

Nebuchadnezzar humbled

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[0 : 0 0] Let's turn back together as we seek God's blessing to the passage we've read, Daniel 4, we can reread verse 37. Daniel chapter 4 at verse 37.

Now I, Nebuchadnezzar, praise and extol and honor the King of heaven, for all his works are right, and his ways are just, and those who walk in pride, he is able to humble.

I'm sure in many ways and for different reasons, the book of Daniel is one of the more familiar, at least to a point, of books in the Old Testament.

No doubt because of the accounts we have of Daniel's friends going through the fiery furnace, and the fourth, somewhat mysterious, divine figure appearing with them.

As well, there's the account of Daniel being put into the lion's den. And for that reason, we're quite familiar with the book, but there's also other things, there are also other things, other aspects of the book of Daniel that we may not be very familiar with.

[1 : 1 0] And for that reason, we don't maybe go from, for example, chapter 7 to the end of the book, where the first six chapters are focusing on the history aspect of Daniel's life there in Babylon.

From chapter 7 forward, it becomes more apocalyptic, more of a revelation and an unveiling of the future of what is coming, both from the time of Nebuchadnezzar right to the end of time, where the book ends with references to the resurrection, chapter 12, the time of the end and the resurrection that's coming.

But as well as the second half of the book maybe being unfamiliar to us, the fourth chapter that we're looking at as well might, although it'd be quite familiar to us, might be something we're not very clear about.

In the sense that you may know yourself that there are different opinions, a different understanding as to what exactly happened to Nebuchadnezzar, not what happened in terms of the experience he had here, but whether the experience he had and the words that he says at the end of it amount to a genuine conversion or a turning of his heart to God.

In other words, is chapter 4 of the book of Daniel the personal testimony of King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon? Now, while it's maybe difficult to come down clearly on one side of that argument as to whether he is converted or not, I tend to think that the fact that it's included in this book, and also, more importantly, the way that Nebuchadnezzar speaks about God, he speaks as someone who has been totally humbled, and someone who has completely submitted himself to the God of heaven, the Most High, and in fact, the way he speaks about him in verse 34 to the end after his restoration, there is such profound, really deep, thought-provoking theology.

[3 : 0 6] In fact, words you maybe quote sometimes. He rules among, I think the older translation puts it along the lines of, He rules among the armies of heaven and the inhabitants of the earth, and none can stay his hand nor say to him, What doest thou?

It's as it's put here so beautifully, all the inhabitants of the earth, verse 35, are accounted as nothing, and he does according to his will among the host of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, and none can stay his hand or say to him, What have you done?

See, the insight that Nebuchadnezzar's given here is quite profound. His understanding is quite amazing. So taking these two things together, the understanding he was given about God and about himself, and the humbling of his heart that went along with it, we seem to suggest that maybe this man, Nebuchadnezzar, was actually turned to the Lord, that he actually became a believer. It's very difficult, like we're saying, to prove that, but that's where we want to try approaching the chapter from today, to look at this account in his life, and with a view to seeing ourselves in relation to what happened to him.

And there's five things we want to look at. Don't worry, it's not going to take too long, but just these are the points we look at. Firstly, agitation, and how this very, very secure and very, very powerful man becomes troubled and agitated when God speaks to him in a dream.

[4 : 32] Second thing is the interpretation that Daniel gives, the way he explains the meaning. The third thing is the exhortation, where Daniel tells the king to turn away from his sin.

Then we come after that to see his humiliation in the fourth place, where he is humbled, and this prediction that comes in the form of the dream actually takes place. And the last thing, it's his restoration, where his reason comes back.

He had lost his mind, and now his reason, his mind is restored, and that leads him to praise, as he says. He praise and honor and extol the God of heaven.

But looking firstly at this point of agitation, it shows us that God has his own ways of speaking to us. One thing we've got to be sure about, and to remind ourselves of as we look at life, and look at our situations, as we think of the Bible, is that God is always speaking to us.

