



LION HEART| The Blessed Blade |Week 4| November 2 & 3

Daniel 4; Matthew 7:16-20; 1 Corinthians 13:1-7; John 15:1-2

These study guides are designed for individual or group study but highly encouraged to be experienced in community with a small group or other friends on the journey with Jesus.

The Nebuchadnezzar greeting: Read Daniel 4:1-3. The king's greeting offers peace and prosperity to his subjects but also praises this Most High God that keeps invading his life.

- What surprises you about this opening to Daniel 4? Journal or share the emotions and motivations you imagine in the king.
- What is the focus of the king's praise?

Earthly security for the king: Daniel 4:4 defines the king's state of mind and his physical condition. Sounds like everything's fine until we get to vs. 5.

- What does the contrast between vs.4 and vs.5 mean to you?
- Have you ever experienced anything like this? Talk about it with the group.

The Dream: Read Daniel 4:6-27. The dream and interpretation (like Dan 2) are in a conversation between Nebuchadnezzar and Daniel.

- What strikes you about the conversation? What do you see going on?
- What is the parallel with Dan 2? What is the king to make of these events?
- Is there a progression in the two dreams?

Getting our Attention: Pastor Dan asks a question about God producing change in us. *"When gifts of life and luxury, of learning and love don't produce fruit that really honors the Giver of Grace... what is God to do to produce a more fruitful response?"*

- How do you respond to that question? Journal or talk about what comes up in you as you think about it.
- As you consider Neb's dreams, what would you say God is addressing in the king's life?

Helpful Advice: Read Dan 4:27. Daniel speaks advice to the king; he is a prophet but knowing the king's temperament it is still done at great risk.

- Have you ever spoken truth into another person's life for their benefit? Journal or share the story and how it impacted you.
- Has anyone ever spoken truth into your life in this way? How did that feel? What was the result?

Bearing Fruit: Read Matt 7:16-20. Jesus' pragmatic instruction to the disciples is to help them discern motives and intent in others. John 15 is Jesus' encouragement to the disciples to "remain in him".

- How do these verses explain what's happening in the story of Nebuchadnezzar?



- How does bearing fruit and being pruned by the gardener strike you? What comes to mind?

God's Reaching of a Stubborn Soul: Pastor Dan gave four examples of how God might be “reaching a stubborn soul.”

- Shake your tree: create a discomfort in the midst of “content and prosperous” life.
 - Do you discern God shaking your tree? What have you become more aware of as a result?
- Bring you a “Daniel” to interpret the shaking.
 - Who is your Daniel?
- God will always give us a chance to respond to His loving correction.
 - If your tree is shaking how are you responding?
- God might have to cut it down, for some.
 - If this is where you find yourself, remember Pastor Dan’s reminder, “What looks and feels like God’s utter abandonment of us is actually God moving to bring about the total improvement of us.”
 - How will you respond towards God’s pruning?
- As you read over this process of how God might call us towards a deeper relationship with Himself, what questions arise for you?
- Do you discern you might be in the midst of this process? If so, where?

As you reflect on the sermon and your coming week talk with each other about two different aspects of what you see and expect:

1. Thankfulness for all that is “content and prosperous”, that God has provided.
2. Attentiveness to any evidence of pruning, prompting toward change, that God may be engaging in with you.

Practice of the Week: Read Daniel 4:10-12, 20-22. Consider your “tree.” The food and shelter you provide, the dominion you hold, your influence and the persons “nesting” in your sphere. These are the good things that God provided to you for your care (perhaps list them out). Give thanks to God for the blessings and responsibilities He has given you. Ask God to show you, if He is pruning anywhere. Listen for His guidance and wisdom.

We’d love to hear from you!

If you have thoughts, questions, comments, ideas on how to make these study guides more meaningful for you or your small group, please let us know.

We also enjoy hearing how God is using these study guides in your lives.

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