

# Daniel Chapter 4

Quick revision:

Daniel 1 - Daniel, Shadrach, Mishael, and Abed-Nego refuse to compromise by eating and drinking the king's meat and wine.

Daniel 2 - Nebuchadnezzar's first dream:

Revise dream... four kingdoms, then the 10 toes or kings — revived roman empire eventually lead by the antichrist, and then destroyed when Jesus returns.

Daniel 3 - happens about 20 years after Chapter 2, Nebuchadnezzar's power goes to his head and he makes a statue that is all gold, representing his delusion that his kingdom and power are eternal and will never fail, despite God clearly telling him the opposite.

Shadrach, Mishael, and Abed-Nego continue to refuse to compromise, laying their lives on the line because they will only worship God and not anyone or anything else. They are willing to pay the ultimate price, but God rescues them miraculously and Jesus joins them in the fire - a picture to us that our relationship with God is so awesome that nothing compares to it. Everything else is like dung or rubbish. It's only as we are willing to give up our own way and die to self that we will start to really experience and enjoy the love peace and joy that God wants to give us.

Daniel 4, which we will cover today, is a continuation of the theme of Nebuchadnezzar's pride, which is really his rebellion against God. Lucifer's sin was pride, and that brought him low. Pride is the sin behind all other sins. It was pride that caused Adam and Eve to rebel against God:

Genesis 3:4-6

<sup>4</sup> Then the serpent said to the woman, "You will not surely die. <sup>5</sup> For God knows that in the day you eat of it your eyes will be opened, **and you will be like God**, knowing good and evil."

<sup>6</sup> So when the woman saw that the tree *was* good for food, that it *was* pleasant to the eyes, and **a tree desirable to make *one* wise**, she took of its fruit and ate. She also gave to her husband with her, and he ate.

Lucifer wanted to be like God, Adam and Eve wanted to be like God, and we too want to be like God. What does this look like practically? It means that I think that I know better than God, that my way is better than God's way, that I will be better off and happier if I do things my way, that my wisdom is greater than God's, and so I reject God and His will and plan for my life. As Romans 3:9b-12 says:

Romans 3:9b-12 - ...for we have already shown that all people, whether Jews or Gentiles, are under the power of sin. <sup>10</sup> As the Scriptures say,

"No one is righteous— not even one.

<sup>11</sup> No one is truly wise; no one is seeking God.

<sup>12</sup> All have turned away; all have become useless.

No one does good, not a single one."

If not for the ministry of the Holy Spirit convicting us of sin, righteousness and judgment, we would never seek Him and would all die in our sins. But praise God that, even though the mess we are in is our own fault - it was the humans who rebelled against God and decided not to trust Him— God set in motion a plan of redemption, where He reached down to us, and He seeks to bring us humans back to Himself, no matter what the cost to Himself.

John 16:8-11

<sup>8</sup> And when He has come, He will convict the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment:

<sup>9</sup> of sin, because they do not believe in Me; <sup>10</sup> of righteousness, because I go to My Father and you see Me no more; <sup>11</sup> of judgment, because the ruler of this world is judged.

And what we see in this chapter epitomises what God has been doing since the garden of Eden when He went looking for Adam and Eve — He is reaching out to lost sinners and shining the light of His law into their hearts to reveal their true ugly and sinful condition, in the hope that some might choose to return to Him. In Chapter 4 of Daniel, we see God reaching out to a prideful and egotistical Nebuchadnezzar, someone who doesn't show the slightest interest in seeking God, someone who doesn't seem have the slightest interest in changing, someone who hates God. Yet despite this, God is faithful and patient to continue to reach out to this lost soul, just like He did me, and just like He did or is doing for you.

## ***Nebuchadnezzar's Second Dream***

4 Nebuchadnezzar the king,

To all peoples, nations, and languages that dwell in all the earth:

Peace be multiplied to you.

2 I thought it good to declare the signs and wonders that the Most High God has worked for me.

3 How great are His signs,  
And how mighty His wonders!  
His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom,  
And His dominion is from generation to generation.