[5 : 34] Now, you may say that's a given. It's too obvious. It's something that doesn't need to be said. But when God is speaking, and when God is calling to us, speaking to us through his word, and in all the circumstances around us in life, the thing we've got to ask ourselves is, are we listening to him?

It can be difficult for us, admittedly, that when he's speaking to us in his providence, meaning the circumstances and the situations he brings, things that come our way unexpected, things that come expected, it can be difficult for us to understand from our hearts back to his.

Because, I mean, we're bad enough at doing this with one another. We judge one another's motives. We work back from what someone does or doesn't do, says or doesn't say, and think because when they haven't explained the reason for doing it, that we understand the reason for doing it.

So we judge people's motives as though we could see into their hearts and we can see why they do or don't do, say or don't say what they do. And we get it wrong, don't we? You maybe know what it feels like for someone to judge your motives and think, oh, I've got you, got you, got you, got you, got you clear, and I can totally understand now why you're doing this.

But if we get it wrong with one another, how much more do we get it wrong with God? It's a mistake for us to look at our circumstances and to work or try to work back from them to God's reasons.

[6 : 59] You know that yourself, and maybe some here who are Christians or have been Christians for a long time. They can look back over their lives and maybe it was years down the line following some situation or circumstances that a bit at least of understanding came through.

There'll be other things in our lives that while we're in this world, we'll never understand. But what we need to be doing is asking God to explain.

Not that God owes us an explanation, but asking God that when he's speaking in his providence, in his word, that he will help us to understand what we need to know.

See, Nebuchadnezzar, someone, that God had been speaking to repeatedly, this may be the way you are yourself. If you aren't a Christian today, you maybe think about this. You're someone that God has spoken to in different ways.

You remember that in the providence of God, in God's plan and purpose, he brought Daniel and three of his friends into very, very close proximity to this man, Nebuchadnezzar.

[7 : 59] They were wise men. They were fearfully godly men from when they were young. And Daniel, right through to the end of his life, in his 80s or so, he was a fearfully godly man.

They had such a commitment to God and such a faithfulness. And yet, despite all of that, we could even say because of that, against Nebuchadnezzar's judgment to begin with, these men ended up in his court in very, very influential positions.

But being the kind of men they were, they were, when opportunity afforded them, they were going to speak to Nebuchadnezzar about their God. That's a wonderful thing that.

If God ever brings you into a situation, unexpected situation, remember Nebuchadnezzar's taking them away from, he's taking the Israelites away from Jerusalem and their own land, destroying the temple and taking them over to his land.

And all with a view to asserting his own dominion and majesty and all of these things. But God in all of this is taking these, especially these men, Daniel and his three friends, bringing them right into Nebuchadnezzar's life.

[9 : 05] And through them, Nebuchadnezzar's going to come face to face with God himself. Isn't that wonderful? You maybe relate to something like that. Maybe it's starting to happen in your life. I don't know.

That there's someone in your life, there's some people in your life, and these people are Christians. They're people who know God. And maybe like never before in your life, you're starting to hear about this God.

And maybe it's not hearing so much as just seeing something completely different in their lives, different from what you have. And something you see they have is something you realize you don't have. And it's something you're beginning to want.

Maybe. But maybe you can relate to someone, maybe in your family, close to you, being converted. And you see their lives change.

You see the difference. You see the turnaround and all of these things. God is speaking to you whenever that happens. When he sends anyone into your life to speak, he's speaking to you.

[10 : 03] This isn't just something happening. It isn't just coincidental or incidental. It is God speaking to you. He's coming close to you. Nebuchadnezzar didn't really understand the first time God was speaking.

The first thing is that he had these four men, Daniel and his friends. Do you remember the previous time where Daniel explained one of the dreams that Nebuchadnezzar had had?

He came face to face with this man who not only interpreted the dream, but told him the content of the dream first. None of the wise men of Babylon could do it. So something about this Daniel that really, really surprised and got hold of this Nebuchadnezzar.

See the effect of it. Daniel is someone, he says about verse 47 chapter 2, Nebuchadnezzar fell on his face and paid homage, verse 46 to Daniel, commanded that an offering and incense be offered up to him.

