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By Dan Maines

Daniel 4

Daniel 4:1–3

Nebuchadnezzar the king to all the peoples, nations, and men of every language that live in all the earth: "May your peace abound! It has seemed good to me to declare the signs and wonders which the Most High God has done for me. How great are His signs and how mighty are His wonders! His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom and His dominion is from generation to generation."

† Nebuchadnezzar begins this chapter as a witness of God's power after experiencing His judgment and mercy.

† Historically, royal proclamations like this were inscribed to glorify the king's god, but here Nebuchadnezzar honors the Most High.

† Prophetically, this foreshadows the spread of God's kingdom through all nations, not just Israel.

† Jerome wrote that Nebuchadnezzar's confession showed the conversion of a Gentile heart to recognize divine sovereignty.

† In the fulfilled kingdom, every tongue confesses that Christ reigns, and His dominion has no end.

Daniel 4:4–5

"I, Nebuchadnezzar, was at ease in my house and flourishing in my palace. I saw a dream and it made me fearful; and these fantasies as I lay on my bed and the visions in my mind kept alarming me."

† The king's comfort preceded his downfall, showing how pride leads to divine correction.

† Historically, Babylon's wealth and splendor were unmatched, but they bred arrogance.

† Prophetically, this dream warns that human power without humility brings ruin.

† Hippolytus wrote that the king's fear shows how worldly security collapses before divine truth.

† In the fulfilled kingdom, pride is replaced by humility, as Christ's reign brings peace through surrender.

Daniel 4:6–7

"So I gave orders to bring into my presence all the wise men of Babylon, that they might make known to me the interpretation of the dream. Then the magicians, the conjurers, the Chaldeans and the diviners came in and I related the dream to them, but they could not make its interpretation known to me."

- † Once again, the futility of human wisdom is exposed.
- † Historically, Babylon's magicians failed repeatedly when confronted by divine revelation.
- † Prophetically, this shows that no earthly system can interpret the mysteries of God's kingdom.
- † Eusebius compared this to the silence of pagan oracles before the gospel's light.
- † In the fulfilled kingdom, all mysteries are revealed in Christ, who is the wisdom of God.

Daniel 4:8–9

"But finally Daniel came in before me, whose name is Belteshazzar according to the name of my god, and in whom is a spirit of the holy gods; and I related the dream to him, saying, 'O Belteshazzar, chief of the magicians, since I know that a spirit of the holy gods is in you and no mystery baffles you, tell me the visions of my dream which I have seen, along with its interpretation.'"

- † Daniel's reputation was known even among idolaters, revealing that true wisdom stands out in every age.
- † Historically, the king still used Daniel's Babylonian name, showing that his understanding was partial.
- † Prophetically, Daniel prefigures Christ, the true interpreter of God's mysteries to the nations.
- † Theodotion noted that Daniel's insight proved that divine knowledge surpasses human philosophy.
- † In the fulfilled kingdom, Christ's Spirit reveals all truth to those who seek God sincerely.

Daniel 4:10–12

"Now these were the visions in my mind as I lay on my bed: I was looking, and behold, there was a tree in the midst of the earth and its height was great. The tree grew large and became strong and its height reached to the sky, and it was visible to the end of the whole earth. Its foliage was beautiful and its fruit abundant, and in it was food for all. The beasts of the field

found shade under it, and the birds of the sky dwelt in its branches, and all living creatures fed themselves from it."

† The great tree symbolizes Babylon's empire and Nebuchadnezzar's power over the nations.

† Historically, ancient kings were often likened to trees giving shelter to peoples and nations.

† Prophetically, this image later reappears in Christ's parable of the mustard seed, showing the true kingdom's growth.

† Jerome saw this as a contrast between temporary earthly empires and God's eternal one.

† In the fulfilled kingdom, Christ alone provides lasting shelter and nourishment to all nations.

Daniel 4:13–15

"I was looking in the visions of my mind as I lay on my bed, and behold, an angelic watcher, a holy one, descended from heaven. He shouted out and spoke as follows: 'Chop down the tree and cut off its branches, strip off its foliage and scatter its fruit; let the beasts flee from under it and the birds from its branches. Yet leave the stump with its roots in the ground, but with a band of iron and bronze around it in the new grass of the field; and let him be drenched with the dew of heaven, and let him share with the beasts in the grass of the earth.'"

† The watcher's command shows divine judgment mixed with mercy, the tree is cut but not destroyed.

† Historically, this represents Nebuchadnezzar's temporary fall rather than total ruin.

† Prophetically, this reflects how God humbles rulers but preserves their place for repentance.

† Clement taught that God's correction is not for destruction but for restoration.

† In the fulfilled kingdom, judgment always leads to redemption through humility and repentance.

Daniel 4:16–18

"Let his mind be changed from that of a man and let a beast's mind be given to him, and let seven periods of time pass over him. This sentence is by the decree of the angelic watchers and the decision is a command of the holy ones, in order that the living may know that the Most High is ruler over the realm of mankind, and bestows it on whom He wishes and sets over it the lowliest of men. This is the dream which I, King Nebuchadnezzar, have seen. Now you, Belshazzar, tell me its interpretation, inasmuch as none of the wise men of my kingdom is able to make known to me the interpretation; but you are able, for a spirit of the holy gods is in you."

