Enoch and in other apocryphal writings."—Keil, *Daniel*, 9:587. "Since the term is used first (and twice) by King Nebuchadnezzar, and Daniel merely repeats it after the king has used it, it may have been a pagan term for angels. Later it became a popular term for angels in Jewish literature from the Hellenistic and Roman periods, including *1 Enoch* 1-36 (especially chapters 10-16; cf. 39:12-13; 71:7); *Testament of Reuben* 5:6-7; *Testament of Naphtali* 3:5; *Jubilees* 4:15, 22; 7:21; 10:5; and several documents from Qumran including the *Genesis Apocryphon* (see Jastrow, s.v. עִיר [*ʿîr*] I). Its English translation survives in Christian usage most notably in J. Athelstan Riley's hymn 'Ye Watchers and Ye Holy Ones' (*LSB* 670)."—Steinmann, *Daniel*, 231. "*Watcher*, an angelic figure, common in Jewish apocalyptic literature (*Jubilees* 4.15), who executes God's justice. In some texts watchers are fallen angels (*1 Enoch* chs 10-16)."—Berlin, *The Jewish Study Bible*, 1649.

[152] Swanson, *Dictionary of Biblical Languages With Semantic Domains : Aramaic (Old Testament)*, #10264.

[153] Young, *The Prophecy of Daniel*, Dan. 2:14.

[154] Pentecost, *Daniel*, 1:1342.

[155] John E. Goldingay, "Daniel," vol. 30 in Bruce M. Metzger, David A. Hubbard, and Glenn W. Barker, eds., *Word Biblical Commentary* (Dallas, TX: Word Books), 92.

[156] "πλὴν τὴν φυὴν τῶν ῥιζῶν αὐτοῦ ἐν τῇ [*plēn tēn phuēn tōn hrizōn autou en tē*], *save the growth of the root of it in the earth*."—Theodotion, *Daniel (Theodotion's Translation)*, Dan. 4:14. "Ῥ῾ίζαν μίαν ἄφετε αὐτοῦ ἐν τῇ γῇ [*Hrizan mian aphete autou en tē gē*], *[A] single root leave behind of it in the earth*."—Anonymous, *Daniel (Old Greek Version)*, Dan. 4:14.

[157] Swanson, *Dictionary of Biblical Languages With Semantic Domains : Aramaic (Old Testament)*, #10743.

[158] Leupold, *Exposition of Daniel*, 184.

[159] *New English Translation : NET Bible*, Dan. 4:15.

[160] Steinmann, *Daniel*, 238.

[161] Zöckler, *The Book of the Prophet Daniel*, 112.

[162] Barnes, *Notes on the Old Testament*, 4:15.

[163] Montgomery, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Book of Daniel*, 233.

[164] Young, *The Prophecy of Daniel*, Dan. 2:15.

[165] "And so those who object to the historicity of the narrative ask us how Nebuchadnezzar would have been bound with chains of iron and brass, or who would have bound him or tied him up with fetters. Yet it is very clear that all maniacs are bound with chains to keep them from destroying themselves or attacking others with weapons."—Eusebius Sophronius Hieronymus, *Jerome's Commentary on Daniel (Translated by Gleason L. Archer Jr.)* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House. 407, 1958, accessed 2027-05-06), 50-51. "It being usual to bind madmen with chains of iron or brass, to keep them from hurting themselves and others, as in Mark 5:4."—Gill, *Exposition of the Old and New Testaments*, Dan. 4:15.

[166] "Since Daniel has avoided details that would embarrass Nebuchadnezzar, this may indicate that the metal band represented physical restraints that would have to be used on the king to control him during his insanity (see the commentary on Dan. 4:10-14▸). Daniel conveniently avoids the subject of the band on the stump, and Nebuchadnezzar is not anxious to explore its meaning with him."—Steinmann, *Daniel*, 241.

[167] "He was probably confined by an iron fence, which is the band of metal he saw surrounding the stump in his dream."—Jeremiah, *The Handwriting on the Wall: Secrets from the Prophecies of Daniel*, 95. "The preservation could have been effected either by a band encompassing the top of the stump, thus keeping it from splitting and rotting; or by an enclosing railing or fence surrounding the stump, to keep animals or people from bringing injury."—Wood, *A Commentary on Daniel*, Dan. 4:15.

[168] "There is nothing to indicate that the king became raving mad. About the most violent thing the poor demented king did was to eat grass. So the more moderate interpretations suggest that these bonds represent the king's malady that held him bound, a point of view that is confirmed also by passages such as Ps. 107:10 and Job 36:8."—Leupold, *Exposition of Daniel*, 184. "The fastening in brass and iron is not, with Jerome and others, to be understood of the binding of the madman with chains, but figuratively or spiritually of the withdrawal of free self-determination through the fetter of madness; cf. The *fetters of affliction*, Ps. 107:10, Job 36:8. With this fettering also agrees the going forth under the open heaven among the grass of the field, and the being wet with the dew of heaven, without our needing thereby to think of the maniac as wandering about without any oversight over him."—Keil, *Daniel*, 9:589. "Apparently a symbol of the mental disorder that would afflict Nebuchadnezzar and enchain him (Job 14:7-9)."—Unger, *Unger's Commentary on the Old Testament*, 1627.

[169] "Some commentators view it as a reference to the physical or psychological restraints that would be placed on Nebuchadnezzar during his insanity, while others see it as a reassurance to Nebuchadnezzar that he would be preserved through his trial."—Steinmann, *Daniel*, 235. "The function of the *band of iron and bronze* is not entirely clear, but it may have had to do with preventing the splitting or further deterioration of the portion of the tree that was left after being chopped down. By application it would then refer to the preservation of Nebuchadnezzar's life during the time of his insanity."—*New English Translation : NET Bible*, Dan. 4:15. "The stump was left in the ground and the angel put a band of bronze around the stump, so that the stump couldn't be chopped up and split apart."—Pentecost, *Class Notes on Daniel, Dallas Theological Seminary*, 5.32.

[170] Howe, *Daniel in the Preterist's Den*, 146.

[171] Concerning the benefits of dew in a parched land and its symbolism: Gen. 27:28; Deu. 32:2; 33:13; 33:28; Job 29:19; Ps. 110:3; 133:3; Has. 14:5; Isa. 26:19; Mic. 5:7.

[172] "And let it be wet with the dew of heaven - As applied to the tree, meaning that the dew would fall on it and continually moisten it. The falling of the dew upon it would contribute to preserve it alive and secure its growth again."—Barnes, *Notes on the Old Testament*, 4:15.

[173] Leupold, *Exposition of Daniel*, 184-185.

[174] Swanson, *Dictionary of Biblical Languages With Semantic Domains : Aramaic (Old Testament)*, #10269.

[175] *The Holy Bible: English Standard Version*, Dan. 2:15.

[176] *New American Standard Bible: 1995 update*, Dan. 2:15.

[177] *The Holy Bible: New International Version*, Dan. 2:15.

[178] *The Holy Bible: Holman Christian Standard Version*, Dan. 4:15.

[179] Swanson, *Dictionary of Biblical Languages With Semantic Domains : Aramaic (Old Testament)*, #10381.

[180] Archer, *Daniel*, Dan. 4:13-16.

[181] *Color monotype in tempera, finished with pen, black ink and watercolor on paper by William Blake, 1795*. Image courtesy of The Minneapolis Institute of Art. Image is in the public domain.

[182] Ferguson, *Daniel*, 753.

[183] Seiss, *Voices from Babylon; or, The Records of Daniel the Prophet*, 129.

[184] William Kelly, *Lectures on the Book of Daniel (3rd. ed.)* (Richardson, TX: Galaxie Software. 1881, 2004), 89-90.

[185] Charles Lee Feinberg, *A Commentary on Daniel: The Kingdom of the Lord* (Winona Lake, IN: BMH Books. 1981), Dan. 4:32.

[186] Fausset, *The Book of Daniel*, Dan. 4:30.

[187] Ironside, *Lectures on Daniel the Prophet*, 70.

[188] This is not to suggest that Nebuchadnezzar's affliction was from natural causes: it was a sudden development due to the supernatural and direct intervention of God (Dan. 4:33▸). So, too, his recovery (Dan. 4:34▸). Yet the similarities between the madness recorded here and records from medical history can be instructive to consider.

[189] Harrison, *Introduction to the Old Testament*, 1115-1116.

[190] Jeremiah, *The Handwriting on the Wall: Secrets from the Prophecies of Daniel*, 95.

[191] Keil, *Daniel*, 9:594.

[192] Benware, *Daniel's Prophecy of Things to Come*, Dan. 4:15-16.

[193] Steinmann, *Daniel*, 235.

[194] Some historical reports of lycanthropy are beyond bizarre and seem far afield from what this chapter records of Nebuchadnezzar. For example, "I will copy here the opinion of Dr. Mead, as it is found in his 'Medica Sacra:' . . . Now the ancients called people affected with this kind of madness, λυκανθρωποι [*lykanthrōpoi*], 'wolf-men' - or κνανθρωποι [*knanthrōpoi*], 'dog-men' - because they went abroad in the night imitating wolves or dogs; particularly intent upon opening the sepulchres of the dead, and had their legs much ulcerated, either from frequent falls or the bites of dogs."—Barnes, *Notes on the Old Testament*, 4:25.

[195] Harrison, *Introduction to the Old Testament*, 1116-1117.