4 I, Nebuchadnezzar, was at rest in my house, and flourishing in my palace. <sup>5</sup> I saw a dream which made me afraid, and the thoughts on my bed and the visions of my head troubled me. <sup>6</sup> Therefore I issued a decree to bring in all the wise men of Babylon before me, that they might make known to me the interpretation of the dream. <sup>7</sup> Then the magicians, the astrologers, the Chaldeans, and the soothsayers came in, and I told them the dream; but they did not make known to me its interpretation. <sup>8</sup> But at last Daniel came before me (his name is Belteshazzar, according to the name of my god; in him is the Spirit of the Holy God), and I told the dream before him, saying: <sup>9</sup> "Belteshazzar, chief of the magicians, because I know that the Spirit of the Holy God is in you, and no secret troubles you, explain to me the visions of my dream that I have seen, and its interpretation.

<sup>10</sup> These were the visions of my head while on my bed:

I was looking, and behold,  
A tree in the midst of the earth,  
And its height was great.

<sup>11</sup> The tree grew and became strong;  
Its height reached to the heavens,  
And it could be seen to the ends of all the earth.

<sup>12</sup> Its leaves were lovely,  
Its fruit abundant,  
And in it was food for all.  
The beasts of the field found shade under it,  
The birds of the heavens dwelt in its branches,  
And all flesh was fed from it.

<sup>13</sup> “I saw in the visions of my head while on my bed, and there was a watcher, a holy one, coming down from heaven. <sup>14</sup> He cried aloud and said thus:

‘Chop down the tree and cut off its branches,  
Strip off its leaves and scatter its fruit.  
Let the beasts get out from under it,  
And the birds from its branches.

<sup>15</sup> Nevertheless leave the stump and roots in the earth,  
Bound with a band of iron and bronze,  
In the tender grass of the field.  
Let it be wet with the dew of heaven,  
And let him graze with the beasts  
On the grass of the earth.

<sup>16</sup> Let his heart be changed from that of a man,  
Let him be given the heart of a beast,  
And let seven times pass over him.

<sup>17</sup> ‘This decision is by the decree of the watchers,  
And the sentence by the word of the holy ones,  
In order that the living may know  
That the Most High rules in the kingdom of men,  
Gives it to whomever He will,  
And sets over it the lowest of men.’

<sup>18</sup> “This dream I, King Nebuchadnezzar, have seen. Now you, Belteshazzar, declare its interpretation, since all the wise men of my kingdom are not able to make known to me the interpretation; but you are able, for the Spirit of the Holy God is in you.”

## **Daniel Explains the Second Dream**

<sup>19</sup> Then Daniel, whose name was Belteshazzar, was astonished for a time, and his thoughts troubled him. So the king spoke, and said, “Belteshazzar, do not let the dream or its interpretation trouble you.”

Belteshazzar answered and said, “My lord, may the dream concern those who hate you, and its interpretation concern your enemies!

<sup>20</sup> “The tree that you saw, which grew and became strong, whose height reached to the heavens and which could be seen by all the earth, <sup>21</sup> whose leaves were lovely and its fruit abundant, in which was food for all, under which the beasts of the field dwelt, and in whose branches the birds of the heaven had their home—<sup>22</sup> it is you, O king, who have grown and become strong; for your greatness has grown and reaches to the heavens, and your dominion to the end of the earth.

<sup>23</sup> “And inasmuch as the king saw a watcher, a holy one, coming down from heaven and saying, ‘Chop down the tree and destroy it, but leave its stump and roots in the earth, bound with a band of iron and bronze in the tender grass of the field; let it be wet with the dew of heaven, and let him graze with the beasts of the field, till seven times pass over him’; <sup>24</sup> this is the interpretation, O king, and this is the decree of the Most High, which has come upon my lord the king: <sup>25</sup> They shall drive you from men, your dwelling shall be with the beasts of the field, and they shall make you eat grass like oxen. They shall wet you with the dew of heaven, and seven times shall pass

over you, till you know that the Most High rules in the kingdom of men, and gives it to whomever He chooses.