† The king's humiliation would teach the nations that God alone rules over men.

† Historically, "seven periods of time" refers to a complete cycle of divine discipline.

† Prophetically, this mirrors how God removed Israel's pride before establishing His everlasting kingdom.

† Hippolytus wrote that the "lowliest of men" ultimately refers to Christ, who reigns after humbling Himself.

† In the fulfilled kingdom, all authority belongs to the humble King who rules forever.

Daniel 4:19–22

Then Daniel, whose name is Belshazzar, was appalled for a while as his thoughts alarmed him... "The tree that you saw, which became large and grew strong, whose height reached to the sky and was visible to all the earth... it is you, O king, for you have become great and grown strong, and your majesty has become great and reached to the sky and your dominion to the end of the earth."

† Daniel's sorrow reveals compassion even toward those under judgment.

† Historically, Nebuchadnezzar's dominion extended across the ancient Near East, confirming the vision's scope.

† Prophetically, the greatness of the tree represents the temporary glory of earthly kingdoms.

† Eusebius noted that Daniel's respect for authority did not silence truth.

† In the fulfilled kingdom, we speak truth with compassion, knowing judgment serves God's purpose.

Daniel 4:23–25

"And in that the king saw an angelic watcher... saying, 'Chop down the tree...' that it is you, O king, that will be driven away from mankind and your dwelling place will be with the beasts of the field... until you recognize that the Most High is ruler over the realm of mankind and bestows it on whomever He wishes."

† The king's fall was decreed so that pride would give way to repentance.

† Historically, Nebuchadnezzar's madness lasted until he acknowledged divine authority.

† Prophetically, this shows that even the greatest powers are subject to God's correction.

† Jerome said this story teaches that pride dethrones kings, while humility restores them.

† In the fulfilled kingdom, all dominion belongs to Christ, who rules through righteousness and humility.

Daniel 4:26–27

"And in that it was commanded to leave the stump with the roots of the tree, your kingdom will be assured to you after you recognize that it is Heaven that rules. Therefore, O king, may my advice be pleasing to you: break away now from your sins by doing righteousness and from your iniquities by showing mercy to the poor, in case there may be a prolonging of your prosperity."

† God's mercy provided a chance for repentance before judgment fell.

† Historically, Daniel's counsel urged the king to humble himself

through justice and compassion.

† Prophetically, this reflects the gospel's call to repentance before destruction came upon Jerusalem.

† Clement emphasized that mercy to the poor is the fruit of true repentance.

† In the fulfilled kingdom, repentance restores life and establishes lasting peace.

Daniel 4:28–33

All this happened to Nebuchadnezzar the king... while the word was in the king's mouth, a voice came from heaven, saying, "King Nebuchadnezzar, to you it is declared: sovereignty has been removed from you!"

† Pride immediately brought divine correction.

† Historically, Nebuchadnezzar's loss of reason is consistent with known descriptions of madness and isolation.

† Prophetically, his fall mirrors Israel's humbling before God raised up the true kingdom in Christ.

† Hippolytus and Jerome both wrote that this event showed how God resists the proud and exalts the humble.

† In the fulfilled kingdom, pride falls, but grace restores those who bow before God's rule.

Daniel 4:34–37

"But at the end of that period I, Nebuchadnezzar, raised my eyes toward heaven and my reason returned to me, and I blessed the Most High... Now I, Nebuchadnezzar, praise, exalt and honor the King of heaven, for all His works are true and His ways just, and He is able to humble those who walk in pride."

† Nebuchadnezzar's restoration shows that repentance restores reason and relationship with God.

† Historically, the king's public confession was unprecedented among ancient monarchs.

† Prophetically, his renewal prefigures the Gentile world turning from idolatry to acknowledge the true God.

† Eusebius and Jerome recorded this confession as a symbol of nations submitting to divine truth.

† In the fulfilled kingdom, those once proud are transformed into witnesses of God's eternal reign.

How it applies to us today

† Daniel 4 shows that pride is the root of spiritual downfall, but humility brings restoration.

† God still rules over nations, exalting and humbling as He wills.

† The story proves that repentance brings renewed understanding and blessing.

† Christ reigns as the everlasting King who replaces all temporary thrones of men.

† In the fulfilled kingdom, the humble walk in wisdom, giving glory to God alone.

† This is the fulfilled perspective we proclaim at Fulfilled Prophecies †

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Source Index

† The Holy Bible, NASB

† Josephus, Antiquities of the Jews, Book 10

† Eusebius, Ecclesiastical History, Book 9

† Tertullian, Against Marcion, Book 4

† Clement of Rome, 1 Clement

† Jerome, Commentary on Daniel

† Theodotion, Greek Version of Daniel

† Hippolytus, Commentary on Daniel

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