

Daniel 1-4
Nebuchadnezzar, King of Babylon
Lesson 3

Key Verse

Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves: be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves.

—Matthew 10:16

Key Verse Thought: Read the Key Verse. What do you think would happen to a sheep that was sent into the midst of a bunch of wolves (i.e.: chased, surrounded, killed, eaten, etc.). In this lesson, we will learn of four young men who were taken from their own people to live among an enemy nation who did not know God. We will learn how they were wise (as serpents – **serpents** means “*the emblem of wisdom or cunning*”) and harmless (**harmless** means “*without any mixture of deceit or any defiling material*”) as doves.

Emphasis: In this lesson, we will learn to understand that we are a witness to this lost generation – just as Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego were a life changing witness to Nebuchadnezzar – for he was saved because of their lives.

Lesson Summary: The book of Daniel contains some of the more familiar events in the Bible. Most people have probably heard these “stories” often. We will recognize that these are not just “stories” and, we will begin to understand them even better. First, we will consider their place in history. Daniel lived during the lives of the prophets Jeremiah and Ezekiel. Daniel and his three friends were most likely taken during the first siege of Nebuchadnezzar when many nobles and princes were taken captive (Daniel was of the kingly lineage of Judah). Remember that God allowed Babylon to come up against Jerusalem because of the condition of the Israelites – especially during the reign of their last four kings (for they had predominately forsaken God for idol worship).

In this lesson, we learn of four particular young men who were carried captive into the enemy king’s household: Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. We find that they chose to obey God rather than the king, and God blessed them for that choice. They became rulers in the enemy land. The familiar events we will learn about today:

- 1) Daniel and his three friends refuse to eat the king’s meat, but they are found wiser than all of the wise men in Babylon.
- 2) Nebuchadnezzar had a troubling dream that he could not remember. Although none of the wise men of Babylon could tell him the dream or the meaning, Daniel prayed with his friends and God revealed to Daniel the dream and the meaning of that dream.
- 3) When King Nebuchadnezzar erected a ninety-foot statue, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego refused to bow and were cast into the fiery furnace. When Jesus was in the fire with these three, Nebuchadnezzar again acknowledged God was real.
- 4) Nebuchadnezzar had another dream, and Daniel warned him to repent of his sins. Instead, Nebuchadnezzar lived as a wild animal for seven years. Nevertheless, when he acknowledged God as the most High God, he was finally saved – all because of the witness of these four men.

Suggested Bible Reading to Prepare for This Lesson

- Monday: Daniel 1
- Tuesday: Daniel 2
- Wednesday: Daniel 3
- Thursday: Daniel 4
- Friday: Proverbs 19
- Saturday: Proverbs 20

Daniel 1-4:

Nebuchadnezzar, King of Babylon

1. Nebuchadnezzar's Captives (Daniel 1)
 - Young men who walked with God
 - God honored Daniel and his three friends
2. Nebuchadnezzar's Troubling Dream (Daniel 2)
 - Daniel was a witness for God
 - Nebuchadnezzar first acknowledged God
3. Nebuchadnezzar's Image (Daniel 3)
 - Three friends chose to worship God only
 - Jesus was with them in the fiery furnace
4. Nebuchadnezzar's Dream (Daniel 4)
 - God warned Nebuchadnezzar in a dream
 - The conversion of Nebuchadnezzar

Note: Before we begin this lesson, remember what Isaiah prophesied to King Hezekiah after he showed all of his treasures to the king of Babylon. “17. Behold, the days come, that all that *is* in thine house, and that which thy fathers have laid up in store unto this day, shall be carried into Babylon: nothing shall be left, saith the LORD. 18. And of thy sons that shall issue from thee, which thou shalt beget, shall they take away; and they shall be eunuchs in the palace of the king of Babylon” (2 Kings 20:17-18). Also remember: “And of thy sons that shall issue from thee, which thou shalt beget, shall they take away; and they shall be eunuchs in the palace of the king of Babylon” (Isaiah 39:7).

Remember that Nebuchadnezzar invaded Jerusalem eventually destroying the house of the Lord, the walls, and burning the city gates. He killed many and took hostages to his land, making them his servants. The destruction of Jerusalem and the nation of Judah took place in three definite movements:

1. Nebuchadnezzar invaded Jerusalem, taking Jehoiakim and many leading nobles (princes, including Daniel and his three friends, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah) captive.
2. Nebuchadnezzar invaded a second time, took Jehoiachin and the most important people (most likely including Ezekiel).
3. When Zedekiah broke his allegiance to Nebuchadnezzar, joining an alliance with Egypt, the Babylonians besieged Jerusalem burning the Temple and taking the final hostages to Babylon.