- 26 “And inasmuch as they gave the command to leave the stump and roots of the tree, your kingdom shall be assured to you, after you come to know that Heaven rules.  
27 Therefore, O king, let my advice be acceptable to you; break off your sins by being righteous, and your iniquities by showing mercy to the poor. Perhaps there may be a lengthening of your prosperity.”

## **Nebuchadnezzar’s Humiliation**

- 28 All this came upon King Nebuchadnezzar. 29 At the end of the twelve months he was walking about the royal palace of Babylon. 30 The king spoke, saying, “Is not this great Babylon, that I have built for a royal dwelling by my mighty power and for the honor of my majesty?”
- 31 While the word was still in the king’s mouth, a voice fell from heaven: “King Nebuchadnezzar, to you it is spoken: the kingdom has departed from you! 32 And they shall drive you from men, and your dwelling shall be with the beasts of the field. They shall make you eat grass like oxen; and seven times shall pass over you, until you know that the Most High rules in the kingdom of men, and gives it to whomever He chooses.”
- 33 That very hour the word was fulfilled concerning Nebuchadnezzar; he was driven from men and ate grass like oxen; his body was wet with the dew of heaven till his hair had grown like eagles’ feathers and his nails like birds’ claws.

## **Nebuchadnezzar Praises God**

- 34 And at the end of the time I, Nebuchadnezzar, lifted my eyes to heaven, and my understanding returned to me; and I blessed the Most High and praised and honored Him who lives forever:

For His dominion is an everlasting dominion,  
And His kingdom is from generation to generation.

- 35 All the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing;  
He does according to His will in the army of heaven  
And among the inhabitants of the earth.  
No one can restrain His hand  
Or say to Him, “What have You done?”

- 36 At the same time my reason returned to me, and for the glory of my kingdom, my honor and splendor returned to me. My counselors and nobles resorted to me, I was restored to my kingdom, and excellent majesty was added to me. 37 Now I, Nebuchadnezzar, praise and extol and honor the King of heaven, all of whose works are truth, and His ways justice. And those who walk in pride He is able to put down.

## **Chapter 4**

Abraham Lincoln said: “Nearly all men can stand adversity, but if you want to test a man’s character, give him power.”

In chapter 4, we see the testimony of the last person you would ever think would be saved. Nebuchadnezzar was king of the Babylonian empire and here we see the story of his conversion.

### **Daniel 4:1–3**

**<sup>1</sup> Nebuchadnezzar the king, To all peoples, nations, and languages that dwell in all the earth: Peace be multiplied to you.**

**<sup>2</sup> I thought it good to declare the signs and wonders that the Most High God has worked for me.**

**<sup>3</sup> How great are His signs, And how mighty His wonders!  
His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, And His dominion is from generation to generation.**

In this letter addressed to all people around the world, Nebuchadnezzar sounds like the apostle Paul as he begins his own conversion story.

**I thought it good to declare:** It *is* good to declare what God has done for us. Satan has a huge interest in keeping us unnaturally silent about **the signs and wonders that the Most High God has worked for us.**

**His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom:** Nebuchadnezzar was a great king, but in this chapter he recognized that God's kingdom was far greater and His dominion was completely unique because it is an **everlasting kingdom.**

#### **Daniel 4:4-5**

**<sup>4</sup> I, Nebuchadnezzar, was at rest in my house, flourishing in my palace. <sup>5</sup> I saw a dream which made me afraid, and the thoughts on my bed and the visions of my head troubled me.**

The most powerful ruler in the history of the world was at rest in his palace and flourishing in his position. Yet, as he laid on his bed, he was troubled. The person you might think is so closed to the gospel could, like Nebuchadnezzar, be struggling with questions about eternity, mortality, the purpose of life—the questions we, as believers, settled when we gave our heart to Jesus. Nebuchadnezzar's rest was the false peace of the ungodly. God soon shook him from his false security.

