

THE GLORY BELONGS TO GOD ALONE

SCRIPTURE REFERENCE: DANIEL 4

**The STORY**

Read the following story of Nebuchadnezzar's dream from Daniel 4. Use the following questions to involve the children in a discussion.

One day while he was at home King Nebuchadnezzar had a scary dream. He dreamed of a huge tree that stretched to the sky and could be seen over the whole earth. Animals lived in the tree and it bore abundant fruit. Then, coming down from heaven was a holy one calling out to cut down the tree and destroy it. Then it is declared that the one whom the tree represents should live with the wild animals and have the mind of an animal until seven years pass.

The King called for his advisors but no one could interpret the dream. Finally, he called for Daniel and asked him to interpret the dream. Daniel was afraid about the dream but after the king encouraged him, Daniel told the king that the tree represented him. He said, "O king, you are that tree! You have become great and strong; your greatness has grown until it reaches the sky."

Daniel warned the king that unless he would renounce his sins and do what is right by giving to the poor then he would be driven away from people to live with wild animals and eat grass like the cattle.

The king did not repent and one year later looked over his kingdom. In his pride he gave himself glory and said, "Is not this the great Babylon I have built by my mighty power and for the glory of my majesty?"

Before he even finished speaking, a voice came out of heaven to judge his words and immediately what was prophesied came true.

The king's body was drenched with dew from heaven until his hair grew like the feathers of an eagle and his nails like the claws of a bird. After seven years the king finally humbled himself and lifted his eyes toward heaven. God saw his humility and restored his sanity. King Nebuchadnezzar praised God and said,

His dominion is an eternal dominion; his kingdom endures from generation to generation. All the peoples of the earth are regarded as nothing. He does as he pleases with the powers of heaven and the peoples of the earth. No one can hold back his hand or say to him: "What have you done?"
(Daniel 4:34-35 NIV)

After that, God restored Nebuchadnezzar's kingdom. Nebuchadnezzar learned a valuable lesson that he passes on to all of us in Daniel 4:37, "Now I, Nebuchadnezzar, praise and exalt and glorify the King of heaven, because everything he does is right and all his ways are just. And those who walk in pride he is able to humble."

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Please note: The discussion questions in the following sections are written to serve as a guide in teaching our youngest children. Three to six year olds are not going to be able to answer these questions like their older brothers and sisters. Please refer to the God's Story Preschool Curriculum Outline for additional ideas.

After reading the story, use the following questions to involve the children in a discussion.

- Why do you think Daniel was afraid of the dream? (Daniel understood that it was very bad news for the king. Perhaps that is why the king's other advisors said they could not interpret the dream.)
- What was the dream about? (The dream showed the greatness of King Nebuchadnezzar and his pride and that God was going to judge him.)
- What was God going to do to the king if he did not repent and change his behavior? (God was going to give him the mind of an animal and the king would be like an animal in the field eating grass.)

CRAFT QUESTIONS

Coloring sheets have been provided that exemplify today's lesson: wild Nebuchadnezzar eating grass with long feather like hair and long nails. Engage the children by asking:

- Why did God give King Nebuchadnezzar the mind of an animal? (Because the king gave glory to himself, not to God.)
- What kind of things might we be tempted to give glory to ourselves about? (Some examples: getting a good grade on a test, learning how to ride a bicycle, doing well in sports, etc.)
- What lesson is God trying to give us in this story? (God alone gets the glory.)



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SNACK QUESTIONS

While the children are eating the snack engage the children by asking:

- Has anyone ever given you a warning that you did not listen to such as "Don't touch that pan because it is hot"? (Accept any answer.)
- What is pride? (Pride is when we place ourselves as more important than God.)
- How was King Nebuchadnezzar proud? (King Nebuchadnezzar praised himself for his accomplishments instead of giving the glory to the Lord.)



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WHERE IS JESUS?

Please use the following comments connecting today's lesson to the Gospel to help inform your understanding and serve you by aiding your preparation for class. Remember, we want to do more than present disconnected Bible stories and lessons to our young children. We want them to understand how each story in the Bible plays a part in God's greater plan of redemption.

Nothing happens by mere chance or by accident apart from the sovereign control of God. Every part of the story of King Nebuchadnezzar happened just as God ordained that it would. Throughout history God moved in such a way so as to allow His people to survive to return from exile. In his letter to the Ephesians, Paul tells us:

In him we were also chosen, having been predestined according to the plan of him who works out everything in conformity with the purpose of his will, in order that we, who were the first to hope in Christ, might be for the praise of his glory. (Ephesians 1:11-12)

In other words, all the things that happened to King Nebuchadnezzar happened according to God's plan. God worked in Nebuchadnezzar's life and ultimately brought this pagan king to faith. All the while God was preserving a remnant of Israel who would later return and rebuild the walls of Jerusalem. Our Savior would later come out of this remnant. God gave His word to Abraham that all nations would be blessed through Abraham's offspring. The Word of the Lord stands forever!

All men are like grass, and all their glory is like the flowers of the field; the grass withers and the flowers fall, but the word of the Lord stands forever. (1 Peter 1:24-25)

SWORD BIBLE MEMORY

BE A DOER OF THE WORD

Take time during the class to review the SWORD Bible Memory verses with the class. Provide the opportunity for each child to recite the verses to an adult worker.