He so saw something divine about this Daniel, not that he was God-like. We know that that wasn't the case, but he was so close to God that Nebuchadnezzar's pagan mindset made the connection between intense godliness and the presence of the spirit with this person being God himself.

[11 : 20] And he therefore falls down, Nebuchadnezzar's on his face before Daniel. And he says truly, your God is God of gods and Lord of kings, a revealer of mysteries, for you've been able to reveal this mystery.

Then Daniel's honored and he's promoted. But you see, it's like hearing something goes in one ear and out the other. And we've got to remind ourselves of that so often. You might be someone and you're thinking that if only you had this one experience of God, just this one something, yes, I've got the Bible, I believe every word of it, but for me to take that step and commit my life completely to God, maybe you're looking for something, that one thing.

But you know, there is no guarantee in any shape or form that if God gave you that sign, performed that miracle, demonstrated that wonder that you would take the next step. In fact, there's very much in the Bible to say the opposite would happen.

You would tend to think maybe that if someone were to rise from the dead and come back, that you would believe. You remember that this was the very theory that the rich man had in the parable of the rich man and Lazarus.

When he's saying to Abraham in the parable to send Lazarus back to his family to warn them about going to the place that he's now in. But he's told that though one rose from the dead, they wouldn't believe.

[12 : 44] They wouldn't believe because they couldn't believe. There's an inability that needs more than just evidence. It needs power. It needs grace. See, Nebuchadnezzar had this experience of God and it absolutely blew him away.

It's something that he had never come across in his life. Your God, he says, is God of gods and Lord of kings. There's no one like your God, Daniel. But it didn't change his life. Kept on going. And that's why God comes back and God humbles him in a very, very powerful way.

But another way, he comes, not just in God giving Daniel the content and interpretation of the first three, but you remember as well Daniel's three friends in the furnace.

And Nebuchadnezzar's looking and he's peering into it and he sees a fourth person with him, another man, and he understands that the fourth one has something about him that is divine, something that is completely out of the ordinary.

Did that convert him? Did that change him? No, we know that that wasn't the case because as he went through that experience again, he says, verse 28, there's chapter 3, blessed be the God of Shadrach, Mishan, Abednego, who sent his angel and delivered his servants.

[13:58] And he therefore makes a decree, verse 29, that anyone who says anything against the God of Shadrach, Mishan, Abednego, they will be torn limb from limb and then they're promoted. But you see, his heart isn't changed.

We're laboring the point, yes, because you know this in your own life. I'm going to challenge you on this one. Just like I can remember it as well and every Christian here can remember it. Times where you thought, if only this happened to me, if I only experienced this or experienced that, then I would give my life.

And you've had some experiences. You've witnessed some things in your life. Has it changed you? No. So now God comes and agitates this king, really troublesome with a dream.

He was untouchable. He had all the power that he could ever want. He had the power to kill, the power to make alive. He had all the influence. I mean, you think about this.

Every single thing that this world could give him, he had it. And he had it in such an amount to such a degree that he was living the life, you might say, and he knew it. But he was living his life without God.

[15:07] You maybe can relate to that. You feel secure in your life. You feel safe. You're sorted. Nothing's ever going to go wrong in your own way of thinking. But when it goes wrong, problems come, hardness in situation and circumstance, difficulty in health, whatever it might be, you're saying, one day, one day, but not yet.

But see, God comes and God troubles this man in his security by just speaking to his mind in a dream. We can and must never underestimate the power of God.

And you might be praying for people in your family, people around you. You might be in pieces. You know the mess maybe some people's lives are in. Those near to you in this life, you maybe see how secure some people's lives are.

And you're aware of the fact that you just can't break in. You can't break through. And there's nothing but the power of God that is ever going to come in and change that life.

But we've got to remind ourselves that even a Nebuchadnezzar like this is not beyond the reach of God. No one is. And when God is going to speak, he'll speak.

[16:17] And he'll speak in such a way that he will be understood. Doesn't come with understanding in the dream. We know that. But that comes through Daniel being given the interpretation, the agitation.