In our last lesson, we read the words Ezekiel preached to the Israelites (especially the children of the captives), after he had been carried captive into Babylon. Daniel and his three friends were taken captive from Jerusalem during the third year of King Jehoiakim in the first invasion of Jerusalem – about nineteen years before the final captivity of Israel (and before Ezekiel began to preach). In this lesson, we will learn what happened to four young men who chose to walk with God.

1. Nebuchadnezzar’s Captives (Daniel 1)

“In the third year of the reign of Jehoiakim king of Judah came Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon unto Jerusalem, and besieged it” (Daniel 1:1). This tells us when the information in the book of Daniel began.

3. And the king spake unto Ashpenaz the master of his eunuchs, that he should bring *certain* of the children of Israel, and of the king's seed, and of the princes; 4. Children in whom *was* no blemish, but well favoured, and skilful in all wisdom, and cunning in knowledge, and understanding science, and such as *had* ability in them to stand in the king's palace, and whom they might teach the learning and the tongue of the Chaldeans. 5. And the king appointed them a daily provision of the king's meat, and of the wine which he drank: so nourishing them three years, that at the end thereof they might stand before the king. 6. Now among these were of the children of Judah, Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah: 7. Unto whom the prince of the eunuchs gave names: for he gave unto Daniel *the name* of Belteshazzar; and to Hananiah, of Shadrach; and to Mishael, of Meshach; and to Azariah, of Abednego. (Daniel 1:3-7)

This verse definitively places Daniel and his three friends as some of the first hostages taken by Nebuchadnezzar into Babylon. King Nebuchadnezzar wanted the best of the young men of Judah to be set aside, to teach them the things of the Chaldeans (i.e. the history, language, laws of the land, how to handle themselves in the king's court, etc.). Notice that it appears the objective here was to make them forget everything about their previous life in Judah, becoming as the Babylonians. It began by changing their foods. We read of four particular young men: Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah. Each of these young men obviously had parents who had not forsaken God (notice the meanings of their names below), but who still served Him in spite of the idolatry around them. The next obvious thing we can recognize that happened to these four young men was a change of their name. Each of these name changes was to make them forget the God of their youth, and instead acknowledge the false gods of Babylon.

Notice what their names mean and what their names were changed to:

- **Daniel** means *God is my judge*; Daniel was changed to **Beltshazzar**;
- **Hananiah** means *God is Gracious*; Hananiah was changed to **Shadrach**;
- **Mishael** means *Who is like God*; Mishael was changed to **Meshach**; and
- **Azariah** means *God is my Help*; Azariah was changed to **Abednego**

Their new names honored Babylonian gods instead.

When King Nebuchadnezzar gave the order to eat the king's meat and drink his wine, and then their names, which had honored God, were taken from them, these young men recognized that their commitment to God was being challenged. Read that they chose to trust God, deciding to walk with Him. "But Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the portion of the king's meat, nor with the wine which he drank: therefore he requested of the prince of the eunuchs that he might not defile himself" (Daniel 1:8). When Daniel purposed in his heart to obey God rather than man, recognize what God did. "Now God had brought Daniel into favour and tender love with the prince of the eunuchs" (Daniel 1:9).

Read Daniel 1:10-16. In Daniel's asking the prince of the eunuchs to permit these four young men to eat vegetables and drink water instead of the king's choice foods, it was to allow the Lord to have a chance to prove Himself. When these young men appeared in better condition than any of the others did, they were allowed to continue their diet for the three years. Read what God did for them when they choose to walk in the ways of God. "As for these four children, God gave them knowledge and skill in all learning and wisdom: and Daniel had understanding in all visions and dreams" (Daniel 1:17). Even more than that, see what was discovered when they were presented to King Nebuchadnezzar. "19. And the king communed with them; and among them all was found none like Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah: therefore stood they before the king. 20. And in all matters of wisdom and understanding, that the king enquired of them, he found them ten times better than all the magicians and astrologers that were in all his realm" (Daniel 1:19-20).