[196] Miller mentions the following resources describing Lycanthropy: "P. Keck, and colleagues, 'Lycanthropy: Alive and Well in the Twentieth Century,' *Psychological Medicine* 18 (1988): 113-20. For a brief introduction to the subject see the article by T. A. Fahy, 'Lycanthropy: A Review,' *Journal of the Royal Society of Medicine* 82 (1989): 37ff. Other helpful studies include P. G. Coll, and colleagues, 'Lycanthropy Lives On,' *British Journal of Psychiatry* 147 (1985): 201-2; H. A. Rosenstock and K. R. Vincent, 'A Case of Lycanthropy,' *American Journal of Psychiatry* 134:10 (1977): 1147-49. See also Montgomery, *Daniel*, 220; Lacocque, *Daniel*, 80 (who cites King George III of England and Otto of Bavaria as victims of this malady)."—Miller, *Daniel*, Dan. 4:16.

[197] Ibid.

[198] Zöckler, *The Book of the Prophet Daniel*, 31.

[199] Robert Dick Wilson, *Studies in the Book of Daniel* (New York, NY: G. P. Putnams & Sons, The Knickerbocker Press. 1971), 286-287.

[200] "His case seems much like that of the maniac in the Gospel, whose dwelling was among the tombs and in the mountains, and who shunned the society of men."—Clarke, *Adam Clarke's Commentary on the Bible - Daniel*, Dan. 4:32.

[201] Oliver B. Greene, *Daniel* (Greenville, SC: The Gospel Hour. 1964, 1974), Dan. 4:33.

[202] Ironside, *Lectures on Daniel the Prophet*, 74.

[203] Arno Clemens Gaebelein, *The Prophet Daniel: A Key to the Visions and Prophecies of the Book of Daniel*, 2nd (New York, NY: Our Hope. 1911), 52.

[204] Leupold, *Exposition of Daniel*, 207.

[205] Walvoord, *Daniel: The Key to Prophetic Revelation*, 95.

[206] Ironside, *Lectures on Daniel the Prophet*, 60-61.

[207] Pentecost, *Daniel*, 1:1344.

[208] Kelly, *Lectures on the Book of Daniel (3rd. ed.)*, 89.

[209] Ibid., 78.

[210] Swanson, *Dictionary of Biblical Languages With Semantic Domains : Aramaic (Old Testament)*, #10530.

[211] "To be sure, the old version of the Seventy renders this passage by 'seven years'; but the version of Theodotion has 'seven seasons' (*kairoi*), the Latin Vulgate has *tempora*, and the Arabic has 'times' (*'azminatin*)."—Wilson, *Studies in the Book of Daniel*, 289.

[212] "For four years Nebuchadnezzar's name disappeared from the historical and governmental records of Babylon. It reappeared for a brief time before the king died [Durant, *Our Oriental Heritage*, p.263]."—Showers, *The Most High God: Commentary on the Book of Daniel*, Dan. 4:34-37. "To these many [accounts concerning Nebuchadnezzar] may be added (5) the accounts which Josephus has taken from Berosus, and (6) those which Eusebius has taken from Abydenus. These last two both refer to the illness of Nebuchadnezzar, but give us no note of time (none at least as to the length of the illness) though they do implied it occurred near the end of his reign."—Wilson, *Studies in the Book of Daniel*, 290.

[213] "People never have on their monuments, and very few in their records or autobiographies, the records of their vices, crimes, or weaknesses."—Ibid., 291. "Even if the essence of the story were true, that Neb. was so afflicted, after the manner of 'geniuses' and of many royal persons, as George III of England and Otho of Bavaria, corroboration of it can hardly ever be expected from archaeology, for royal families do not leave memorials of such frailties."—Montgomery, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Book of Daniel*, 220. "The contract tablets give us no facts as to the private or public life of Nebuchadnezzar, except to imply that the regular machinery of government at Babylon ran on uninterruptedly throughout his reign. This implication is gathered, however, from the fact that the tablets are dated continuously throughout every one of the 43 years of his reign, from 604 to 561 B.C., and not from any direct allusions to the political events of the time."—Wilson, *Studies in the Book of Daniel*, 290.

[214] "The supposition that they were seven years 'cannot well be adopted in opposition to the circumstance that Nebuchadnezzar was again restored to reason, a thing which very rarely occurs after so long a continuance of psychical disease' (J. B. Friedreich, *Zur Bibel. Naturhist., anthrop. u. med. Fragmente*, i. p. 316)."—Keil, *Daniel*, 9:590. Against Keil's difficulty we must note that both the affliction and recovery are not to be explained by natural causes, but by the direct intervention of God.

[215] "The unit of measure might be months, or seasons, or years, though seven full years would be more difficult to integrate into the known historical situation."—J. Barton Payne, *Encyclopedia of Biblical Prophecy* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books. 1973, 1996), 377.

[216] "Hippolytus mentioned a view which identified a time with one of the four seasons, '. . . seven times of three months each which change. For the year has four seasons, winter, spring, summer, fall. Seven such times now passed over the king.' "—Young, *The Prophecy of Daniel*, Dan. 4:16. "May stand for seven years (Dan. 11:13▸; 12:7▸; Rev. 12▸;14▸), or conceivably, seven seasons, because the year, according to Persian reckoning, consisted of two seasons."—Unger, *Unger's Commentary on the Old Testament*, 1627.

[217] "Until *seven times pass over*. I have said nothing of those times, but their opinion is probable who take it for an indefinite number, meaning, until a long time shall pass away. Others think months denoted; others, years; but I willingly incline to this interpretation, since God wishes for no short time to punish King Nebuchadnezzar."—Calvin, *Commentary on The Prophet Daniel*, Dan. 4:23.

[218] "This could mean seven years. But in a book like this, where the symbolical use of numbers stands out so prominently, the emphasis obviously rests on the seven as being the number that marks some work as a divine activity. Consequently we regard it to be far better to translate *'iddanîm* 'times' and to take the entire expression to mean: enough time for God to finish his specific work upon the man."—Leupold, *Exposition of Daniel*, 185.

[219] "The seven עִדָּנִין [*'iddānîn*] are seven *years*, as appears from chap. Dan. 7:25▸, compared with Dan. 12:7▸ (thus the Sept., Josephus, Ibn-Ezra, Rashi, etc.),—not seven months (as Saadia Gaon, Dorotheus, Pseudo-Epiphanius, etc., held) or seven half-years (Theodoret). . . . The number seven is however, not to be pressed literally, to the extent of assuming that the duration of the king's sickness covered exactly seven times 365 days, which would do violence to the always prophetically-ideal pragmatism of the history."—Zöckler, *The Book of the Prophet Daniel*, 113. "It may be seriously doubted whether the term עֲלוֹהִי [*'ălôhî*], 'over him,' was chosen with a special reference to 'the stars succeeding each other in the heavenly heights above the tormented one, which were to indicate the duration of his affliction' (Kranichfeld)"—Ibid.

[220] " 'Times' may have been used rather than years, perhaps because this judgment of Nebuchadnezzar is the type of the condition to which the Gentile powers are reduced during the whole course of their empire. Hence a symbolic term may have been chosen rather than one of ordinary life."—Kelly, *Lectures on the Book of Daniel (3rd. ed.)*, 90-91.

[221] Steinmann, *Daniel*, 236-237.

[222] The *time and times and half a time* of Daniel 7:25 describe the last half of the final seven years prior to the return of Christ, when the Antichrist holds global sway (Rev. 13:5) and the woman has fled to the wilderness for protection (Rev. 12:14).

[223] When Daniel wrote, the related time periods given within the book of Revelation were not yet revealed: they provided no interpretive help for those who lived before John wrote Revelation. However, now that Revelation *has* been written, it is incumbent upon us to consider how the additional revelation sheds light upon Daniel's text. This consideration will come up again in relation to interpreting the prophecy of Seventy Weeks.

[224] The OG also indicates that during that period of his madness, Nebuchadnezzar entreated God concerning his sins and mistakes. But, His entreaty seems unlikely since during the entire period he was mentally afflicted and lived like a beast—only to have his understanding return at the "end of the time" (Dan. 4:34).

[225] "In the place before us, so far as the meaning of the word is concerned, it might mean a day, a week, a month, or a year. The more common interpretation is what supposes that it was a year, and this will agree better with all the circumstances of the case than any other period. . . . The most natural construction of this Greek phrase would be to refer it to years."—Barnes, *Notes on the Old Testament*, 4:16.

[226] "Some restrict this to days, but this is contrary not only to every reason, but to every pretext. Nor do I explain it of months; the space of time would have been much too short. Hence the opinion of those who extend it to seven years is more probable."—Calvin, *Commentary on The Prophet Daniel*, Dan. 4:32.

[227] "Let seven times pass over him - Let him continue in this state for seven years."—Clarke, *Adam Clarke's Commentary on the Bible - Daniel*, Dan. 4:16.

[228] "Let seven seasons [times] pass over him," or seven years."—Clough, *Lessons on Daniel*, 13.173.

[229] "His insanity lasted for seven years. This may faintly foreshadow the seven years of awful insanity in the world, when the antichrist rules in the future Tribulation."—James O. Combs, *Mysteries of the Book of Daniel* (Springfield, IL: Tribune Publishers. 1994), 53.

[230] "The word 'periods of time' ('iddanin) is indefinite; it does not indicate how long these periods of time are. It means years in Dan. 7:25, and probably that is the meaning here too."—Constable, *Notes on Daniel*, 50.

[231] "Seven times, or seven years, pass over the head of Nebuchadnezzar deprived of his reason."—John Nelson Darby, *Synopsis of the Books of the Bible: Ezra to Malachi* (Bellingham, WA: Logos Bible Software. 2008), 468.

[232] " '. . . and let seven periods of time pass over him.' So that means that this is going to last for a period of seven years."—Dean, *Lessons on Daniel*, 19.228.