God is troubling this man's mind. Can you relate to this? You know, sometimes, just a kind of by the way, sometimes the Christian life or entering the Christian life, becoming a Christian, it's an experience in relation to God.

God comes into your life. He becomes real. But it involves certain changes in your understanding about yourself, about God, about everyone, everything else around you.

Sometimes that change and that experience is put over to you as though it's something that's all positive, it's all upbeat, it's just an emotional high, there's nothing troubling or nothing negative.

And that comes across sometimes how the gospel is presented to you. Where there's no real talk of sin or judgment or punishment or eternity and all of these things, it's almost like Jesus is the best next thing, the best accessory you could have in your life.

[17:26] It's kind of cool to have Jesus. He's really cool, you know, and if you have him, your life will be cool as well. But that is all because of a tragic misunderstanding of who Jesus is, the character of this glorious person.

He comes into situations, he comes in his providence, he comes through his word and he terrifies people sometimes. And you might be thinking, I can remember someone, you might maybe relate to this yourself, who used to go to church but when they were out one Sunday evening, they started feeling the minister was talking to them.

Things that were going on in their minds and in their lives that they hadn't told anyone. Things that were kept to themselves. But they were coming out of the man who was talking in the pulpit and it scared this fellow like nothing had ever scared him in his life.

And that was the end of it. He left church, he turned his past, but as far as I know he hasn't gone back yet. What is this all about? It's God's convicting, it's God's striving, it's God coming close and

beginning to speak to someone.

And that is a troubling thing at times. I mean there can be different phases in our understanding and experience of becoming a Christian but there will very often be this element of fear and being unnerved in the presence of God.

[18 : 50] It's a fearful thing, a glorious thing but God is coming close and he's troubling this man. So he calls for all the wise men, calls for the Chaldeans, the enchanter. You notice the second thing, the interpretation.

Daniel is then called in and he explains to Daniel the content of the dream. Remember the first dream that Nebuchadnezzar had had? He was upset, he was troubled, but in order to get a right interpretation, he insisted that the wise men first when they would have a shot and then Daniel afterwards, that they would tell the content as well as the interpretation.

But this time, it's really got to him. This second dream has so got to him, he's not bothered about that anymore. He just wants someone to explain it to him and he knows that Daniel has that ability. Daniel is called in and then the dream is explained and Daniel is absolutely horrified when he hears it.

It says a lot about Daniel. Imagine living in the court of Nebuchadnezzar. He wasn't a nice man. He was very proud and very arrogant. He'd kill at will and he would do whatever he wanted with whoever he wanted whenever he wanted to do it and you couldn't stop him.

And if you were a godly man or woman, if you were as intensely godly, I mean your life was just so immersed in God so that you were radiating God in your life.

[20 : 12] People could see it in you and he could even admit the spirit of the holy gods is in you. You'd feel completely uncomfortable in that environment. That's one thing.

But what Daniel doesn't do and we shouldn't do in that kind of environment is have any kind of disrespect or any kind of negative feelings towards people.

See when Daniel has the dream explained to him. Verse 19, Daniel, whose name was Belteshazzar, was dismayed for a while and his thoughts alarmed him.

Why? Because he knew what the dream meant. He knew what was going to happen to Nebuchadnezzar and Daniel was broken about it. He says in the verse 19, My Lord, may the dream be for those who hate you and its interpretation for your enemies.

He's saying, Nebuchadnezzar, I wish, I wish this wasn't going to happen to you. Some people might rub their hands and say he's in for it now. God has finally caught up with him and God is now going to bring this man down to where he belongs.

[21 : 17] But Daniel is truly concerned and broken hearted. But the interpretation is given and we've read that already. We don't need to reread the details. But just to notice that in the interpretation and in the word that Daniel is giving, it's a reminder to us that God always warns us before he deals with us.

You believe that? You know, we often think sometimes that some of the things that God does are so unjust. If you're not a Christian, you maybe claim to be an atheist.