#### **Daniel 4:6-7**

**<sup>6</sup> Therefore I issued a decree to bring in all the wise men of Babylon before me, that they might make known to me the interpretation of the dream. <sup>7</sup> Then the magicians, the astrologers, the Chaldeans, and the soothsayers came in, and I told them the dream; but they did not make known to me its interpretation.**

When Nebuchadnezzar woke up, he didn't know what to make of his dream. He knew it had significance, but he couldn't put the pieces together. So he did the same thing he did in chapter 2. Even though they were powerless the first time, he called his magicians to interpret his dream.

#### **Daniel 4:8-9**

**<sup>8</sup> But at last Daniel came before me (his name is Belteshazzar, according to the name of my god; in him is the Spirit of the Holy God), and I told the dream before him, saying: <sup>9</sup> "Belteshazzar, chief of the magicians, because I know that the Spirit of the Holy God is in you, and no secret troubles you, explain to me the visions of my dream that I have seen, and its interpretation.**

When the magicians were again unable to interpret his dream, Nebuchadnezzar called for Daniel.

**At last Daniel came before me:** "And why 'at last'? Why was he not sooner sent for? If the soothsayers and sorcerers could have served the turn, Daniel had never been sought to. This is the guise of graceless men; they run not to God till all other refuges fail them." (Trapp)

**His name is Belteshazzar, according to the name of my god:** Before Daniel interpreted the dream described in this chapter for Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon considered the Babylonian deity *Bel* his god.

This means that what he saw previously with Daniel and the three Hebrew young men was enough to impress him, but not enough to convert him. Being impressed with God isn't the same as being converted.

## THE HOLY GOD

It is interesting that Nebuchadnezzar described Daniel as one in whom is "the Spirit of the Holy God." We tend to take for granted that God is holy, but to pagans this is a unique claim. The pagan gods were never seen as holy. They were always selfish, vengeful, and even lecherous and licentious. A holy God was a novelty to them. But you have to ask yourself, How did Nebuchadnezzar get the idea that Daniel's God was holy? No doubt, the Holy God was manifested in the holiness of Daniel. He lived such a pure, clean life—a life that was holy, a life of prayer, a life of commitment to the Lord—that his Holy God could be seen in his lifestyle. That is a challenge to me. Can people see the holiness of God in the way that I live? (Chuck Smith)

Think about what Paul said in:

1 Corinthians 4:16-17 - <sup>16</sup> Therefore I urge you, imitate me. <sup>17</sup> For this reason I have sent Timothy to you, who is my beloved and faithful son in the Lord, who will remind you of my ways in Christ, as I teach everywhere in every church.

### Daniel 4:10–12

<sup>10</sup> These were the visions of my head while on my bed:

**I was looking, and behold, A tree in the midst of the earth, And its height was great.**

<sup>11</sup> **The tree grew and became strong; Its height reached to the heavens, And it could be seen to the ends of all the earth.**

<sup>12</sup> **Its leaves were lovely, Its fruit abundant, And in it was food for all.**

**The beasts of the field found shade under it, The birds of the heavens dwelt in its branches, And all flesh was fed from it.**

Nebuchadnezzar's dream was of a tree so big that all of the beasts of the earth could gather underneath it. It had many leaves and an abundance of fruit. Plus, it grew so high that one could see it from any point on earth — a picture of the extent and power of the kingdom of Babylon.

### Daniel 4:13–18

<sup>13</sup> **"I saw in the visions of my head while on my bed, and there was a watcher, a holy one, coming down from heaven. <sup>14</sup> He cried aloud and said thus:**

**'Chop down the tree and cut off its branches, Strip off its leaves and scatter its fruit. Let the beasts get out from under it, And the birds from its branches.**

<sup>15</sup> **Nevertheless leave the stump and roots in the earth, Bound with a band of iron and bronze, In the tender grass of the field. Let it be wet with the dew of heaven, And let him graze with the beasts On the grass of the earth.**

<sup>16</sup> **Let his heart be changed from that of a man, Let him be given the heart of a beast, And let seven times pass over him.**

<sup>17</sup> **'This decision is by the decree of the watchers, And the sentence by the word of the holy ones, In order that the living may know That the Most High rules in the kingdom of men, Gives it to whomever He will, And sets over it the lowest of men.'**

<sup>18</sup> **"This dream I, King Nebuchadnezzar, have seen. Now you, Belteshazzar, declare its interpretation, since all the wise men of my kingdom are not able to make known to me the interpretation; but you are able, for the Spirit of the Holy God is in you."**

As this magnificent tree extended into the heavens, an angel descended and cut the tree down, leaving only a stump behind.