[233] "times—that is, 'years' (Dan. 12:7)."—Fausset, *The Book of Daniel*, Dan. 4:16.

[234] "The seven times mean seven years."—Gaebelein, *The Prophet Daniel: A Key to the Visions and Prophecies of the Book of Daniel*, 52.

[235] "Not seven months, as Abarbinel, and others; nor seven half years, or three years and a half, as some in Theodoret; dividing the year into two parts, summer and winter; and suppose, that seven of these seasons passed over him before he recovered; but seven years are meant, as Jarchi, Saadiah, and Jacchiades, as the phrase is used in Dan. 7:25, so many years the temple of Solomon was building, which Nebuchadnezzar had destroyed, and so long this madness must remain upon him . . ."—Gill, *Exposition of the Old and New Testaments*, Dan. 4:16. "[and his nails like birds' claws] the nails of his fingers and toes were hard, long, and sharp, like theirs, having not been cut during this time; this shows that the seven times are not to be understood of weeks or months, but of years."—Ibid., Dan. 4:33.

[236] "This time limit is by no means accidental; it has a definite, prophetic significance . In chapter 9 of Daniel, the 'seven times' foreshadow the *seven years* of the rule of the Man of Sin, the last world dictator and last ruler of Gentile world dominion, or the seventieth week of Daniel's seventy weeks of prophecy."—Greene, *Daniel*, Dan. 4:33.

[237] "In Daniel 4:32 it is said that Nebuchadnezzar was to be driven mad for 'seven times' . . . during which total period of time 'his hair had grown like eagles' feathers and his nails like birds' claws (Dan. 4:33), which certainly takes longer than seven days. Given the reference to the 'dew of heaven' drenching him (Dan. 4:25, 33), it appears safe to conclude that this must be reflecting seven cycles of the seasons (i.e., seven "years")."—Christopher A. Hughes, "The Terminus Ad Quem of Daniel's 69th Week: A Novel Solution," in *Journal of Dispensational Theology*, vol. 17 no. 51 (Fort Worth, TX: Tyndale Theological Seminary. Summer/Fall 2013), 122.

[238] "Daniel declared that the King would be mad until seven times had passed over him; and in exactly seven years Nebuchadnezzar lifted up his eyes; . . ."—Ironside, *Lectures on Daniel the Prophet*, 73.

[239] "Nebuchadnezzar was turned into a madman and dwelt for seven years amongst the brute beasts and was fed upon the roots of herbs. . ."—Hieronymus, *Jerome's Commentary on Daniel (Translated by Gleason L. Archer Jr.)*, 46.

[240] "The king saw in his sleep again another vision; how he should fall from his dominion, and feed among the wild beasts; and that, when he had lived in this manner in the desert for seven years, he should recover."—Flavious Josephus, "The Antiquities of the Jews," in Flavius Josephus and William Whiston, *The Works of Josephus : Complete and Unabridged* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson. 1996, c1987), 10.216. "A little after this the king saw in his sleep again another vision; how he should fall from his dominion, and feed among the wild beasts; and that, when he had lived in this manner in the desert for seven years, he should recover his dominion again."—Ibid.

[241] "At the end of the 'Seven Years' Nebuchadnezzar lifted up his eyes to Heaven."—Larkin, *The Book of Daniel*, Dan. 4:35.

[242] "For seven years, Nebuchadnezzar is to live with and like the beasts of the field."—J. Vernon McGee, *Thru The Bible Commentary* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson. 1997, c1981), 3:553.

[243] "Nebuchadnezzar admitted that he rejected this warning (v.30) and was specifically disciplined for seven years."—Mills, *Daniel: A Study Guide to the Book of Daniel*, Dan. 4:1.

[244] "the corresponding Heb. word for 'time' used as year in כֶּת הֱיֵה [*kăṯ hyh*] Gen. 18:10."—Montgomery, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Book of Daniel*, 234.

[245] " 'Seven years' was this terrible humiliation of the vain-glorious king to last."—Seiss, *Voices from Babylon; or, The Records of Daniel the Prophet*, 131.

[246] "That is, seven years, a time in the prophetic language denoting a year. Dan. 4:23, 25, 31; 7:25; 11:13; 12:7; Rev. 12:14."—Smith, *The New Treasury of Scripture Knowledge*, Dan. 4:16.

[247] "Probably the most common interpretation is to consider it seven years as in the Septuagint. It is certain that the period is specific and not more than seven years."—Walvoord, *Daniel: The Key to Prophetic Revelation*, 103.

[248] "The *seven periods of time* probably refer to seven years."—*New English Translation : NET Bible*, Dan. 4:16.

[249] Swanson, *Dictionary of Biblical Languages With Semantic Domains : Aramaic (Old Testament)*, #10542.

[250] James Swanson, *Dictionary of Biblical Languages With Semantic Domains : Hebrew (Old Testament)* (Oak Harbor, WA: Logos Research Systems. 1997), #6584.

[251] James Swanson, *Dictionary of Biblical Languages With Semantic Domains : Greek (New Testament)* (Oak Harbor, WA: Logos Research Systems. 1997), #248.

[252] Swanson, *Dictionary of Biblical Languages With Semantic Domains : Aramaic (Old Testament)*, #10141.

[253] Ibid., #10601.

[254] Calvin, *Commentary on The Prophet Daniel*, Dan. 4:17.

[255] "Some expositors have suggested that, since the Scriptures occasionally refer to councils held in heaven (cf. 1 Kings 22:19-22; Job 1:6-12; 2:1-6), the angelic realm does play some part in making divine decisions; but this cannot be, for it would imply an impairment of the sovereignty of God, who alone is capable of making any decision in the final sense."—Wood, *A Commentary on Daniel*, Dan. 4:17.

[256] Leupold, *Exposition of Daniel*, 187.

[257] Steinmann, *Daniel*, 237.

[258] Green suggests that angels play a judicial role beyond enforcement. "But there is a judicial court in heaven known as the court of 'the watchers' and in the case of Nebuchadnezzar, the court of watchers tried him and condemned him to the life of an animal for seven years."—Greene, *Daniel*, Dan. 4:17. See commentary concerning the occupants of the thrones in *Daniel 7:9*.

[259] Tanner, *Daniel: Evangelical Exegetical Commentary*, 290.

[260] Howe, *Daniel in the Preterist's Den*, 154.

[261] The tension between God's sovereignty and the responsibility of His creatures and the playing out of evil in history is a complex topic worthy of a lifetime of study and meditation. Both are taught by Scripture and the elevation of either at the expense of the other will always lead to a distortion of God's truth on the matter.

[262] Wood, *A Commentary on Daniel*, Dan. 4:17.

[263] "The confrontational chapters show that Pharaoh hardened his own heart seven times (Ex. 7:13, Ex. 7:22; Ex. 8:15, Ex. 8:19, Ex. 8:32; Ex. 9:7, Ex. 9:34); and seven times the Lord is said to have hardened Pharaoh's heart (Ex. 9:12; Ex. 10:1,

Ex. 10:20, Ex. 10:27; Ex. 11:10; Ex. 14:4, Ex. 14:17). All of the passages regarding hardening are preceded by the promise of God to harden Pharaoh's heart (Ex. 7:3-4), yet the passages regarding Pharaoh's self-hardening tend to precede the passages that indicate that God was doing the hardening. The purpose of all this is mentioned several times (Ex. 9:16; Ex. 10:1; Ex. 11:9; Ex. 14:4, Ex. 14:7) to show the glory and power of Yahweh in a display of miraculous signs that identify Him as the true God."—Michael Pocock, "The Sovereignty of God in Missions," in Russell Penney, *Overcoming the World Missions Crisis* (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publications. 2001), 77-78.

[264] Swanson, *Dictionary of Biblical Languages With Semantic Domains : Aramaic (Old Testament)*, #10738.

[265] Showers, *The Most High God: Commentary on the Book of Daniel*, Dan. 4:4-18.

[266] Josh McDowell, *Daniel in the Critics' Den* (San Bernardino, CA: Here's Life Publishers. 1979), 12-13.

[267] Barnes, *Notes on the Old Testament*, 4:17.

[268] "Men of the meanest and lowest rank and condition of life, as David was taken from the sheepfold, and made king of Israel . . ."—Gill, *Exposition of the Old and New Testaments*, Dan. 4:17.

[269] "The allusion here is not to Nebuchadnezzar as if he were the 'basest' or the 'vilest' of men, but the statement is a general truth, that God, at his pleasure, sets aside those of exalted rank, and elevates those of the lowest rank in their place."—Barnes, *Notes on the Old Testament*, 4:17.

[270] In the LXX, the adjective *Holy* (ἅγιον [*hagion*], neuter) is associated with the Spirit (πνεῦμα [*pneuma*], neuter): "thou, Daniel, art able; for the **Holy Spirit** of God is in thee." [emphasis mine]—Brenton, *The Septuagint with Apocrypha: Greek and English*, Dan. 4:15.

[271] Steinmann, *Daniel*, 239.

[272] Swanson, *Dictionary of Biblical Languages With Semantic Domains : Aramaic (Old Testament)*, #10724.

[273] Ibid., #10734.

[274] Leupold, *Exposition of Daniel*, 189.

[275] Swanson, *Dictionary of Biblical Languages With Semantic Domains : Aramaic (Old Testament)*, #10097.

[276] Calvin, *Commentary on The Prophet Daniel*, Dan. 4:19.

[277] "Messengers who bring bad news sometimes pay for it as if they were responsible for it, and the king reassures Daniel that he is not to fear for his own fate."—Goldingay, *Daniel*, 94. "Daniel is scared to death because he perceives the meaning of the dream and he is standing in the presence of one who had the authority to throw him into a heated furnace if he so chooses."—Pentecost, *Class Notes on Daniel, Dallas Theological Seminary*, 5.32.