That's maybe one of your, you mean you're an atheist. You think, well, why would I be here if I was an atheist? In your understanding, atheist, it's actually, it comes from a Greek word. It's written in Ephesians 2 and it's translated as without God, *atheoi*.

So, there's different levels of meaning. We have a general application of that word. It just means without God. But as you look at the Bible, as you look at these things and you think, in life, how could a God who is loving and merciful do things like this?

He's either all loving and merciful but has no power to stop it. Because if he had power to stop it, surely he would if he loves. Well, maybe it's that he doesn't love, he's all powerful, he just likes doing this kind of thing to people.

[22 : 40] But neither of these are true. Neither of these are true. And one thing that will prove to you and to me if we're Christians, not that we won't struggle with things and in our understanding with difficult circumstances and will God willing come back to this kind of theme tonight, is that we will admit and acknowledge to God that his way is perfect.

It's not that we've got to kind of grind our teeth and stiff up our lip and say, well, I better just accept it and say, yeah, God does things that are right. He never does anything wrong. But we absolutely and actually are persuaded that even if we can't understand what's taking place, that God is doing what is right.

But think about this another way. This is really what we're getting to. Before God does something, when God is going to bring a judgment right throughout the Bible and we're living in the age where these warnings are there, God announces what he's going to do.

You maybe think, well, how does that apply in my life? Well, if you're a Christian, don't you know the experience of when you're sinning, you're maybe backsliding and God sends word to you that he knows what you're doing.

It could be in your own conscience. You get a bit troubled by what you're doing. It could be that God speaks to you through someone else. It could be parts of the Bible coming home. It could be when you're in church and the sermons are there and that the word is coming home to you and you only know what's going on and you only know what's taking place but God will say to you, look, stop what you're doing.

[24 : 14] Turn around from where you're going or I'll have to visit you and I'll have to deal with you. You may want to look again and me with you at the second and third chapters of the book of Revelation, letters to the seven churches and our Lord assesses all of these churches.

He warns them and he announces sometimes that if they don't repent, for example, he'll come and take the lampstand away. He'll take his presence, he'll take his power, he'll take all that is associated with his blessing away from them.

He'll just leave them to themselves unless they repent. That's a church he's talking to and there's that principle and that application in our lives and you can maybe remember it and maybe it's happening to you just now.

Listen to him when he's talking to you. Listen to him. If you're not a Christian, same thing applies in a different way. Listen to God speaking to you. Someone's converted around you.

Something's going on in your life, situations. You're starting to get a bit troubled. Maybe you're starting to become a bit anxious about the Bible, about yourself. Maybe things are changing in your life.

[25 : 18] Your security, the previous dependence you had on yourself and your possessions and everything and everyone around you, that is all going. Maybe God is shaking your life.

Listen to him. Maybe God is saying to you this kind of thing comes up. That he's talking to you, that he wants you to listen to him. Listen to him. In the ultimate sense, people often think about God being a God of love and grace, ever punishing, everlastingly punishing people for their sins.

How does that add up? Why does God not just forgive everybody if he's the kind of God that you say he is? Why doesn't he just forgive? He cannot.

He cannot remain who he is and do that kind of thing in the sense that God in the whole of his being is so glorious and there is such a harmony of perfection that involves his love, it involves also his justice, his holiness.

He's the kind of God who cannot, cannot but deal with sin. We don't understand God when we think about and say, well, how can he do this or how can he do that? Well, we don't understand him when we're asking these kind of questions.

[26 : 35] We're actually saying, God, you should look at me, take a leaf out of my book and see how good I am. That's what we're actually saying. Blasphemous. What we need to do is come to Calvary, come to the cross, because it's there any of these arguments or questions or doubts that we may have about God's love and God's justice are met.

They meet in the death of his own son where in that moment God is the father dealing with his people's sin in his son.

That is love and that is justice. There's so much involved in all of that. But any of these questions, you'll find them resolved at the cross and it should stop us from arguing if we argue at all.

He's warning Nebuchadnezzar. But there is, thirdly, an exhortation involved in that because God is, through Daniel, saying what's coming.

