

# Living like an animal!

Lesson for Sunday, February 14, 2021

TEXT: Daniel 4

## INTRODUCTION:

- Most of us recognize the danger of pride, but fail to recognize the depth of pride in our own human hearts. What are some common ways we see pride exhibited in our world today?
- The opposite of pride is humility. The Bible has so much to say about this important trait. Read 1 Peter 5:5 – we are to be clothed in humility. What does this mean? How do we do that?
- In today's lesson from Daniel, we see that when we fail to clothe ourselves in humility, we face the danger of living like an animal!

NOTE: The chapter actually begins with Nebuchadnezzar's testimony – a testimony that grew out of the experience described in this chapter. He has come to trust in God and has a personal relationship with Him (quite an amazing thought). This testimony would actually fit better at the end of the chapter/lesson!

## BIBLE STUDY:

1. The King's dream (vs. 4-18)
  - a. Throughout Daniel, the King is always having interesting dreams. This dream, like the others, greatly disturbed him.
  - b. As a result, he called in all the astrologers, but once again they could not answer.
  - c. The text describes his dream:
    - i. There was a huge tree grew as tall as the heavens and wide as the earth.
    - ii. Angels commanded that the tree be cut down.
    - iii. A man's heart would be changed to a beast's heart.
  - d. What does the text tell us about his dream (vs. 17)?
    - i. God is in control of all things. "The most High ruleth..."
    - ii. God permits the earthly kings to rule. "Giveth it to whomsoever He will."
    - iii. Bottom line: God is in control; not the kings of the earth.
2. Daniel's interpretation (vs. 19-27)
  - a. Daniel had an interesting response – He was quiet for an hour!
  - b. Daniel understood the ramifications of the dream and even said that he wished the dream was talking about the king's enemies instead.
  - c. Here's how Daniel broke down the dream and its meaning:
    - i. The tree represented the king. He has become a strong and great ruler.
    - ii. His rule was to be cut off, but not ended. He would live as a beast of the field for seven years and not even know who he was.
    - iii. This would all happen because of the king's pride. God was going to humble him to show him once and for all Who is in control.

- d. Take a moment and read some other passages that deal with the danger of pride: Proverbs 6:16-19, Jeremiah 9:23-24, 2 Corinthians 10:17.
  - e. Daniel begged the king to turn from his sins hoping that God might reverse the coming judgment.
3. The King's condition and conversion (vs. 28-37)
- a. God gave the king an entire year, and he still did not deal with his pride. What does this say about God?
  - b. God finally fulfilled the dream and it was an unbelievable occurrence (vs. 31-33).
  - c. The king finally returned and repented. Notice...
    - i. He gave God the glory that only He deserves (34).
    - ii. He recognized that God is in control (35).
    - iii. He learned the lesson: "...those who walk in pride he is able to abase."

#### APPLICATIONS TO DISCUSS:

1. Who do we go to if we want real answers to the tough questions of life? Do we go to God's Word or do we look for a more appealing answer? Do we seek to adjust our lives to the Bible's teachings, or do we try to manipulate the Scriptures to fit our lives? What is the danger in this approach?
2. Do you believe that God is in control? Does it change anything if you don't believe it?
3. Why did God have to go to such extremes with Nebuchadnezzar?
4. What must God do to get your attention? Would it not be better to listen to "the still small voice?"
5. In what areas does pride surface in your life? What do you need to do with this pride? How can you keep a humble perspective?