

LESSON PLAN

NEBUCHADNEZZAR'S STRANGE DREAM

Daniel 4

Lesson Memory Verse: 1 Peter 5:6 - "Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time."

Lesson Aim: We must learn to humble ourselves in everything we think, say or do.

Lesson Plan: Use the KEY – HE – SEE – WE – BE plan (explained in the Introductory Notes).

KEY (for Attention): Ask the children to name one of the worst sins that many kings in the Bible did; i.e., Rehoboam, Uzziah, Manasseh, Jehoiakim. (You are looking for the sin of pride.) If they do not name "pride" as one of the worst sins that God hates, give them another clue. Tell them that it is the sin that Satan did when he was cast out of Heaven. You might tell them how Satan showed his pride (cf. Isaiah 14:12-14).

HE (for Authority): Our memory verse tells us that we are to humble ourselves. Some people ask God to make them humble, but God says that is our responsibility. Humility starts in how we think of ourselves. Then it will be expressed by the words that we use and the actions that we do. The same is true of pride. So it is important to guard our thoughts. The "therefore" in our verse refers to the previous verse, which says, "God resists the proud, and gives grace to the humble." God's mighty hand will hurt us when we are proud, but His mighty hand will help us when we are humble. In fact, He will exalt us, He will greatly honor

SEE (for Apperception) and WE (for Application): PLEASE do not read these comments until you have read the Scripture for this lesson. First let the Holy Spirit teach you directly from His Word. In our Bible story today God warned Nebuchadnezzar about his pride by giving him a strange dream about a great tree that reached up to heaven.

I Proclamation - Daniel 4:1-3

God struck Nebuchadnezzar with a strange sickness for seven years as punishment for his pride. At the end of the seven years he was ready to humble himself and surrender to the authority of God. This is when he was saved from his sins by the grace of God and his life was changed. The proof of his salvation is the proclamation that he made and sent to all the people in his kingdom. He told them that his pride had offended God. He had warned him to put away his pride, but when he refused, God severely judged him. God's mighty and miraculous power in judging his pride finally caused him to humble himself. Now he was ready to listen to God and let him rule his life in His everlasting Kingdom. He was a changed man and wanted everyone in his kingdom to know it.

WE: When we are saved, we need to tell others about it. If we do not tell others that God has saved us, we are proud. We think more of ourselves than we do of God. We need to humble ourselves. When we are truly humble, we will forget about ourselves and will tell others what God has done for us.

II. Puzzle - Daniel 4:4-18

Nebuchadnezzar began his official letter about his salvation with a strange puzzling dream about a great tree that reached to heaven. It was so great that its fruit fed everyone on the earth, and all the beasts of the field could be shaded by it and all the birds could live in it. Then the tree was cut down by someone who came from heaven. Its stump was to be left in the earth for seven times (years). He called all the wise men to interpret the dream for him, but none could interpret it. Then Daniel came and he was able to understand this strange dream and interpret it because the Spirit of God told him what it meant.

WE: If we have received Jesus Christ as our Savior, we have been given the Spirit of God to dwell in us. He has inspired holy men to write the Scriptures and the Scriptures will give us the answers to problems in our lives or in the lives of others. If we depend on the Spirit of God to teach us as we study the Bible, He will teach what He had the holy men write in the Bible. This is how we can be wiser than unbelievers that do not have the Spirit of God. This should not make us proud, but rather it should make us thankful that God has given us the Holy Spirit.\

III. Prediction - Daniel 4:19-27

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Daniel was almost afraid to tell the king what the dream meant because it was against him. God had given the king a dream about him. He was the great tree that provided food and protection for all that were in his kingdom. It also was him when the tree would be cut down. He would be removed from his throne and treated like an animal to eat the grass in the field for seven years. Daniel then urged the king to turn from his sins and show mercy to the poor.

WE: We need to be like Daniel and warn sinners about God's judgment of their sins. Sometimes it will almost make us afraid to tell them, but we must do it if we are going to be faithful to God. Urge sinners to turn from their sins and turn to Jesus Christ to be saved.

IV. Pride - Daniel 28-33

God did not strike Nebuchadnezzar down right after He warned him in the dream. God waited for one year. Then one day Nebuchadnezzar was caught in his pride. He looked at all the things God had given to him and he said that he had gotten all of these things by his own power. While his words were still in his mouth, a voice called to him from heaven and said, "O king Nebuchadnezzar, to you it is spoken; the kingdom is departed from you" (4:31). And that very hour he was removed from his throne and put in the field to eat grass with the oxen for seven years.

WE: We can be sure God thinks the same way about pride today as He did in Nebuchadnezzar's day. We must remember that everything that we have is from God. Even if our parents gave it to us, God gave it to them, so it really comes from God. If we think that we got anything by our own ability, we are proud like Nebuchadnezzar. Watch out, if you are proud. God opposes a proud person, but will help a humble person.

After seven years Nebuchadnezzar was given back his understanding and his throne when he turned from his pride. When he was humble, he praised and honored God as the King of heaven. He told all men throughout his great kingdom about his salvation by making an official proclamation (cf. 4:1). He said that God's "works are truth, and His ways judgment: and those that walk in pride He is able to abase" (4:37). Nebuchadnezzar had learned his lesson about the wickedness of pride; then God wonderfully saved him from it when He saved his soul.

WE: We must learn to hate pride. It is a wicked sin. We must learn to be humble. It is the way God wants us to live. If we are humble, we will forget about ourselves and tell others how great God is. This will please God greatly and He will honor us for it.

BE (for Action): How did Nebuchadnezzar show that he was proud? (He took credit for all the things that he had when he had received them from God.) Remember, everything we have is a gift from God. How did Nebuchadnezzar finally show that he was humble? (He gave God credit for taking away his mind and then his throne and then for giving it all back to him again. He also showed that he was humble when he was willing to tell everyone what God had done to him.) If you are humble, you will thank God for everything that you have, you will ask Him to save you by Jesus Christ, and you will tell others about the things He has done for you. Will you do these three things?