God honored Daniel for choosing to walk according to God's Words. "And Daniel continued even unto the first year of king Cyrus" (Daniel 1:21). Especially notice God allowed Daniel to live through the entire captivity

1. Now in the first year of Cyrus king of Persia, that the word of the LORD by the mouth of Jeremiah might be fulfilled, the LORD stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia, that he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom, and put it also in writing, saying, 2. Thus saith Cyrus king of Persia, The LORD God of heaven hath given me all

the kingdoms of the earth; and he hath charged me to build him an house at Jerusalem, which *is* in Judah. 3. Who *is there* among you of all his people? his God be with him, and let him go up to Jerusalem, which *is* in Judah, and build the house of the LORD God of Israel, (he *is* the God,) which *is* in Jerusalem. (Ezra 1:1-3)

However, more than that, Daniel lived until a king arose, sending the first group back into Jerusalem to rebuild after the seventy years of captivity (which we will learn about in a few lessons).

A Deeper Path: Remember in the book of Joshua, there was a choice the people had to make once they were settled in the Promised Land, a land where the previous inhabitants had served many idols. Remember the declaration Joshua made to the people of his decision. “14. Now therefore fear the LORD, and serve him in sincerity and in truth: and put away the gods which your fathers served on the other side of the flood, and in Egypt; and serve ye the LORD. 15. And if it seem evil unto you to serve the LORD, choose you this day whom ye will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that *were* on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: but as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD” (Joshua 24:14-15). In order to serve God, one must put away the old (idols, lifestyle) and purpose in one’s heart to serve God – and no other. Daniel and his three friends chose to serve God, forsaking the idolatrous lifestyle in Babylon, living a life according to God’s Word.

2. Nebuchadnezzar’s Troubling Dream (Daniel 2)

Read Daniel 2:1-49. After you finish reading those verses, consider them and especially notice the following:

Daniel 2:1-3: Nebuchadnezzar had a dream that troubled him. He called his wise men to tell him what his dream was that troubled him, for he declared he could not remember the dream, nor knew what it meant.

Daniel 2:4-13: The wise men claimed no man could tell the king his dream and the interpretation. After arguing about it, read what the wise men claimed. “10. The Chaldeans answered before the king, and said, There is not a man upon the earth that can shew the king’s matter: therefore *there is* no king, lord, nor ruler, *that* asked such things at any magician, or astrologer, or Chaldean. 11. And *it is* a rare thing that the king requireth, and there is none other that can shew it before the king, except the gods, whose dwelling is not with flesh” (Daniel 2:10-10). Read Nebuchadnezzar’s response to this declaration. “12. For this cause the king was angry and very furious, and commanded to destroy all the wise *men* of Babylon. 13. And the decree went forth that the wise *men* should be slain; and they sought Daniel and his fellows to be slain” (Daniel: 2:12-13). The king wanted all of the wise men dead.

Daniel 2:14-18: Daniel heard of the king’s decree and went to the king. He asked for time, and he would show the king the interpretation. “Then Daniel went to his house, and made the thing known to Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, his companions” (Daniel 2:17). They prayed together, asking God to tell them this dream and the interpretation (“*this secret*” in Daniel 2:18).

Daniel 2:19-24: God answered their prayer. Daniel thanked God for that answer, and asked to see the king.

Daniel 2:25-30: Daniel told the king that no man could tell the king his dream and the meaning, “But there is a God in heaven that revealeth secrets, and maketh known to the king

Nebuchadnezzar what shall be in the latter days. Thy dream, and the visions of thy head upon thy bed, are these” (Daniel 2:28). Daniel told the king that the answer to his dream came from God.

Daniel 2:31-45: Picture what was in King Nebuchadnezzar’s dream. “32. This image’s head *was* of fine gold, his breast and his arms of silver, his belly and his thighs of brass, 33. His legs of iron, his feet part of iron and part of clay” (Daniel 2:32-33). Not only did he see this great image, but also an uncut stone struck the image at the feet and broke it to pieces. That stone became a great mountain that filled the whole earth. The meaning of the dream: There would be four great kingdoms (King Nebuchadnezzar’s was represented in the head of gold – because God had established him a great kingdom), but one day God would establish a kingdom that would never be destroyed. He was telling of Jesus (the uncut stone) who would one day rule and reign, forever. We can understand that the parts of the image represented kingdoms of the earth that should successively bear rule among the nations:

- the gold (head) was Babylon,
- the silver (breast and arms) were the Medes and Persians,
- the brass (belly and thighs) were Greece,
- the iron (legs) were Rome
- the iron and clay mixed was the divided, weakened Rome (the antichrist’s kingdom, not yet fulfilled)
- the uncut stone is Christ, the Messiah who will destroy the kingdoms of the world (not yet fulfilled)

Daniel 2:46-47: We read King Nebuchadnezzar’s first acknowledgment that the God of Daniel is the one true God. “The king answered unto Daniel, and said, Of a truth *it is*, that your God *is* a God of gods, and a Lord of kings, and a revealer of secrets, seeing thou couldest reveal this secret” (Daniel 2:47).