[278] King Darius requested that the Jews pray for him and his sons (Ezra 6:9-10).

[279] Calvin, *Commentary on The Prophet Daniel*, Dan. 4:19.

[280] As the Apostle Peter observed, "Honor all people. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. **Honor the king**." [emphasis mine] (1Pe. 2:17).

[281] Daniel's concern over the affairs of the Jews would have been mitigated by his knowledge that God's sovereign hand still lay upon the nation. Yet God's hand of judgment could be severe whenever the nation walked in disobedience.

[282] Miller, *Daniel*, Dan. 4:19.

[283] Dean, *Lessons on Daniel*, 19.229.

[284] Walvoord, *Daniel: The Key to Prophetic Revelation*, 95.

[285] Steinmann, *Daniel*, 242.

[286] Rabbinic interpretation does not always accept the straightforward reading of the passage which implies a genuine concern on the part of Daniel for the pagan king. "Daniel's concern for Nebuchadnezzar did not always meet with approval in rabbinic tradition (*b. B. Bat.* 4a); some rabbis, however, assumed that 'my lord' (v. 16) must refer to God and the 'enemy' must be Nebuchadnezzar himself."—Berlin, *The Jewish Study Bible*, Dan. 4:16.

[287] Feinberg, *A Commentary on Daniel: The Kingdom of the Lord*, Dan. 4:19.

[288] Goldingay, *Daniel*, 94.

[289] Calvin, *Commentary on The Prophet Daniel*, Dan. 4:19.

[290] Leupold, *Exposition of Daniel*, 190.

[291] Clough, *Lessons on Daniel*, 14.179.

[292] *Nebuchadnezzar's dream: the fallen tree. "Ars Moriendi," Marseille - BM - ms. 0089 (f. 024v),* 15th century. Image courtesy of culture.gouv.fr. Image is in the public domain.

[293] The OG includes the additional phrase, ὑψώθη σου ἡ καρδία ὑπερηφανίᾳ καὶ ἰσκύι τὰ πρὸς τὸν ἅγιον καὶ τοὺς ἀγγέλους αὐτοῦ, τὰ ἔργα σου ὤφθη, καθότι ἐξερήμωσας τὸν οἶκον τοῦ θεοῦ τοῦ ζῶντος ἐπὶ ταῖς ἁμαρτίαις τοῦ λαοῦ τοῦ ἡγιασμένου [*hypsōthē sou hē kardia hyperēphania kai iskyi ta pros ton hagion kai tous angelous autou, ta erga sou ōphthē, kathoti exerēmōsas ton oikon tou theou tou zōntos epi tais hamartiais tou laou tou hēgiasmenou*], *your heart has become raised up in pride and strength toward the sacred [things] and His angels, your works have been seen, inasmuch as [you] made desolate the house of the living God on account of the sins of the holy people*.

[294] Barnes, *Notes on the Old Testament*, 4:24.

[295] "The Codex Chisianus has, 'And the Most High and his angels shall run upon thee – κατατρεξουσιν [*katatrexousin*] - leading thee into prison,' or into detention – εις φυλακην εις πηυλακεν [*eis phylakēn eis pēylaken*] - 'and shall thrust thee into a desert place.' "—Ibid., 4:25.

[296] "The indefinite plural form טָרְדִין [*ṭārᵉḏîn*] stands instead of the passive, as the following יְטַעֲמוּן לָךְ [*yᵉṭaʿămûn lāk*] and מְצַבְּעִין [*mᵉṣabbᵉʿîn*], cf. under Dan. 3:4. Thus the subject remains altogether indefinite, and one has neither to think on men who will drive him from their society, etc., nor of angels, of whom, perhaps, the expulsion of the king may be predicated, but scarcely the feeding on grass and being wet with dew."—Keil, *Daniel*, 9:592.

[297] "Aramaic often uses impersonal plurals as passives [Rosenthal, *A Grammar of Biblical Aramaic*, § 181.]"—Steinmann, *Daniel*, 249. "A typical Aramaic construction appears here: the third person plural used impersonally takes the place of the passive, or to be more exact, plural participles represent the third person plural in this use (*K. S.* 324n); we have translated these forms freely as passives—'thou shalt be driven,' etc."—Leupold, *Exposition of Daniel*, 192. "It should be noted that the plurals are impersonal. The verbs may then be rendered freely in English, *thou shalt be driven, thou shalt be fed, thou shalt be drenched*."—Young, *The Prophecy of Daniel*, Dan. 4:25.

[298] Gill, *Exposition of the Old and New Testaments*, Dan. 4:25.

[299] Steinmann, *Daniel*, 241.

[300] "But now they mock at me, men younger than I, Whose fathers I disdained to put with the dogs of my flock. Indeed, what profit is the strength of their hands to me? Their vigor has perished. They are gaunt from want and famine, Fleeing late to the wilderness, desolate and waste, Who pluck mallow by the bushes, And broom tree roots for their food. They were driven out from among men, They shouted at them as at a thief. They had to live in the clefts of the valleys, In caves of the earth and the rocks. Among the bushes they brayed, Under the nettles they nestled. They were sons of fools, Yes, sons of vile men; They were scourged from the land" (Job 30:1-8).

[301] "Nebuchadnezzar is driven from among men, viz., by his madness, in which he fled from intercourse with men, and lived under the open air of heaven as a beast."—Keil, *Daniel*, 9:594.

[302] Barnes, *Notes on the Old Testament*, 4:1.

[303] Pentecost, *Daniel*, 1:1343.

[304] Miller, *Daniel*, Dan. 4:25.

[305] Steinmann, *Daniel*, 231.

[306] Miller, *Daniel*, Dan. 4:25.

[307] "The temperature in modern Iraq ranges from a high of 110 or 120 degrees Fahrenheit in summer—usually with high humidity—to a low of well below freezing in winter."—Archer, *Daniel*, Dan. 4:33.

[308] Miller, *Daniel*, Dan. 4:25.

[309] 2Cor. 1:26

[310] Goldingay, *Daniel*, 94.

[311] Ibid.

[312] Miller, *Daniel*, Dan. 4:25.

[313] "Of course the Most High rules. But it might be possible to understand that rule as holding in the world above and in the world to come but not in this present world. The watchman declares that God rules here and now."—Goldingay, *Daniel*, 93.

[314] "Apparently no outstandingly capable regent could be found; and even the crown prince, Evil-Merodach (Amel-Marduk), was unsuitable for supreme responsibility at this time (c. 582). Either he was too young or else did not show enough ability to rule permanently."—Archer, *Daniel*, Dan. 4:23-27.

[315] "Daniel not only predicted the slaughter which was at hand, but brought at the same time a message of reconciliation."—Calvin, *Commentary on The Prophet Daniel*, Dan. 4:26.

[316] A sampling of passages highlighting the twin truths of human responsibility and divine sovereignty include: Mat. 26:24; Mark 14:21; Luke 22:22; Acts 1:16; Acts 2:23.

[317] Robert L. Thomas, *Evangelical Hermeneutics: The New Versus the Old* (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel. 2002), 500.

[318] "A figure of speech consisting of the use of the name of one thing for that of another of which it is an attribute or with which it is associated (as 'crown' in 'lands belonging to the crown')."—*Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary, (10th ed.)*, s.v. "metonymy."

[319] Leupold, *Exposition of Daniel*, 193.

[320] Walvoord, *Daniel: The Key to Prophetic Revelation*, 106.

[321] Calvin, *Commentary on The Prophet Daniel*, Dan. 4:27.

[322] Steinmann, *Daniel*, 245.

[323] Gill, *Exposition of the Old and New Testaments*, Dan. 4:27.

[324] J. C. Ryle, *Expository Thoughts on the Gospels: Matthew*, 209, cited in Iain Murray, *D. Martyn Lloyd Jones - The Fight of Faith* (Carlisle, PA: The Banner of Truth Trust. 1990), 752.

[325] The subjects of any leader can suffer from his sin. Consider the affects of the sins of King David (1Chr. 21:26-28) and King Ahab (2Chr. 28:19) upon their subjects.

[326] Fausset, *The Book of Daniel*, Dan. 4:27.

[327] Barnes, *Notes on the Old Testament*, 4:27.

[328] Brenton, *The Septuagint with Apocrypha: Greek and English*, Dan. 4:24.

[329] "It is important to note that the Rabbis did not have a doctrine of original sin or of the essential sinfulness of each man in the Christian sense. It is a matter of observation that all men sin. Men have, apparently, the inborn drive towards rebellion and disobedience. But this is not the same as being born in a state of sinfulness from which liberation is necessary. . . . it is no caricature of Judaism to say, with Sanders, that it lacked a doctrine of the 'essential sinfulness' of humankind; no Jew would regard that claim as an insult. For Paul, on the other hand, it is precisely the 'essential sinfulness' of humankind that requires a salvation based on grace alone, apart from human 'works.' "—Stephen Westerholm, *Justification Reconsidered: Rethinking a Pauline Theme* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing Company. 2013), 34-35.

[330] *Tanakh: The Holy Scriptures: A New Translation of the Holy Scriptures According to the Traditional Hebrew Text*, Dan. 4:27.

[331] Fausset, *The Book of Daniel*, Dan. 4:27.

[332] Wood, *A Commentary on Daniel*, Dan. 4:27.

[333] Barnes, *Notes on the Old Testament*, 4:27.

[334] If it *were* possible for meritorious works to expiate sin, then it would have been possible for Jesus to avoid the cross (Mat. 26:39-42).

