

God Humbles Nebuchadnezzar

Scripture: Daniel 4

Memory Verse: “All His acts are just and true, and He is able to humble the proud.” Daniel 4:37

King Nebuchadnezzar sent this message to the people of every race and nation and language throughout the world:

Peace and prosperity to you! I want you all to know about the miraculous signs and wonders the Most-High God has performed for me. How great are His signs, how powerful His wonders! His kingdom will last forever, His rule through all generations.

I was living in my palace in comfort and prosperity. But one night I had a dream that frightened me. I saw a large tree in the middle of the earth. The tree grew very tall and strong, reaching high into the heavens for all the world to see. It had fresh green leaves, and it was loaded with fruit for all to eat. Wild animals lived in its shade, and birds nested in its branches. All the world was fed from this tree. Then, I saw a holy messenger coming down from heaven. The messenger shouted, “Cut down the tree! Shake off the leaves and scatter its fruit! Cut everything down, but leave the stump. Let him be drenched with dew, and eat grass, and have the mind of an animal instead of a man.”

Then I said to Daniel, (who I called Belteshazzar), “I know that the spirit of the holy gods is in you and that no mystery is too great for you to solve. Now tell me what my dream means.”

Daniel replied, “I wish the events in this dream would happen to your enemies, and not to you! This is what the dream means, Your Majesty: You will be driven from human society, and you will live in the fields with the wild animals. You will eat grass like a cow, and you will be drenched with the dew of heaven. Seven periods of time will pass while you live this way, until you learn that the Most-High rules over the kingdoms of the world and gives them to anyone he chooses. But the stump and roots of the tree were left in the ground. This means that you will receive your kingdom back again when you have learned that heaven rules. King Nebuchadnezzar, please accept my advice. Stop sinning and do what is right. Break from your wicked past and be merciful to the poor. Perhaps then you will continue to prosper.”

Twelve months later, that is exactly what happened to me. I was taking a walk on the flat roof of the royal palace in Babylon and looked out across the city, and said, ‘Look at this great city of Babylon! By my own mighty power, I have built this beautiful city as my royal residence to display my majestic splendor.’

While these words were still in my mouth, a voice called down from heaven, ‘O King Nebuchadnezzar, this message is for you! You are no longer ruler of this kingdom. You will be driven from human society. You will live in the fields with the wild animals, and you will eat grass like a cow. Seven periods of time will pass while you live this way, until you learn that the Most-High rules over the kingdoms of the world and gives them to anyone he chooses.’

That same hour the judgment was fulfilled, and I was driven from human society. I ate grass like a cow, and I was drenched with the dew of heaven. I lived this way until my hair was as long as eagles’ feathers and his nails were like birds’ claws.

After this time had passed, I looked up to heaven. My sanity returned, and I praised and worshiped the Most-High and honored the one who lives forever. His rule is everlasting, and His kingdom is eternal. All the people of the earth are nothing compared to him. He does as He pleases among the angels of heaven and among the people of the earth. No one can stop Him or say to Him, ‘What do you mean by doing these things?’

When my sanity returned to me, so did my honor and glory and kingdom. My advisers and nobles sought me out, and I was restored as head of my kingdom, with even greater honor than before.

Now I, Nebuchadnezzar, praise and glorify and honor the King of heaven. All His acts are just and true, and He is able to humble the proud.