

The Dream

- Staggering contrast - Nebuchadnezzar is hugely powerful, influential, yet willing to share this humiliating story!
- Is he more secure now, that he will share his dream?
 - some level of appreciation of Daniel's special ability (v.9)
- Little detail - in Greek text (not Hebrew) this is dated at the 18th year of Nebuchadnezzar's reign
 - the year of the final fall of Jerusalem (Jeremiah 52:29)
 - is Nebuchadnezzar content and prosperous partly because of this?
 - he is certainly no worshipper of Daniel's God - he specifically calls him Belteshazzar in v.8, highlighting the distinction between his own God and Daniel's God...
- Tree common symbol across religious traditions
 - from Norse myth to the more local, middle Eastern religions of the area...
 - often a sign of security, according to Goldingay in his commentary
- Already in the dream clear its about a person... (v.15-16)

The Interpretation

- Not much to say...
 - God is in control, not Nebuchadnezzar...
 - though there is hope left for Nebuchadnezzar...
 - call to repentance...

The Fulfilment

- God is concerned with our **reaction** or response to his work on us:
 - that, more than the particular things he uses to attract our attention
 - for some it may be dreams
 - for others circumstances, coincidences
 - for others hardships
 - for others God's word (though God's revelation will underpin all methods God uses!)
- Was it mental health? **Doesn't matter...**
 - God spoke, Nebuchadnezzar (finally) responded

Conclusion

- Model of whole human condition:
 - **I can do things myself, I am the centre of the universe...**
 - **no you can't....**
 - **possibility, through repentance, of restoration**
 - (this is no mere historical backwater; there is continuity here with the whole sweep of biblical revelation)
- Humility
- Testimony
 - how is God at work in you just now?