[335] Calvin, *Commentary on The Prophet Daniel*, Dan. 4:27.

[336] The OG includes the phrase, ἵνα ἐπιείκεια δοθῇ σοι καὶ πολυήμερος γένῃ ἐπὶ τοῦ θρόνου τῆς βασιλείας σου, καὶ μὲ καταφθείρῃ σε [*hina epieikeia dothē soi kai poluēmeros genē epi tou thronou tēs basileias sou, kai me kataphtheirē se*], *so that gracious forbearance be upon the throne of your kingdom, and you not be destroyed.*

[337] Swanson, *Dictionary of Biblical Languages With Semantic Domains : Aramaic (Old Testament)*, #10610.

[338] Ibid., #10559.

[339] Steinmann, *Daniel*, 242.

[340] Leupold, *Exposition of Daniel*, 195-196.

[341] Zöckler, *The Book of the Prophet Daniel*, 116.

[342] Ibid., 120.

[343] Keil, *Daniel*, 9:592.

[344] Clarke, *Adam Clarke's Commentary on the Bible - Daniel*, Dan. 4:17.

[345] George H. Peters, *The Theocratic Kingdom* (New York, NY: Funk & Wagnalls. 1884), 3:15.

[346] "Sixty thousand men were employed by Mohammed Ali in digging the canal from Cairo to Alexandria, in which work almost no tools were furnished them but their hands. A large portion of them died, and were buried by their fellow-laborers

in the earth excavated in digging the canal. Who can estimate the number of men that were recklessly employed under the arbitrary monarch of Egypt on the useless work of building the pyramids? Those structures, doubtless, cost million of lives, and there is no improbability in supposing that Nebuchadnezzar had employed hundreds of thousands of persons without any adequate compensation, and in a hard and oppressive service, in rearing the walls and the palaces of Babylon, and in excavating the canals to water the city and the adjacent country."—Barnes, *Notes on the Old Testament*, 4:27.

[347] Bob Deffinbaugh, *Daniel: Relating Prophecy to Piety* (Richardson, TX: Bible.org. 2006), Dan. 4:19-27.

[348] Wood, *A Commentary on Daniel*, Dan. 4:27.

[349] Ironside, *Lectures on Daniel the Prophet*, 61.

[350] Goldingay, *Daniel*, 95.

[351] Steinmann, *Daniel*, 245.

[352] Concerning our duty to the poor: Deu. 14:29; 15:7-11; Job 29:12-16; 31:16-20; Ps. 41:1; 112:9; Pr. 14:20-21, 31; 17:5; 19:17; 21:13; 22:9; 28:27; 29:7; 31:4, 9, 20; Ecc. 11:1; Isa. 58:7-10; Jer. 5:28; Eze. 16:49; 18:7; 22:29; Mat. 25:40; 2Cor. 9:6; Jas. 2:14.

[353] Keil, *Daniel*, 9:592.

[354] Hieronymus, *Jerome's Commentary on Daniel (Translated by Gleason L. Archer Jr.)*, 51-52.

[355] A small sample of passages indicating God's desire for repentance and restoration includes: Ex. 32:11-14, 30-32; Num. 12:13-14; 14:13-20; 16:44-48; Deu. 9:18-29; 10:10; 1K. 21:27-29; 2K. 20:3-6; 2Chr. 33:10-13; Isa. 5:6-7; 22:12; Jer. 26:3, 7; Eze. 18:21-22, 27-32; 22:29-31; 33:14-19; Joel 2:12-13; Amos 7:1-6; Jonah 3:5-10; Mat. 3:2, 8; 3:11; 4:17; 9:13; Mark 1:4, 15; 2:17; 6:12; Luke 3:3, 8; 5:32; 13:3, 5; 15:7; 17:4; 24:47; Acts 2:38; 3:19; 5:31; 8:22; 11:18; 13:24; 17:30; 19:4; 20:21; 26:20; Rom. 2:4; 2Cor. 7:9-10; 2Ti. 2:25; Heb. 6:1; 2Pe. 3:9; Rev. 2:5▸, 16▸, 22▸; 3:3▸; 3:19▸

[356] God sees the matters of the heart: 1S. 16:7; 1Chr. 28:9; 2Chr. 6:30; Job 21:27; Ps. 94:11; Pr. 20:27; Pr. 21:2; Pr. 24:12; Isa. 11:3-5; Isa. 66:18; Jer. 17:10; Jer. 20:12; Dan. 2:10▸; Acts 8:21; Rom. 8:27; 1Cor. 2:11. "For when men see their life must be changed, they feign for themselves many acts of obedience which scarcely deserve the name. They have no regard for what pleases God, nor for what he commands in his word; but just as they approve of one part or another, they thrust themselves rashly upon God, as we see in the Papacy. For what is a holy and religious life with them? To run about here and there; to undertake pilgrimages imposed by vows; to set up a statue; to found masses, as they call it; to fast on certain days; and to lay stress on trifles about which God has never said a single word."—Calvin, *Commentary on The Prophet Daniel*, Dan. 4:27.

[357] Concerning the failure to repent leading to hardness of heart: Ex. 4:21; 7:3, 13, 23; 8:15, 19, 32; 9:34; 10:1, 20; 11:10; 14:4, 8, 17; Deu. 2:30; 1S. 6:6; 2K. 17:14; 2Chr. 36:13; Job 9:4; Jer. 19:15; Mat. 11:20; John 12:40; Rom. 2:5; 9:18; Rev. 2:21▸; Rev. 9:20-21▸; Rev. 16:9▸, 11▸.

[358] "A change from first (Dan. 4:1-18▸, 19b-27▸) to third person (Dan. 4:19▸a,28-33) and then back to first person (Dan. 4:34-37▸) occurs in the chapter. For the most part the material written in the third person (except Dan. 4:19▸a) describes the king's madness, to which the king 'would not have been a sane witness.' ([Montgomery, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Book of Daniel*, 223]; cf. L. F. Hartman and A. A. Di Lella, *The Book of Daniel*, AB (Garden City: Doubleday, 1978), 174. Cf. [Goldingay, *Daniel*, 82, 85].)"—Miller, *Daniel*, 128. "Nebuchadnezzar narrates the fulfilment of the dream altogether objectively, so that he speaks of himself in the third person. . . . The reason of his speaking of his madness in the third person, as if some other one were narrating it, lies simply in this, that in that condition he was not *Ich* = *Ego* (Kliefoth). With the return of the *Ich*, *I*, on the recovery from his madness, Nebuchadnezzar begins again to narrate in the first person (v. 31 [34])."—Keil, *Daniel*, 9:593. "Dramatically the account of the king's madness is told in the 3d pers., for of that he would not have been a sane witness; the change of person is anticipated somewhat too early in v. 15. The dramatic propriety involved appears from the fact that probably most readers do not stumble over the incongruity."—Montgomery, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Book of Daniel*, 223. "Told in the third person, thus emphasizing that, during the recorded events, the king was in no condition to assess his own experiences."—Ferguson, *Daniel*, 752.

[359] Leupold, *Exposition of Daniel*, 197.

[360] Clough, *Lessons on Daniel*, 14.185.

[361] Calvin, *Commentary on The Prophet Daniel*, Dan. 4:30.

[362] Steinmann, *Daniel*, 253.

[363] Seiss, *Voices from Babylon; or, The Records of Daniel the Prophet*, 122.

[364] "The result of this fine climate is that for the greater part of the year all business is carried on in the open air, in the courts, or at any rate with open doors. . . . The evenings and nights were spent on the flat roofs."—Robert Koldewey and Agnes S.

Johns, *The Excavations at Babylon* (Liverpool, England: MacMillan and Co. 1914), 75.

[365] "*he was walking upon the royal palace of Babylon*, possibly upon the famous Hanging Gardens . . ."—Montgomery, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Book of Daniel*, 243. "Lacocque suggests that the king's location may have been the famous 'hanging gardens.'"Lacocque, *Daniel*, 85."—Miller, *Daniel*, Dan. 4:30. From this high vantage point he had an impressive view of the area."—Ibid. Some question whether the hanging gardens were actually in Babylon—or were actually in Nineveh. "The iconic and legendary Hanging Gardens of Babylon, one of the ancient Wonders of the World according to Roman-period sources, seem not to have existed while Daniel resided in Babylon or at any other time in the history of the city. While later writers such as Diodorus Siculus of the 1st century BC referenced Ctesias as his source when discussing the gardens, Josephus of the 1st century AD attributed them to Nebuchadnezzar with Berossus as his source, and Strabo in the 1st century AD also described the gardens, earlier historians such as Herodotus and Xenophon oddly make absolutely no mention of the gardens now so famous in traditional lore. Reference to the Hanging Gardens or any type of waterworks that would irrigate them is also missing from the records of Nebuchadnezzar, even though records about building projects from his reign are extensive. Archaeological excavations at Babylon have also failed to locate any evidence for the monumental gardens. . . . While scholars initially attempted to identify this garden with Babylon, it is now understood that the 'Hanging Gardens' may have existed in Nineveh. Perhaps significantly, the book of Daniel never mentions any grand garden in Babylon."—Titus Kennedy, *The Essential Guide to Bible Lands* (Eugene, OR: Harvest House Publishers. 2023), 35, 37.

[366] Fausset, *The Book of Daniel*, Dan. 4:29.

[367] "One of the more evident features of Gentile government is its exaltation of human leaders. In every period, men have deified themselves instead of worshipping the true God, magnified their own powers instead of acknowledging the authority of God, and lived in pride and independence of God. Pride was the original sin of Satan and it is the chief characteristic of godless men."—John F. Walvoord, "Eschatological Problems III: Is Moral Progress Possible?," in *Bibliotheca Sacra*, vol. 101 no. 402 (Dallas, TX: Dallas Theological Seminary. April 1944), 155.