**Bound with a band of iron and bronze:** These were either for the tree stump's confinement or protection. The tree would no longer be free and great.

**In order that the living may know that the Most High rules in the kingdom of men:** Nebuchadnezzar heard these words in his dream. In light of this, the dream wasn't hard to interpret—it clearly dealt with the humbling of a great king. No wonder none of Nebuchadnezzar's counselors wanted to interpret the dream for him.

i. Like most kings—ancient and modern—Nebuchadnezzar wanted to believe that *he* ruled instead of God or anyone else. “Both the Assyrian and the Babylonian kings thought of themselves as rulers over all the earth, so describing themselves in their inscriptions.” (Wood)

**You are able, for the Spirit of the Holy God is in you:** Though Nebuchadnezzar recognized Daniel as a man filled with **the Spirit of the Holy God**, Nebuchadnezzar had not yet yielded himself to the Holy God.

#### **Daniel 4:19**

**Then Daniel, whose name was Belteshazzar, was astonished for a time, and his thoughts troubled him. So the king spoke, and said, “Belteshazzar, do not let the dream or its interpretation trouble you.”**

**Belteshazzar answered and said, “My lord, may the dream concern those who hate you, and its interpretation concern your enemies!”**

Daniel sat speechless for an hour. Finally, he said to Nebuchadnezzar, “I wish this dream applied not to you but to your enemies.”

Notice Daniel's tenderness. He could have said, “This serves you right, Nebuchadnezzar. You've been such a pain to so many people for so long, you deserve what's going to happen.” But he didn't. Ezra was another one who was rendered speechless over the sin of his people (9:1–4). Jesus, of course, wept (Luke 19:41). You might be able to quote theology. You might have countless charts on eschatology. There might be no end to the knowledge in your head—but until people see your heart, they won't receive from you.

#### **Daniel 4:20–26**

**<sup>20</sup> “The tree that you saw, which grew and became strong, whose height reached to the heavens and which could be seen by all the earth, <sup>21</sup> whose leaves were lovely and its fruit abundant, in which was food for all, under which the beasts of the field dwelt, and in whose branches the birds of the heaven had their home—<sup>22</sup> it is you, O king, who have grown and become strong; for your greatness has grown and reaches to the heavens, and your dominion to the end of the earth.**

**<sup>23</sup> “And inasmuch as the king saw a watcher, a holy one, coming down from heaven and saying, ‘Chop down the tree and destroy it, but leave its stump and roots in the earth, bound with a band of iron and bronze in the tender grass of the field; let it be wet with the dew of heaven, and let him graze with the beasts of the field, till seven times pass over him’; <sup>24</sup> this is the interpretation, O king, and this is the decree of the Most High, which has come upon my lord the king: <sup>25</sup> They shall drive you from men, your dwelling shall be with the beasts of the field, and they shall make you eat grass like oxen. They shall wet you with the dew of heaven, and seven times shall pass over you, till you know that the Most High rules in the kingdom of men, and gives it to whomever He chooses.**

26 **“And inasmuch as they gave the command to leave the stump and roots of the tree, your kingdom shall be assured to you, after you come to know that Heaven rules.**

“You are the tree, Nebuchadnezzar, standing so tall. But you will be cut down low and driven out to the fields where you will live like a beast for seven years,” Daniel said. “But, just as the stump of the tree was left, you will return to power.”

**After you come to know that Heaven rules:** This was God’s intended purpose for Nebuchadnezzar. The king could have avoided this humiliating fate if he genuinely humbled himself.

