

The dream of the tree – Nebuchadnezzar’s lesson



Nebuchadnezzar doesn’t listen to Daniel’s advice. 12 months go by. He does not only enjoy the peace, but also boasts about his own power and glory (v30). Any praise received on account of his great buildings must have gone to his head. Those who are so proud of themselves and their own achievements have not yet learnt the lesson which God wants to teach every person: God rules over everyone and wants to be acknowledged as Lord and God by everyone.

In Nebuchadnezzar’s case, this had bad consequences. What God has predicted happens. The king “becomes an animal” (read chapter 5 verse 21). For how long, is not known, but at the end of the time appointed by God, his mind returns and he is again established as king.



- 19. What do you think about Nebuchadnezzar’s statement that “all inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing” (v35)?
- 20. Has Nebuchadnezzar learnt his lesson?



The second of the seven wonders of the Ancient World were the hanging gardens of Babylon. It is said that king Nebuchadnezzar had them build for his wife Semiramis. They consisted of an artificial terraced garden, around 30 metres high. A cellar structure was covered with massive beams of stone, then followed a layer of reeds and bitumen, then a double layer of bricks, bonded with cement, and finished with a layer of lead for damp proofing. The 3 metre high layers of soil contained the richest collection of plants in the world.



Small as man may be – God is looking for him.



19. Nebuchadnezzar is right to confirm that God is almighty and sovereign. No one can stop Him doing something, and He doesn't have to give account to anyone. In that sense, whole nations are like "a drop on a bucket" and "as nothing" (Isaiah 40:15+17). On the other hand, God does care about people, and He wants to best for everyone, small and great (1 Timothy 2:4). He also cared for Nebuchadnezzar. 20. It seems yes. At least he recognises God's authority, praises, extols and honours Him (v34-37). He may still speak of his own glory and splendour (v36, but these are factual items which God has given him (again). What is important is the lesson that God "puts those down who walk in pride" (v37) – as he has experienced.