[368] *Building Inscription of King Nebukadnezar II, 604-562 BC. During the excavations of Babylon, in the immediate vicinity of the Ishtar Gate, numerous fragments of bricks with remains of white-glazed cuneiform characters have been found. These fragments obviously belonged to a building inscription of Nebuchadnezzar II at the gate. Their exact location is unknown but there is no doubt that the text refers to the construction of the gate. The text was restored by comparison with another complete inscription on a lime stone block and gives three excerpts of this main inscription of the king. Abridged excerpt: "I (Nebuchadnezzar) laid the foundation of the gates down to the ground water level and had them built out of pure blue stone. Upon the walls in the inner room of the gate are bulls and dragons and thus I magnificently adorned them with luxurious splendour for all mankind to behold in awe."* Image courtesy of Gryffindor, 2007. Image is in the public domain.

[369] "Herodotus, *Histories* 1.178-80."—Miller, *Daniel*, Dan. 4:30.

[370] Ibid.

[371] Koldewey, *The Excavations at Babylon*, 197.

[372] Whitcomb, *Daniel*, Dan. 4:30.

[373] Koldewey, *The Excavations at Babylon*, 5.

[374] Gill, *Exposition of the Old and New Testaments*, Dan. 4:30.

[375] Calvin, *Commentary on The Prophet Daniel*, Dan. 4:30.

[376] Wood, *A Commentary on Daniel*, Dan. 4:30.

[377] Seiss, *Voices from Babylon; or, The Records of Daniel the Prophet*, 123.

[378] Koldewey, *The Excavations at Babylon*, s.v. "Work on Palace."

[379] Gill, *Exposition of the Old and New Testaments*, Dan. 4:29.

[380] Wood, *A Commentary on Daniel*, Dan. 4:30.

[381] Howard P. Free and Voss, *Archaeology and Bible History* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House. 1992), 196.

[382] Herodotus may have exaggerated the dimensions of the city: "Herodotus claimed that the city was in the shape of a square, each of its four walls being fourteen miles long. He added that the huge outer wall was about eighty-five feet wide and rose to a height of 350 feet (Histories 1.178). Most, however, believe that Herodotus exaggerated these dimensions, although he generally was reliable and accurately reported about the moat, the double-wall system, and other details. The height of the walls is not known, but the Ishtar Gate was forty feet high, and the walls would have approximated this size."—Miller, *Daniel*, Dan. 4:30. "I have been too often misled by ancient statements of measurements . . . as in the case of Herodotus' statements with reference to the town walls, I consider it possible that the length and breadth have been confused with the circumference."—Koldewey, *The Excavations at Babylon*, 98. Excavation by Koldewey reveals the city walls were of an

impressive thickness: "The city walls . . . which in other ancient towns measure 3 metres, or at the most 6 or 7 metres, in Babylon are fully 17 to 22 metres thick."—Ibid., v.

[383] A. D. Herodotus and Godley, ed., *The Histories (English)* (Medford, MA: Harvard University Press. 1920), 1.178.1-3.

[384] Josephus, *The Antiquities of the Jews*, 10.219-228 .

[385] Whitcomb, *Daniel*, Dan. 4:30.

[386] Peters, *The Theocratic Kingdom*, 3:54-55.

[387] Swanson, *Dictionary of Biblical Languages With Semantic Domains : Aramaic (Old Testament)*, #10278.

[388] Nebuchadnezzar's great power was dependent upon His role in the purposes of God: Jer. 20:4; 21:20; 22:25; 27:6; 28:14; 32:3, 28; 34:2, 21; 44:30; Eze. 29:19-20. "Unless the LORD builds the house, They labor in vain who build it; Unless the LORD guards the city, The watchman stays awake in vain" (Ps. 127:1). "He who glories, let him glory in the LORD" (1Cor. 1:21b).

[389] Calvin, *Commentary on The Prophet Daniel*, Dan. 4:30.

[390] Ibid., Dan. 4:17.

[391] The OG includes the phrase, κληθήσεται εἰς τιμὴν τῆς δόξης μου [*klēthēsetai eis timēn tēs doxēs mou*], *to be attributed to the honor of my glory.*

[392] Leupold, *Exposition of Daniel*, 198.

[393] Free, *Archaeology and Bible History*, 196.

[394] Seiss, *Voices from Babylon; or, The Records of Daniel the Prophet*, 124.

[395] Alfred J. Hoerth, *Archaeology and the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic. 1998), 376.

[396] Koldewey, *The Excavations at Babylon*, 5-6.

[397] A partial list of passages concerning God's condemnation of pride includes: Lev. 26:19; Deu. 17:20; 2S. 22:28; Job 10:16; 35:12; 40:11-12; Ps. 10:4; 18:27; 31:23; 36:11; 40:4; 59:12; 73:6; 75:4-5; 101:5; 119:21; 123:4; 138:5; 138:6; Pr. 8:13; 11:2; 13:10; 14:3; 15:25; 16:5; 16:18; 18:12; 21:4; 21:24; 28:25; 30:12-13; Ecc. 7:8; Isa. 2:12; 10:12-15; 10:33; 13:11; 13:19; 16:6; 23:9; 25:11; 28:3; Jer. 13:9; 13:15; 13:17; 43:2; 48:29; 50:29-32; Eze. 7:10; 7:24; 28:2; 28:17; 29:3; 29:9; 31:10; Dan. 4:30▸; 4:37▸; 5:20▸; Hos. 13:6; Amos 6:8; Hab. 2:4-5; Zep. 2:10; Mal. 4:1; Mat. 23:11-12; 1Cor. 4:18; 2Ti. 3:2; Jas. 4:6; 1Jn. 2:16; 1Pe. 5:5-6.

[398] Jeremiah, *The Handwriting on the Wall: Secrets from the Prophecies of Daniel*, 87.

[399] Norman Geisler, *Unshakable Foundations* (Minneapolis, MN: Bethany House. 2001), 336.

[400] Seiss, *Voices from Babylon; or, The Records of Daniel the Prophet*, 138.

[401] "Before the Civil War, America produced many impressive theologians, but none as philosophically powerful as Edwards. Since the Civil War, American has had many great philosophers, but none who was, like Edwards, primarily a theologian. To fully appreciate *Freedom of the Will* one needs to view it not just as another piece modern philosophy. More fundamentally, it is a philosophical *tour de force* by someone who was first of all a theologian."—George M. Marsden, *Jonathan Edwards: A Life* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press. 2003), 446.

[402] Ibid., 45.

[403] Ibid., 225.

[404] Deffinbaugh, *Daniel: Relating Prophecy to Piety*, 4:37.

[405] Charles H. Spurgeon, *Morning and Evening* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers. 1869, 2006), s.v. "March 6 PM."

[406] Gill, *Exposition of the Old and New Testaments*, Dan. 4:37.

[407] Concerning an audible voice from God: Ex. 19:9, 19; 20:22; Num. 7:89; 12:4-8; Deu. 4:12-13, 33, 36; 5:4, 25; 1S. 3:4; Mat. 3:17; :5; John 12:28, 30; Acts 9:4; 22:7-9; 26:14; 1Th. 4:16.

[408] Zöckler, *The Book of the Prophet Daniel*, 118.

[409] James A. Borland, "Daniel," in Edward E. Hindson and Woodrow Michael Kroll, eds., *KJV Bible Commentary* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson. 1994), Dan. 4:28-33.

[410] The OG states, καὶ οἱ ἄγγελοι διώξονταί σε ἐπὶ ἔτη ἑπτά [*kai hoi angeloi diōxontai se epi etē hepta*], *and the angels themselves will banish you for seven years*, and indicates that another would occupy Nebuchadnezzar's place: καὶ τόν οἶκον τῆς τρυφῆς σου καὶ τὴν βασιλείαν σου ἕτερος ἕξει [*kai ton oikon tēs tryphēs sou kai tēn basileian sou heteros hexei*], *and your luxurious house and your kingdom another will have.*

[411] *Long fingernails on the left hand of a Chinese doctor, ca. 1920* Image courtesy of Pierce, C.C. (Charles C.), 1861-1946. Image is in the public domain

[412] Wood, *A Commentary on Daniel*, Dan. 4:33.

[413] "The noun נְשַׁר [*nᵉšar*], like its Hebrew cognate נֶשֶׁר [*nešer*], signifies any large soaring bird of prey or carrion eater. While the majority of translations have 'eagles,' as does the translation above, the word also includes vultures of various kinds [*Fauna and Flora of the Bible*, 82-84]."—Steinmann, *Daniel*, 249.

[414] The LXX states, ἕως οὗ αἱ τρίχες αὐτοῦ ὡς λεόντων ἐμεγαλύνθησαν [*heōs hou hai triches autou hōs leontōn emegalynthēsan*], *until which the hairs of him like [that of] lions became very long*. The OG indicates, οἱ ὄνυχές μου ὡσεὶ λέοντος [*hoi onyches mou hōsei leontos*], *the nails of me like a lion*.

[415] Smith, *The New Treasury of Scripture Knowledge*, Dan. 4:25.

[416] In 2015, the longest human fingernails on record belong to Shridar Chillal, who allowed his fingernails to grow for a period of 62 years. The thumbnail of his left hand measured 197.8 cm (1.98 meters, 6.49 feet) in length.

[417] "He died about 561 and was succeeded by his son Awil-Marduk (Evil-Merodach of 2 Kings)."—Michael Levy, ed., *Britannica 2012 Deluxe Edition CDROM*, s.v. "Nebuchadrezzar II."