You notice it's a decree, verse 24, O king, it is a decree of the Most High which has come upon my Lord, the king, saying, Nebuchadnezzar, this is going to happen to you. This is going to happen to you.

[27 : 45] What would you do if you were in that situation? What would I do? You're Nebuchadnezzar, here's Daniel, you know Daniel tells the truth, you know that he says things from God and it's all come through. You going to listen to him?

Well, the exhortation, he says, is in the heart of this, verse 27. Therefore, he says, O king, let my counsel be acceptable to you. This is the Daniel we know and love. He's in the situation and he's going to tell him the gospel in a manner of speaking.

He says, break off your sins by practicing righteousness and your iniquities by showing mercy to the oppressed. He's saying, stop sinning, Nebuchadnezzar. Turn away from the way you're going. You can't turn away from sin to nothing. It's to God, obviously. Turning away from your own sin and rebellion, go to God. Stop oppressing the oppressed and perhaps there'll be a lengthening of your prosperity.

Some people think that 27th verse that Daniel is saying, look, if you repent, God maybe won't do this to you. That's not true. That's not what's going on. It's written in verse 24, it is a decree of the most high which has come upon my Lord the king.

[28 : 52] This is going to happen to you. So what Daniel is saying is if not saying, if you repent, this may not happen. Your repentance may turn it away. That's could happen in your life or mine. Remember the situation in Nineveh as well.

They turned from their sin and God didn't send the judgment he said would come after the 40 day period. But what he's saying at the ESV Hazard that there may perhaps be a lengthening of your prosperity.

So after this experience you may have an enhanced and an extended period of prosperity. That's what I think Daniel is saying. But you have to turn from your sins.

It's very interesting because we're told verse 36 that at the same time his reason returned. The glory of his kingdom, majesty, and his splendor returned.

God established his kingdom after this. God did what he said he would do through Daniel. If you turn, if you repent, break off your sins, break off your iniquities, and practice righteousness and have mercy on the oppressed.

[29 : 55] He must have done that before God blesses him in the end as he does. The faithfulness this man Daniel has. He's faithful to this Nebuchadnezzar, man who has the power to take his life, spare his life.

Daniel's not the kind of man who'll say it to one and not say it to the other. Such an example to us for us to be faithful and for us to be consistent as witnesses for the Lord wherever he places us to say and speak in his name.

But notice the fourth thing is humiliation. Stand in Nebuchadnezzar's shoes for just a minute. If you had this told you, if I had that told me, what would you do about it?

Maybe you say, maybe you think, and we're back at this whole thing again, if I only had this experience, if only I heard this, if God would just say something so clearly that it would be unmistakable that God himself is speaking to me, then I'll change, then I'll turn.

No, we wouldn't because we're told, verse 28, all this came upon King Nebuchadnezzar. At the end of 12 months, 29, he was walking on the roof of the royal palace of Babylon and the king answered and said, it's not this great Babylon which I've built by my power as a royal residence for the glory of my majesty.

[31 : 10] You see him, he's as proud as ever, if not worse. And Daniel was saying to him, humble yourself. Humble yourself before God. A year has passed since this experience of verses 1 to 27 when the king hasn't changed.

You're like that too. I know, there'll be some of you like that. You're really troubled by things and things kind of, for one reason or another, things get under your skin in a spiritual sense and you start getting serious for a while.

But then the weeks, the months, maybe for some of you it's years go past and you're as hard as you ever were. It's a frightening thing that. Can you relate to it? You'd be worried about yourself if that's the way it is.

Not in a sense of there being no hope for you but in the sense that recognize that's where you are. It's a sign of God withdrawing from you if you're not bothered about these things anymore.

It's a sign of God coming near to you when you start getting worried about these things until you come by his grace and power the next step to come into his kingdom and into his presence, into his family becoming a believer.

[32 : 25] Nebuchadnezzar forgot the whole thing and he's as proud as ever. So God humbled him, brought him down, he lost his mind. Verse 31, notice that. It's while he's still saying, isn't this great Babylon? Verse 31, while the words were still in the king's mouth.