#### **Daniel 4:27**

**Therefore, O king, let my advice be acceptable to you; break off your sins by being righteous, and your iniquities by showing mercy to the poor. Perhaps there may be a lengthening of your prosperity.”**

In addition to Daniel’s tenderness, notice his honesty. “Turn away from your unrighteousness,” he said to Nebuchadnezzar. Like Daniel, we need to be those who care enough to say to people, “You’ve got to turn away from the path you’re on, you need to repent. You’ve got to come to Jesus.”

That’s what Jesus did. “Sell your goods and follow Me,” He said to the rich, young ruler, knowing riches were his god (Luke 18). The ultimate expression of self-love is not telling people the truth but rather withholding the truth from people who are lost because we are afraid of offending them and them not liking us. We are more concerned about our reputation than the well being of the other person when we fail to speak the truth in love.

In contrast to the tenderness and honesty of Daniel, notice the stubbornness and stupidity of Nebuchadnezzar...

#### **Daniel 4:28–30**

**All this came upon King Nebuchadnezzar. <sup>29</sup> At the end of the twelve months he was walking about the royal palace of Babylon. <sup>30</sup> The king spoke, saying, “Is not this great Babylon, that I have built for a royal dwelling by my mighty power and for the honor of my majesty?”**

Not only did Nebuchadnezzar hear from the Lord through the dreams that Daniel interpreted, but he literally saw the Lord in the fire with Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego. Like the relentless “Hound of heaven,” God was pursuing Nebuchadnezzar. But Nebuchadnezzar hardened his heart and refused to acknowledge Him. Pride is the foundational sin of everyone who is not saved. Pride is what caused Lucifer to fall.

**At the end of the twelve months:** God gave Nebuchadnezzar twelve months to repent, and he probably forgot about the dream during that time—but God didn’t forget.

#### **Daniel 4:31–33**

**<sup>31</sup> While the word was still in the king’s mouth, a voice fell from heaven: “King Nebuchadnezzar, to you it is spoken: the kingdom has departed from you! <sup>32</sup> And they shall drive you from men, and your dwelling shall be with the beasts of the field. They shall make you eat grass like oxen; and seven times shall pass over you, until you know that the Most High rules in the kingdom of men, and gives it to whomever He chooses.”**



**<sup>33</sup> That very hour the word was fulfilled concerning Nebuchadnezzar; he was driven from men and ate grass like oxen; his body was wet with the dew of heaven till his hair had grown like eagles' feathers and his nails like birds' claws.**

Just as Daniel had prophesied, Nebuchadnezzar went insane and developed a rare medical condition known as lycanthropy. Even in this we see God's faithfulness and tenacity. "Whatever it takes, I'm going after you, Nebuchadnezzar," He said. "Even if it means allowing you to eat grass like an ox, develop feathers like an eagle, and grow claws like a bird, I'm going to bring you to the place where you see you need Me."

God's faithfulness and tenacity to go after people never fails to astound me. God will do whatever it takes to bring people to a place where they see they need Him.

iii. Nebuchadnezzar was given the opportunity to humble himself, and he did not. Now God humbled him, and the experience was much more severe than it would have been had Nebuchadnezzar humbled himself. The same is true for us, even as Christians. We can either humble ourselves sooner, or later God will have to do something a lot more painful.

#### **Daniel 4:34**

**And at the end of the time I, Nebuchadnezzar, lifted my eyes to heaven, and my understanding returned to me; and I blessed the Most High and praised and honored Him who lives forever:**

**For His dominion is an everlasting dominion,  
And His kingdom is from generation to generation.**

The first sign of Nebuchadnezzar's conversion was that, instead of looking down like a beast, he looked up to heaven.

#### **SANITY OR INSANITY? by Chuck Smith**

Nebuchadnezzar had a dream that Daniel interpreted for him, that predicted that Nebuchadnezzar would lose his mind for a period of time, so that he would realize that God is in charge.