Daniel 2:48-49: Recognize the furtherance of Daniel and his three friends because of their faithfulness to God. “48. Then the king made Daniel a great man, and gave him many great gifts, and made him ruler over the whole province of Babylon, and chief of the governors over all the wise *men* of Babylon. 49. Then Daniel requested of the king, and he set Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, over the affairs of the province of Babylon: but Daniel *sat* in the gate of the king” (Daniel 2:48-49).

A Deeper Path: Notice that Daniel shared with his three friends and asked them to pray with him. Prayer is important. “16. ... Pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much. 17. Elias was a man subject to like passions as we are, and he prayed earnestly that it might not rain: and it rained not on the earth by the space of three years and six months. 18. And he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain, and the earth brought forth her fruit” (James 5:16-18).

Sometimes God reveals Himself to His people during the night, in a dream (as we just read of Daniel). “14. For God speaketh once, yea twice, *yet man* perceiveth it not. 15. In a dream, in a vision of the night, when deep sleep falleth upon men, in slumberings upon the bed; 16. Then he openeth the ears of men, and sealeth their instruction” (Job 33:14-16). Then he can reveal to us His plans, instructing us what we should do.

Even though Nebuchadnezzar was the enemy king, Daniel was a bold witness to him – and the king recognized God through Daniel’s life. Remember what we learn from Jesus in the New Testament. “**But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to**

them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you” (Matthew 5:44).

3. Nebuchadnezzar’s Image (Daniel 3)

Nebuchadnezzar, the king, made an image of gold ninety feet tall and nine feet wide. After setting it up, “Then Nebuchadnezzar the king sent to gather together the princes, the governors, and the captains, the judges, the treasurers, the counsellors, the sheriffs, and all the rulers of the provinces, to come to the dedication of the image which Nebuchadnezzar the king had set up.” (Daniel 3:2). When they all came and stood before the image, they were commanded to fall down and worship that golden image when they heard the, “sound of the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, dulcimer, and all kinds of musick” (Daniel 3:5). See what else they were told. “And whoso falleth not down and worshippeth shall the same hour be cast into the midst of a burning fiery furnace” (Daniel 3:6). When Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego did not fall down and worship the image, someone went and told the king. “There are certain Jews whom thou hast set over the affairs of the province of Babylon, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego; these men, O king, have not regarded thee: they serve not thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up” (Daniel 3:12). We have already learned that these young men trusted the one true God with their lives. They had chosen to serve God rather than man, and they had witnessed God’s blessing upon their lives. Remember: they were captives in a foreign land, yet they were rulers in their captive land. God had blessed them through the enemy king.

Nevertheless, read King Nebuchadnezzar’s reaction to the report he received. “Then Nebuchadnezzar in *his* rage and fury commanded to bring Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. Then they brought these men before the king” (Daniel 3:13). He was angry, but he gave them a second chance to bow to the golden image – with the warning, “but if ye worship not, ye shall be cast the same hour into the midst of a burning fiery furnace; and who *is* that God that shall deliver you out of my hands?” (Daniel 3:15b). Read their answer, “... O Nebuchadnezzar, we *are* not careful to answer thee in this matter. 17. If it be *so*, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and he will deliver *us* out of thine hand, O king. 18. But if not, be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up” (Daniel 3:16b-18).

Something interesting to consider here: Read the following verses.

3. Thou shalt have no other gods before me. 4. Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness *of any thing* that *is* in heaven above, or that *is* in the earth beneath, or that *is* in the water under the earth: 5. Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them ... (Exodus 20:3-5)

1. But now thus saith the LORD that created thee, O Jacob, and he that formed thee, O Israel, Fear not: for I have redeemed thee, I have called *thee* by thy name; thou *art* mine. 2. When thou passest through the waters, I *will be* with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee. 3. For I *am* the LORD thy God, the Holy One of Israel, thy Saviour ... (Isaiah 43:1-3)

These young men understood that they were not to worship or bow down to any image. They also understood that God would protect them – even when they, “*walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee*” (Isaiah 43:2b). For God is the God of Israel, their Savior. They believed God was with them no matter what happened.