[418] "This according to Bishop Usher [*Annales Vet. Test.*, A. M. 3442], Dean Prideaux [*Connexium*, etc. part. 1. p. 106.], and Mr. Whiston [*Chronological Tables*, cent. 10.], was in the year of the world 3442 A.M., and before Christ 563, in the forty second year of his reign; after which he lived but one year, reigning from the death of his father forty three years, . . ."—Gill, *Exposition of the Old and New Testaments*, Dan. 4:34. "A.M. 3441. B.C. 563."—Smith, *The New Treasury of Scripture Knowledge*, Dan. 4:34.

[419] "There is no independent support for the tradition in Daniel of Nebuchadrezzar's seven years' madness, and the story probably arose from a fanciful later interpretation of texts concerned with events under Nabonidus, who showed apparent eccentricity in deserting Babylon for a decade to live in Arabia."—Levy, *Britannica 2012 Deluxe Edition CDROM*, s.v. "Nebuchadrezzar II." See *Similar Historical Writings*.

[420] "Baldwin, *Daniel*, 108."—Miller, *Daniel*, Dan. 4:33.

[421] Miller, *Daniel*, Dan. 4:33.

[422] Gill, *Exposition of the Old and New Testaments*, Dan. 4:34.

[423] Feinberg, *A Commentary on Daniel: The Kingdom of the Lord*, Dan. 4:34.

[424] "The moral concerns that are prompted by [evolutionary] biology? The list is already long: abortion, stem-cell research, euthanasia, infanticide, cloning, animal-human hybrids, sexual deviancy. It will get longer, as scientists with no discernible sense of responsibility to human nature come extravagantly to interfere in human life. . . . In 1984, Holland legalized euthanasia. Critics immediately objected that Dutch doctors, having been given the right to kill their elderly patients at their request, would almost at once find reasons to kill patients at their whim. This is precisely what has happened. The Journal of Medical Ethics, in reviewing Dutch hospital practices, reported that 3 percent of Dutch deaths for 1995 were assisted suicides, and that of these, fully one-fourth were involuntary. The doctors simply knocked their patients off, no doubt assuring the family that Grootmoeder would have wanted it that way. As a result, a great many elderly Dutch carry around sanctuary certificates indicating in no uncertain terms that they do not wish their doctors to assist them to die, emerging from their coma, when they are ill, just long enough to tell these murderous pests for heaven's sake to go away."—David Berlinkski, *The Devil's Delusion: Atheism and its Scientific Pretensions* (New York, NY: Basic Books. 2008, 2009), paras. 484, 494.

[425] C. S. Lewis, *Mere Christianity* (New York, NY: MacMillan Publications. 1943, 1945, 1952), 111.

[426] The OG includes a statement by an angel, καὶ ἰδοὺ ἄγγελος εἷς ἐκάλεσέ με ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ λέγων Ναβουχοδονοσορ, δούλευσον τῷ ἁγίῳ καὶ δῶς δόξαν τῷ ὑψίστῳ, τὸ βασίλειον τοῦ ἔθνους σού σοι ἀποδίδοται [*kai idou angelos heis ekalese me ek tou ouranou legōn Nabouchodonosor, douleuson tō hagiō kai dos doxan tō hypsistō, to basileion tou ethnous sou soi apodidotai*], *and behold one angel called me from the heaven saying, 'Nebuchadnezzar, serve the God of heaven, the holy [One], and give glory to Most High, the palace of your nation is being given over to you.'*

[427] Swanson, *Dictionary of Biblical Languages With Semantic Domains : Aramaic (Old Testament)*, #10430.

[428] Barnes, *Notes on the Old Testament*, 4:34.

[429] "The latter part of [Dan. 7:4▸] is probably a reference to Nebuchadnezzar's experience recorded in Daniel 4:1-37▸. As much as possible that a man could become a beast, Nebuchadnezzar became one; . . ."—Arnold G. Fruchtenbaum, *The*

Footsteps of Messiah, rev. ed (Tustin, CA: Ariel Ministries. 1982, 2003), 27.

[430] "Conversion is turning from evil (Acts 8:22; 2Cor. 12:21; Rev. 2:21-22▸) to God (Acts 20:21; Acts 26:20; Rev. 16:9▸). In Acts 3:19 and 26:20 metanoeō and eipstrephō are placed side by side; metanoeō describes the turning from evil and epistrephō the turning to God."—Verlyn D. Verbrugge, ed., *New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology, Abridged Edition* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan. 2000), 367.

[431] Gill, *Exposition of the Old and New Testaments*, Dan. 4:35.

[432] Swanson, *Dictionary of Biblical Languages With Semantic Domains : Aramaic (Old Testament)*, #10411.

[433] Barnes, *Notes on the Old Testament*, 4:35.

[434] Murray, *D. Martyn Lloyd Jones - The Fight of Faith*, 241.

[435] *Klępsk, the Church of the Visitation of the Blessed Virgin Mary, "Madness and healing Nebuchadnezzar" (fresco on the balustrade galleries)*. Image courtesy of Archive Roweromaniaka Wielkopolska, No 175-28, 11 September 2004. Use of this image is subject to a Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 3.0 Unported license.

[436] Swanson, *Dictionary of Biblical Languages With Semantic Domains : Aramaic (Old Testament)*, #10196.

[437] Ibid., #10652.

[438] Keil, *Daniel*, 9:596.

[439] "It is almost unbelievable that after seven years, his kingdom was still secure. No foreign power had come and confiscated it; there had been no national uprising or coup to depose him."—Jeremiah, *The Handwriting on the Wall: Secrets from the Prophecies of Daniel*, 96.

[440] "The synchronisms of Hezekiah of Judah and Hoshea of Israel in 2 Kings 18 imply that Hezekiah at this time was coregent with his father Ahaz. . . . Hezekiah's father, grandfather, and great-grandfather had coregencies with their fathers, and Hezekiah had a coregency with his son; . . ."—Rodger C. Young, "Inductive and Deductive Methods as Applies to OT Chronology," in Richard L. Mayhue, ed., *The Master's Seminary Journal*, vol. 18 no. 1 (Sun Valley, CA: The Master's Seminary. Spring 2007), 105.

[441] "Jewish legend tells how when Nebuchadrezzar spent seven years among the beasts, high state officials took *Amēl-Marduk* to make him king in his father's place. A later version, incorporated in Jerome's commentary on Isaiah 14:19, however, says that they refused to do so for fear of Nebuchadrezzar's reappearance."—Wiseman, *Nebuchadrezzar and Babylon*, 102. "Evil-merodach his son was regent during his father's insanity."—Clarke, *Adam Clarke's Commentary on the Bible - Daniel*, Dan. 4:26.

[442] "There is no evidence that Nebuchadnezzar ceased to be regarded as virtual sovereign during the continuance of his malady, but the reverse (Dan. 4:36▸. Cf. Com. of Keil, and Hitzig, ad loc.) From the dream itself, through which the coming of this affliction was made known to the king before its occurrence (Dan. 4:20-26▸), it was also intimated that it would be of a temporary character. It is very unlikely, therefore, that the Babylonians took steps touching a successor, which would have involved them in serious difficulties subsequently. The queen could well enough have continued to carry on the government in the name of her consort."—Edwin Cone Bissell, "The Apocrypha of the Old Testament," in John Peter Lange, ed., *A Commentary on the Holy Scriptures: Critical, Doctrinal, and Homiletical* (New York, NY: Charles Scribner's Sons. 1880), 415.

[443] "Perhaps Daniel, who understood that the insanity was temporary, communicated that fact to all who were in the palace. It may be that he took special care of the king and used his influence to protect him. We just do not know, but Daniel most likely played some role of significance during those years."—Benware, *Daniel's Prophecy of Things to Come*, Dan. 4:28-33.

[444] "[And my counsellors and my lords sought unto me;] . . . they had seen the first part of it fulfilled in the king's madness and miserable state, they had reason to believe the latter part also, and therefore waited for the accomplishment of it."—Gill, *Exposition of the Old and New Testaments*, Dan. 4:36.

[445] "If he were displaced, they who were then the chief officers of the nation had reason to suppose that, in accordance with Oriental usage on the accession of a new sovereign, they would lose their places."—Barnes, *Notes on the Old Testament*, 4:1.

[446] Walvoord, *Daniel: The Key to Prophetic Revelation*, 108.

[447] Dean, *Lessons on Daniel*, 18.214.

[448] Young, *The Prophecy of Daniel*, Dan. 2:33.

[449] Clough, *Lessons on Daniel*, 13.172.

[450] "As a matter of fact, we have no Babylonian record of any governmental activity at all on Nebuchadnezzar's part between 582 and 575; so it may well be that this was the approximate period of his madness."—Archer, *Daniel*, 15. "There is no

reference to a period of madness in the extant material and neither is there a period of seven years when there was no activity recorded. While the absence of a reference to his illness is explicable, the lack of a seven year gap is not, leading the obvious conclusion that (if the Biblical record is to be counted as trustworthy) the seven 'times' referred to were not period of years. The largest gap in the records is six years from 568/67 - 562/61. However this occurred at the very end of the Nebuchadnezzar's reign and as Jonsson points out, the text implies that he lived for a period after his restoration (Dan. 4:26, 36) (Jonsson, 1998: 246-256)."—Robert I. Bradshaw, *The Book of Daniel* (BiblicalStudies.org.uk. Accessed 2026-05-06.), 8.2.

[451] Howe, *Daniel in the Preterist's Den*, 155.