Nebuchadnezzar was out looking at the wonders of Babylon one day, marvelling at the splendour of all that he had built by his power and for the honour of his majesty. At that moment of pride, he lost his mind. He became like an animal, eating grass like an ox. But then, after seven years, we see in verse 34 that "I, Nebuchadnezzar, lifted up my eyes to heaven, and my understanding returned to me; and I blessed the Most High and praised and honoured Him who lives forever."

There is a fine line between sanity and insanity, and the difference is often determined by where you are looking. If you are looking at your own accomplishments, and taking pride in your own glory, it can drive you crazy. But if you will lift up your eyes to heaven and worship and praise God, your understanding will so often return. The picture clarifies, as you see God for who He is.

#### **Daniel 4:35**

**All the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing;  
He does according to His will in the army of heaven And among the inhabitants of the earth.  
No one can restrain His hand Or say to Him, "What have You done?"**

The centurion whose servant was sick spoke to Jesus as a man in authority speaking to One with ultimate authority (Matthew 8:9). So too, Nebuchadnezzar speaks of God as a king speaking of the King of kings.

#### **Daniel 4:36 (a)**

**At the same time my reason returned to me, and for the glory of my kingdom, my honor and splendor returned to me.**

Just as the prodigal “came to himself” (Luke 15:17), Nebuchadnezzar’s reason and understanding returned to him. In other words, they were both returned to the men they were before they were railroaded by pride, which is really just deception.

#### **Daniel 4:36 (b), 37**

**<sup>36</sup>... My counsellors and nobles resorted to me, I was restored to my kingdom, and excellent majesty was added to me. <sup>37</sup> Now I, Nebuchadnezzar, praise and extol and honor the King of heaven, all of whose works *are* truth, and His ways justice. And those who walk in pride He is able to put down.**

Nebuchadnezzar learned that **those who walk in pride He is able to put down.**

The abiding lesson is plain: *God resists the proud but gives grace to the humble* (James 4:6).

**I blessed the Most High and praised and honored Him:** Nebuchadnezzar could only see the truth about *himself* when he first saw the truth about *God*. King Nebuchadnezzar did see who God was, and he eloquently praised His sovereignty. *After* this his **reason returned**.

i. This return of reason results in *worship*. Spurgeon says: “We do not worship enough, my brethren. Even in our public gatherings we do not have enough worship. O worship the King! Bow your heads now—bow your spirits rather, and adore him that liveth for ever and ever. Your thoughts, your emotions, these are better than bullocks and he-goats to be offered on the altar: God will accept them. Worship him with lowliest reverence, for you are nothing, and he is all in all.”

ii. This return of reason also results in *prayer*. If we believe what Nebuchadnezzar believed about God, it will certainly show in our prayer life. We will know that God can change the heart and mind of man, the course of rivers, the flow of the oceans, the distribution of resources, and the assignment of angels.

iii. The proper response of the believer to the greatness and sovereignty of God:

- Have a heart of humble adoration.
- Show a heart of unquestioning acceptance.
- Exercise the spirit of reverent love.
- Let your spirit have profound delight.

In summary, exactly as Daniel prophesied, Nebuchadnezzar returned to power, only this time he knew that his power came not from his own ability but from God’s mercy. Nebuchadnezzar is now humble and broken before the Lord. He is saved. Listen again to what He says in verse 37:

**Now I, Nebuchadnezzar, praise and extol and honor the King of heaven, all of whose works are truth, and His ways justice. And those who walk in pride He is able to put down.**

Every person has the same opportunity to respond to God’s grace, to humble themselves and be broken before Jesus, the Creator and Ruler of Heaven and Earth. What does Nebuchadnezzar mean when he says, “And those who walk in pride He is able to put down?” It’s the same thing as being humble and broken before Jesus. Listen to what Jesus said in:

Luke 20:17-18 - <sup>17</sup> Then He (Jesus) looked at them and said, “What then is this that is written:

‘The stone which the builders rejected Has become the chief cornerstone’?

<sup>18</sup> Whoever falls on that stone will be broken; but on whomever it falls, it will grind him to powder.”