This angered King Nebuchadnezzar greatly. “*Then was Nebuchadnezzar full of fury, and the form of his visage was changed against Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego: therefore he spake, and commanded that they should heat the furnace one seven times more than it was wont to be heated*” (Daniel 3:19). He had his mightiest men bind Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego and throw them into the fiery furnace. The men that threw them into the fire were burned up, “*And these three men, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, fell down bound into the midst of the burning fiery furnace.*” (Daniel 3:23). Moreover, Nebuchadnezzar, the king, was astonished.

24. Then Nebuchadnezzar the king was astonished, and rose up in haste, *and* spake, and said unto his counsellors, Did not we cast three men bound into the midst of the fire? They answered and said unto the king, True, O king. 25. He answered and said, Lo, I see four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire, and they have no hurt; and the form of the fourth is like the Son of God. (Daniel 3:24-25)

Do you recall the verse we just read from Isaiah chapter forty-three that said that God would be with them when they walk through the fire? Jesus, Himself, went into the fire with Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. And because of their faith in God, read what happened.

26. Then Nebuchadnezzar came near to the mouth of the burning fiery furnace, *and* spake, and said, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, ye servants of the most high God, come forth, and come *hither*. Then Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, came forth of the midst of the fire. 27. And the princes, governors, and captains, and the king's counsellors, being gathered together, saw these men, upon whose bodies the fire had no power, nor was an hair of their head singed, neither were their coats changed, nor the smell of fire had passed on them. 28. *Then* Nebuchadnezzar spake, and said, Blessed *be* the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, who hath sent his angel, and delivered his servants that trusted in him, and have changed the king's word, and yielded their bodies, that they might not serve nor worship any god, except their own God. (Daniel 3:26-28)

Not only did God spare their lives, miraculously, but Nebuchadnezzar also acknowledged God as the most high God. This is the second time recorded that Nebuchadnezzar recognized God and His dealings in the lives of the young men from Judah. Not only that, but see what the king did. “*Therefore I make a decree, That every people, nation, and language, which speak any thing amiss against the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, shall be cut in pieces, and their houses shall be made a dunghill: because there is no other God that can deliver after this sort*” (Daniel 3:29). He then promoted Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego in the kingdom (see Daniel 3:30).

A Deeper Path: Read some of the following verses that must have been encouragement to Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego as they refused to break God's Laws – even with the threat of death facing them. These verses, and the lives of these three young men, should serve as an encouragement to us – even today.

David understood that it was God, who was his helper: the one who delivered him from the death of the wild animals. He knew God would deliver him again from Goliath. “David said moreover, The LORD that delivered me out of the paw of the lion, and out of the paw of the bear, he will deliver me out of the hand of this Philistine. And Saul said unto David, Go, and the LORD be with thee” (1 Samuel 17:37). Moreover, God delivered Goliath into David's hand, and David was not harmed.

Later, David still understood God was watching him, protecting him from harm from his enemies. “15. The eyes of the LORD are upon the righteous, and his ears are open unto their cry. 16. The face of the LORD is against them that do evil, to cut off the remembrance of them from the earth. 17. The righteous cry, and the LORD heareth, and delivereth them out of all their troubles” (Psalm 34:15-17).

In another instance, see what David wrote: “In God have I put my trust: I will not be afraid what man can do unto me” (Psalm 56:11). This also showed his complete trust in God.

It would also be good to read Psalm 121 for more understanding that our help comes from God.

4. Nebuchadnezzar's Dream (Daniel 4)

We begin Daniel chapter four with a declaration from King Nebuchadnezzar. He declares that this is his personal testimony of how he came to know the one true God. Take note that this chapter is written by King Nebuchadnezzar.

It began with a dream, but when he called all of his wise men in before him, to tell him what his dream meant, no one knew. “But at the last Daniel came in before me, whose name was Belteshazzar, according to the name of my god, and in whom is the spirit of the holy gods: and before him I told the dream ...” (Daniel 4:8). Notice that Nebuchadnezzar acknowledged that he had named Daniel after his gods, but he recognized that the spirit of the one true God was within Daniel. He told Daniel his dream. Daniel 4:10-18 tells us of that dream. Again, read what Nebuchadnezzar acknowledged about Daniel. “... Now thou, O Belteshazzar, declare the interpretation thereof, forasmuch as all the wise men of my kingdom are not able to make known unto me the interpretation: but thou art able; for the spirit of the holy gods is in thee” (Daniel 4:18).