[452] "Note the difference here and what is described in Daniel 2. In chapter 2, after Daniel told Nebuchadnezzar his dream and its interpretation, the king honored and promoted Daniel. Here we find no expression of appreciation from the king, nor a promotion or advancement of Daniel."—Deffinbaugh, *Daniel: Relating Prophecy to Piety*, 4:28-33. "On previous occasions, he might have bowed down before the prophet, and commanded sweet odors to be offered to him; he might send out statutes and decrees that the God of the Jews should be honored by all his subjects. But what does he now? He drops all others for the moment, and bows before God. Nebuchadnezzar is not occupied with compelling other people for good or ill, but himself, in blessing, praising and honoring the Most High."—Kelly, *Lectures on the Book of Daniel (3rd. ed.)*, 91-92.

[453] "We see that Nebuchadnezzar has a new vocabulary; he has a vocabulary that is reminiscent of the praise vocabulary of the Psalms. That tells us that he's been taught something, that he has been listening to Daniel. He was saved . . ."—Dean, *Lessons on Daniel*, 18.217.

[454] Young, *The Prophecy of Daniel*, Dan. 4:37.

[455] Clough, *Lessons on Daniel*, 13.163.

[456] Ibid., 14.187.

[457] Ibid., 13.166.

[458] "From notices in the book of Jeremiah it appears that Jeremiah actually witnessed to Nebuchadnezzar."—Ibid., 13.163.

[459] Mark Hassler, "Daniel 4 and the Testimony of Nebuchadnezzar," in *Bible and Spade*, vol. 30 no. 3 (Landisville, PA: Associates for Biblical Research. Summer 2017), 64-65.

[460] "The Apology of the Augsburg Confession cites Daniel 4 as a Scripture passage that shows that salvation is through faith and takes the view that Nebuchadnezzar was brought to saving faith by the prophetic preaching of Daniel. . . . (Ap IV 261-68)."—Steinmann, *Daniel*, 246.

[461] "It is the firm conviction of this writer that Nebuchadnezzar came to genuine faith in the Savior God of Israel."—Benware, *Daniel's Prophecy of Things to Come*, Dan. 4:1-3.

[462] "It is very probable that Nebuchadnezzar was a true convert; that he relapsed no more into idolatry, and died in the faith of the God of Israel."—Clarke, *Adam Clarke's Commentary on the Bible - Daniel*, Dan. 4:37.

[463] "Nebuchadnezzar finally, in this chapter, becomes a believer."—Clough, *Lessons on Daniel*, 13.162.

[464] "Apparently, Nebuchadnezzar exercises Old Testament saving faith. . . . That so powerful an autocrat would humbly acknowledge the perils of his own pride and recount the heavy punishment he suffered is an indication that he may indeed have found the true God in his heart."—Combs, *Mysteries of the Book of Daniel*, 50.

[465] "The king described the Lord as the Most High, He who lives forever, and the King of heaven in these verses. It is difficult to prove conclusively from the text that the monarch placed saving faith in Yahweh, but that is a distinct possibility in view of these titles and his accompanying praise."—Constable, *Notes on Daniel*, 54.

[466] "We read about Nebuchadnezzar's salvation in Daniel 3:43"—Dean, *Lessons on Daniel*, 19.229.

[467] "The opening verses of this chapter contain Nebuchadnezzar's testimony of his conversion to the most High God . . . I expect to meet Nebuchadnezzar in heaven. I definitely believe he is there."—Greene, *Daniel*, Dan. 4:1, 7.

[468] Hassler, *Daniel 4 and the Testimony of Nebuchadnezzar*, 64-65.

[469] "Although there is much disagreement over whether the king was actually converted, it seems that the language provides enough evidence to conclude that he was."—Howe, *Daniel in the Preterist's Den*, 154.

[470] "This is Nebuchadnezzar's conversion, and seems clearly to show that a work of grace took place in his soul ere he laid down the sceptre entrusted to his hand by Jehovah."—Ironside, *Lectures on Daniel the Prophet*, 60.

[471] "This is the last we hear about Nebuchadnezzar in the Bible, but I believe we will meet with him someday in heaven."—Jeremiah, *The Handwriting on the Wall: Secrets from the Prophecies of Daniel*, 96.

[472] "Nebuchadnezzar certainly had an encounter with the living God, and his praise seems sincere. Was this experience equivalent to salvation, or did it fall short of saving faith? Wood, Young, Luck, Rushdoony, and Walvoord believe that the

king had a genuine salvation experience; but others, including Calvin, Keil, Pusey, and Archer, think that the king's faith fell short. One cannot be dogmatic, but the language of the text suggests that Nebuchadnezzar did in fact have a saving encounter with the true God."—Miller, *Daniel*, Dan. 4:37.

[473] "He began and ended the narrative with praise, and in between told why he converted to such worship of the true God! "—John MacArthur, ed., *The MacArthur Study Bible* (Nashville, TN: Word Publishing. 1997), 1232.

[474] "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) but had been humbled by his experience. This too would testify to a transformation in Nebuchadnezzar's character through a newfound knowledge of God."—Pentecost, *Daniel*, 1:1344.

[475] Miller, *Daniel*, Dan. 4:37.

[476] "Here (Dan. 4:34‣, 35‣) the king rises into a true apprehension of God. Cf. Darius, Dan. 6:25-27‣."—Scofield, *The Scofield Study Bible*, Dan. 4:34.

[477] "Men have debated whether his was a full and genuine conversion or not. To me it seems as if everything that could be expected under the circumstances was actually wrought. . . . Nor do I know by what authority any one can deny him place in the great congregation of them that know God and share in His redeeming grace."—Seiss, *Voices from Babylon; or, The Records of Daniel the Prophet*, 133-134.

[478] "It is confidently believed that he was a true convert, and died in the faith of the God of Israel. "—Smith, *The New Treasury of Scripture Knowledge*, Dan. 4:36.

[479] "He did not tell this story reluctantly; it was quite pleasing to him to do it—he actually wanted to do this. In my opinion, there is only one satisfactory explanation for this: in the process of his humiliation by God, the heart of this man was truly changed, and he personally came to faith in the God of heaven."—Tanner, *Daniel: Evangelical Exegetical Commentary*, 266. "Although we should be somewhat cautious in our conclusions, these actions do seem to speak of a transformed and redeemed heart of a saint. Therefore, we may very well assume that Nebuchadnezzar himself became a true believer in the same God as Daniel and will one day stand with Daniel in the kingdom of God that will be given to the Son of Man."—Ibid., 310-311.

[480] "It is entirely possible that Nebuchadnezzar will be numbered among the saints."—Walvoord, *Daniel: The Key to Prophetic Revelation*, 112.

[481] "This view of the Babylonian king seemingly concerned with the spiritual and moral issues of life, anxious for divine guidance and working for the spiritual and material welfare of all peoples is no mere propaganda."—Wiseman, *Nebuchadrezzar and Babylon*, 101.

[482] "It is noteworthy that these words, in distinction from those of verse thirty-four, are active participles, indicating continuedness of action."—Wood, *A Commentary on Daniel*, Dan. 4:37.

[483] Miller, *Daniel*, Dan. 4:37.

[484] "Some reputable and devout students of the book of Daniel (e.g., Calvin, Hengstenberg, Pusey, and Leupold) have believed that Nebuchadnezzar probably was not truly converted."—Whitcomb, *Daniel*, Dan. 4:36.

[485] Ibid.

[486] Ibid.

[487] Ibid.

[488] Steinmann, *Daniel*, 253.

[489] Concerning Gentiles seeking God: Gen. 12:3; :18; Deu. 32:21, 43; 2S. 22:50; 1K. 8:43; 2Chr. 6:32; Ezra 7:15; Ps. 18:49; 22:27; 86:9; 117:1; Isa. 9:2; 11:1, 10; 42:6; 44:5; 49:6; 56:8; 60:3; 63:16; 65:1; 66:18; Jer. 16:19; Hos. 2:23; Amos 9:12; Mal. 1:11; Mat. 12:21; Luke 2:32; John 12:20-24; Acts 10:2, 45; 13:47; 15:17; 16:29, 23; 28:28; Rom. 9:30; 10:20; 15:9.

[490] Barnes, *Notes on the Old Testament*, 4:37.

[491] The OG includes a long passage offering additional praises and magnifying God.

[492] Swanson, *Dictionary of Biblical Languages With Semantic Domains : Aramaic (Old Testament)*, #10734.

[493] Wood, *A Commentary on Daniel*, Dan. 4:37.

[494] This image was produced by www.spiritandtruth.org and is hereby placed in the public domain.

[495] Andrew Roberts, *The Storm of War* (New York, NY: Harper Collins. 2011), 82.

[496] Jonathan Edwards, *On Knowing Christ* (Carlisle, PA: Banner of Truth Trust. 1893, 1993), 120.

[497] Concerning nations as beasts: Ps. 80:13; Isa. 11:6-9; 30:6; 35:8-9; 56:9; 65:25; Jer. 2:15; 4:7; 5:6; 8:17; 12:9-10; Eze. 34:25-30; 39:18; Dan. 7:3-7‣; Hos. 13:7; Nah. 2:11-13; Zec. 11:3; Rev. 13:1-2‣.

[498] Miller, *Daniel*, Dan. 4:37.

[499] Ironside, *Lectures on Daniel the Prophet*, 59-60.

[500] Clough, *Lessons on Daniel*, 13.162.

[501] Ibid., 14.177.

[502] Ibid., 13.164.

[503] Calvin, *Commentary on The Prophet Daniel*, Dan. 4:35.

[504] Seiss, *Voices from Babylon; or, The Records of Daniel the Prophet*, 127.

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