The verse Jesus quotes—Psalm 118:22—is the most frequently quoted Old Testament verse in the New Testament. It refers to the construction of the temple under Solomon’s reign when the massive stones were chiseled miles away from the building site in order that no sound be heard upon the temple mount. When the stones arrived, one stone didn’t fit and was thrown down the hill into the Kidron Valley. When it became evident that the cornerstone was missing, the stone that had been rejected turned out to be the one that fit perfectly. Jesus applies this to Himself. “You’re trying to build your religion, your life, apart from Me,” He says, “but you’re going to see that I am the Cornerstone. Without Me, nothing stands, nothing lasts.”

The one who falls upon Jesus, the Cornerstone, will indeed be broken, for it’s only in admitting our sin and our need that we can be saved. You see, those who aren’t broken or humbled before Him will one day be broken or humbled by Him. The bible says that *Every* knee shall bow and every tongue will confess that Jesus is Lord (Philippians 2:10). The only question is when will this happen? Will you do it now in brokenness and humility before Him and be saved? Or will you wait too long and be broken by Him and have to endure eternal torment in the Lake of fire?

Nebuchadnezzar bowed the knee and I’ve bowed the knee, making Jesus my Lord, having repented and counted the cost of following Him, having responded to God’s love and grace, having believed in His promises, especially this one:

Acts 10:43 - To Him all the prophets witness that, through His name, whoever believes in Him will receive forgiveness of sins.”

My pride, like Nebuchadnezzar’s has been broken. I have come to understand what Paul says in Romans 7:18a - And I know that nothing good lives in me, that is, in my sinful nature.

I have come to understand that I have broken God’s law, summed up by the 10 commandments, and am therefore guilty. I will finish with some verses from Romans which clearly show that before we see our need for forgiveness, we first have to see and admit that we are dirty rotten sinners because we have all broken His law. Only then can we see the reason that Jesus became the sacrifice for the sins of the whole world as shown in 1 Jn 2:2 is because that is the only way to be saved — we can’t save ourselves:

1 John 2:2 - He himself is the sacrifice that atones (pays the debt) for our sins—and not only our sins but the sins of all the world.

Romans 3:19-28 - <sup>19</sup> Obviously, the law applies to those to whom it was given, for its purpose is to keep people from having excuses, **and to show that the entire world is guilty before God.** <sup>20</sup> For no one can ever be made right with God by doing what the law commands. **The law simply shows us how sinful we are.** (this is the purpose of the law)

<sup>21</sup> But now God has shown us a way to be made right with Him **without keeping the requirements of the law**, as was promised in the writings of Moses and the prophets long ago.

<sup>22</sup> **We are made right with God by placing our faith in Jesus Christ.** And this is true for everyone who believes, no matter who we are.

<sup>23</sup> For everyone has sinned; we all fall short of God’s glorious standard (we have all broken the 10 commandments). <sup>24</sup> **Yet God, in his grace, freely makes us right in his sight. He did this through Christ Jesus when he freed us from the penalty for our sins.** <sup>25</sup> **For God presented Jesus as the sacrifice for sin.** People are made right with God when they believe that Jesus sacrificed his life, shedding his blood (as the sacrifice or payment for our sins). ...

<sup>27</sup> Can we boast, then, that we have done anything to be accepted by God? No, because our acquittal (being declared not guilty of breaking God’s law) is not based on obeying the law (trying

to be good). It is based on faith. <sup>28</sup> So we are made right with God through faith (simple belief) and not by obeying the law (trying hard to be good enough).

So, for those who are not born again or saved, what will you do? Will you admit your guilt before the perfect God, who is also your judge, and accepted His gift of forgiveness by believing that Jesus' sacrificial death on the cross almost 2000 years ago was the payment for your sins? Or, because of your pride, will you continue to reject Him and risk hardening your heart or missing the opportunity to be saved and so spend eternity being in torment and agony and isolation and darkness in the Lake of Fire?

The choice is yours. Never forget that God loves you and has literally done everything in His power and is going to extreme lengths, just like He did with Nebuchadnezzar, to deliver you from eternal damnation. The choice of where you spend eternity is yours alone.