



Shining in Babylon  
Study Guide  
Daniel 4

1. Discuss what you think is the problem in our world. Do you think our politicians are addressing the real problem in our world? Discuss.

2. Read Daniel 4:1-3. Notice that this is Nebuchadnezzar's personal testimony. He wants the whole world to know, that Jehovah is the Most High God. Why is that so important to know and live by?

3. Read Daniel 4:4-37.

Break up the passage as a group and read in sections:

a. Daniel 4:4-9- Why do you think we don't seek God first? Why do we tend to find solutions on our own?

b. Daniel 4:10-18- What was the dream?

c. Daniel 4:19-27- What was the interpretation of the dream?

d. Daniel 4:28-33- Why do you think Nebuchadnezzar didn't respond to Daniel's call to repentance?

3. Daniel 4:34-37- Discuss the idea that God is not paying us back, but bringing us back. How is this story encouraging to you?

### Application Challenge

Take the next two weeks to meditate on Psalm 51.

Write it out by hand and define the main words in the Psalm.

Pray through each line slowly and ask God to reveal blinding pride in your life.

## Daniel 4 Message Outline

### Shining in Babylon

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*"Humanity's natural disposition is one of proud defiance towards God and therefore against His people. Man, on the unstable foundation of his pride, "builds a city" and constructs a lifestyle that is set against God's ways."*

I'm trying to 'shine' but nothing is happening!

Chapter 1- Daniel/friends do not defile themselves.

Chapter 2- Daniel reveals the dream and its interpretation.

Nebuchadnezzar's reaction (Daniel 2:47)

"Truly, your God is God of gods and Lord of kings, and a revealer of mysteries, for you have been able to reveal this mystery."

Chapter 3- Daniel's friends in the fiery furnace

Nebuchadnezzar's reaction (Daniel 3:28-29)

"Blessed be the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, ... <sup>29</sup> Therefore I make a decree: Any people, nation, or language that speaks anything against the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego shall be torn limb from limb, and their houses laid in ruins, for there is no other god who is able to rescue in this way."

Big Idea: God is not paying us back, He is bringing us back.

#### I. The King's Conclusion (v. 1-3)

King Nebuchadnezzar to all peoples, nations, and languages, that dwell in all the earth: Peace be multiplied to you! <sup>2</sup> It has seemed good to me to show the signs and wonders that the Most High God has done for me. <sup>3</sup> How great are his signs, how mighty his wonders! His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and his dominion endures from generation to generation.

#### II. The King's Story (v. 4-37)

##### A. The Dilemma (v. 4-7)

<sup>4</sup> I, Nebuchadnezzar, was at ease in my house and prospering in my palace. <sup>5</sup> I saw a dream that made me afraid. As I lay in bed the fancies and the visions of my head alarmed me. <sup>6</sup> So I made a decree that all the wise men of Babylon should be brought before me, that they might make known to me the interpretation of the dream. <sup>7</sup> Then the magicians, the enchanters, the Chaldeans, and the astrologers came in, and I told them the dream, but they could not make known to me its interpretation.

##### B. Daniel Enters (v. 8-9)

<sup>8</sup> At last Daniel came in before me—he who was named Belteshazzar after the name of my god, and in whom is the spirit of the holy gods—and I told him the dream, saying, <sup>9</sup> "O Belteshazzar, chief of the magicians, because I know that the spirit of the

holy gods is in you and that no mystery is too difficult for you, tell me the visions of my dream that I saw and their interpretation.

#### C. Nebuchadnezzar Tells the Dream (v. 10-18)

<sup>10</sup>The visions of my head as I lay in bed were these: I saw, and behold, a tree in the midst of the earth, and its height was great. <sup>11</sup>The tree grew and became strong, and its top reached to heaven, and it was visible to the end of the whole earth. <sup>12</sup>Its leaves were 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 heavens lived in its branches, and all flesh was fed from it.

#### C. Nebuchadnezzar Tells the Dream (v. 10-18) *continued*

<sup>13</sup>"I saw in the visions of my head as I lay in bed, and behold, a watcher, a holy one, came down from heaven. <sup>14</sup>He proclaimed aloud and said thus: 'Chop down the tree and lop off its branches, strip off its leaves and scatter its fruit. Let the beasts flee from under it and the birds from its branches.

#### D. Daniel Interprets the Dream (v. 19-27)

<sup>19</sup>Then Daniel...was dismayed for a while, and his thoughts alarmed him. ...  
"My lord, may the dream be for those who hate you and its interpretation for your enemies."

#### D. Daniel Interprets the Dream (v. 19-27 *continued*)

<sup>24</sup>This is the interpretation, O king: It is a decree of the Most High, which has come upon my lord the king, <sup>25</sup>that you shall be driven from among men, and your dwelling shall be with the beasts ...eat grass like an ox, ... be wet with the dew of heaven, and seven periods of time shall pass over you, till you know that the Most High rules ...  
<sup>27</sup>Therefore, O king, let my counsel be acceptable to you: break off your sins by practicing righteousness, and your iniquities by showing mercy to the oppressed, that there may perhaps be a lengthening of your prosperity."

#### E. Nebuchadnezzar's Humiliation (v. 28-33)

<sup>28</sup>All this came upon King Nebuchadnezzar. <sup>29</sup>At the end of twelve months he was walking on the roof of the royal palace of Babylon, <sup>30</sup>and the king answered and said, "Is not this great Babylon, which I have built by my mighty power as a royal residence and for the glory of my majesty?"

#### E. Nebuchadnezzar's Humiliation (v. 28-33 *continued*)

<sup>31</sup>While the words were still in the king's mouth, there fell a voice from heaven, "O King Nebuchadnezzar, to you it is spoken: The kingdom has departed from you, <sup>32</sup>and you shall be driven from among men, and your dwelling shall be with the beasts of the field. And you shall be made to eat grass like an ox, and seven periods of time shall pass over you, until you know that the Most High rules the kingdom of men and gives it to whom he will."

## 2 Peter 2:12

“But these, like irrational animals, creatures of instinct, ...blaspheming about matters of which they are ignorant, will also be destroyed in their destruction.”

Big Idea: God is not paying us back, He is bringing us back.

## F. Nebuchadnezzar's Restoration (v. 34-37)

<sup>34</sup> At the end of the days I, Nebuchadnezzar, lifted my eyes to heaven, and my reason returned to me, and I blessed the Most High, and praised and honored him who lives forever, for his dominion is an everlasting dominion, and his kingdom endures from generation to generation; ...<sup>36</sup> At the same time my reason returned to me, and for the glory of my kingdom, my majesty and splendor returned to me. My counselors and my lords sought me, and I was established in my kingdom, and still more greatness was added to me.

## F. Nebuchadnezzar's Restoration (v. 34-37 *continued*)

<sup>37</sup> Now I, Nebuchadnezzar, praise and extol and honor the King of heaven, for all his works are right and his ways are just; and those who walk in pride he is able to humble.

## Blinding Pride is the Failure to See...

1. ...that all things come from God.
2. ...our vulnerability without God.
3. ...our self-centeredness.

Big Idea: God is not paying us back, He is bringing us back.

## Psalm 51 Meditation

Have mercy on me, O God, according to your steadfast love;  
according to your abundant mercy blot out my transgressions.

<sup>2</sup> Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin!

<sup>3</sup> For I know my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me.

<sup>4</sup> Against you, you only, have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight, so that you may be justified in your words and blameless in your judgment.