After hearing the dream, Daniel was troubled – for he knew that it was bad news for Nebuchadnezzar, yet good news for his enemies. Read Daniel 4:19-26 for the interpretation of that dream that Daniel gave to King Nebuchadnezzar. However, see a key part. “That they shall drive thee from men, and thy dwelling shall be with the beasts of the field, and they shall make thee to eat grass as oxen, and they shall wet thee with the dew of heaven, and seven times shall pass over thee, till thou know that the most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will” (Daniel 4:25). In addition, read the invitation Daniel gave to King Nebuchadnezzar. “Wherefore, O king, let my counsel be acceptable unto thee, and break off thy sins by righteousness, and thine iniquities by shewing mercy to the poor; if it may be a lengthening of thy tranquillity” (Daniel 4:27). Daniel counseled him to turn from his sins.

Just as God warned in a dream, “All this came upon the king Nebuchadnezzar” (Daniel 4:28).

One year later, Nebuchadnezzar said, "... Is not this great Babylon, that I have built for the house of the kingdom by the might of my power, and for the honour of my majesty?" (Daniel 4:30). While the words were in his mouth, God spoke telling Nebuchadnezzar that, "The kingdom is departed from thee" (Daniel 4:31b). God proceeded to tell him that he would be driven from men to live with the beasts of the field and eat grass for seven years. "The same hour was the thing fulfilled upon Nebuchadnezzar: and he was driven from men, and did eat grass as oxen, and his body was wet with the dew of heaven, till his hairs were grown like eagles' feathers, and his nails like birds' claws" (Daniel 4:33). But at the end of that seven years see what happened.

And at the end of the days I Nebuchadnezzar lifted up mine eyes unto heaven, and mine understanding returned unto me, and I blessed the most High, and I praised and honoured him that liveth for ever, whose dominion is an everlasting dominion, and his kingdom is from generation to generation: (Daniel 4:34)

Understand what took place once Nebuchadnezzar recognized *the* God. "At the same time my reason returned unto me; and for the glory of my kingdom, mine honour and brightness returned unto me; and my counsellors and my lords sought unto me; and I was established in my kingdom, and excellent majesty was added unto me" (Daniel 4:36). Once Nebuchadnezzar acknowledged God, his reasoning returned. Read the declaration made by King Nebuchadnezzar. "Now I Nebuchadnezzar praise and extol and honour the King of heaven, all whose works are truth, and his ways judgment: and those that walk in pride he is able to abase" (Daniel 4:37). When Nebuchadnezzar acknowledge God and what God did in his life, Nebuchadnezzar was changed – for he had been saved.

Daniel 1-4 at a Glance:

- Chapter 1: Daniel and three friends carried captive into Babylon; refused the king's food; were found wiser than any others
- Chapter 2: Nebuchadnezzar's troubling dream; he ordered the death of wise men; Daniel told the dream and the meaning
- Chapter 3: Nebuchadnezzar set up a 90 foot image for all to bow at the sound of the music; Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego refused – cast into the fiery furnace where one like the Son of God was with them
- Chapter 4: Nebuchadnezzar's dream and Daniel's interpretation; the king would be as a wild beast for seven years because he was strong (proud) – Daniel encouraged him to repent, but the king's heart was lifted up and he became as a beast for seven years; at the end of that time, his reasoning returned, he recognized and praised God

Reinforcement: We should have learned in this lesson, that although these four friends were thrown as sheep to the wolves, they understood they had to walk with God, pleasing Him first and foremost. Today, we are to do the same thing right where God has placed us. "15. See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, 16. Redeeming the time, because the days are evil. 17. Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is" (Ephesians 5:15-17). Because of their lives displaying God as most important, the king of the enemy nation not only recognized God, but also eventually acknowledged Him, personally –

King Nebuchadnezzar was saved because of their witness. That is our job even today: to win others to Christ by our godly lifestyles

Closing: It would be good to close with a short prayer reinforcing today's lesson. Always include any prayer requests you may have. *Today, pray that we will purpose in our hearts to obey God in everything and then to recognize God's blessings upon our lives.*