So he's saying it out loud. He's praising himself. Amundi, so great. And while he's doing this, as soon as, while he's still saying the words, a voice came from heaven, God spoke to him again. He said, Nebuchadnezzar, the kingdom has departed from you. You'll be driven from men. You'll be living like a beast. And so he does. For seven years, it says seven periods of time.

We understand that to be seven years. What a situation. Know what God can do to any one of us. We realize in his sovereignty, in his mystery of his dealings, that whatever means may be involved in the situation, it is God who said, you're going to lose your mind.

And he lost his mind. God is going to humble him. And that's the last thing we notice in his restoration. Very briefly. At the end of the days, verse 34 says, I, Nebuchadnezzar, lifted my eyes to heaven and my reason returned to me and I blessed the Most High and praised and honored him who lives forever.

[33 : 44] He praises and honors him in terms of what's there in verse 34 and 35. He's saying, you are the God who lives and reigns forever and ever. Your kingdom is everlasting. Mine isn't. What's Babylon compared with your kingdom?

Nothing. All the inhabitants of the earth are accounted as nothing. We are nobodies before you. You rule in heaven. You rule on earth. All that you do is right.

None of us can stop you. None of us can argue with you. And as he says in the end, he says, this is the last verse of the chapter, all his works are right and his ways just. Can you identify with that in your life?

Can you say and admit that lovingly and from your heart? Lord, your way is perfect. I absolutely believe it. I know it. But can you worship him for that?

Remember when, well, it's in the life of Job in the Old Testament, also in the life of David, where David lost the child that back in the book of 2 Samuel was born to him by Bathsheba.

[34 : 48] You may remember that while the child was still alive, he was fasting, he was praying, he was agonizing. But when the child died, he got up, he washed, anointed himself, changed his clothes, went into the house of God, we're told, and he worshipped.

It's quite staggering that. And Job as well before him in terms of, in point of history, when he lost his family and lost his health, was in the first stage of it when he lost his family, he bowed his head and worshipped and he said, the Lord gave, the Lord has taken away.

Blessed be the name of the Lord. Can we say that? Yes, Job went on to struggle and we'll struggle and we'll wrestle at times with what God is doing, but can we identify with Nebuchadnezzar here like we could do a degree with David and with Job.

All his works are right. All his ways are just. God's way is absolutely perfect. Not because I see the way it works out, but because I know it is he who is doing it.

It is perfect. The last thing, those who walk in pride, he is able to humble. Amazing to see that in the life of this very, very proud, this very, very arrogant King Nebuchadnezzar that he's actually saying, God has humbled me.

[36 : 06] God can humble anybody. Those that walk in pride, he says, he is able to humble. That's a wonderful thing. Let's not be in the business of trying to humble each other. You know, we can do that. That doesn't mean that we don't say when we have to say things to one another in love and in faithfulness that can result in our being humbled or someone else having to be humbled.

But we mustn't be in the business of trying to cut someone down or trying to humble them in our own ways because that's God's work. And we've got to leave that to the God who does it perfectly. But the question we finish with, full circle, we're back to the beginning of the chapter where Nebuchadnezzar begins. And he speaks about what God has done in his life. Have you got a story to tell?

Could you say yourself that God has humbled you? Because all of us at root have the very same sin governing us that was governing Nebuchadnezzar.

Don't need to be kings of Babylon to be proud and arrogant, full of ourselves. That's our problem. And while we're in that attitude of pride and arrogance, we're defying God. We live in rebellion against God.

[37 : 15] This is the thing that Satan came into the mind of Eve in the Garden of Eden with. That if you take the forbidden fruit, your eyes will be open and you'll be like God. You become God to yourself.

Not in your theology. Not in your... You wouldn't sit and say, well, I believe I'm God. Of course we wouldn't. We're not like that. But we think and we live and we speak and act in ways that we say, I'll do what I want.

No one's going to tell me what to do. And even when it comes to the gospel and we say, no, we're defying God. And we're saying, no, I am my own God. I am on the throne of my own life.

But when God comes into your life, his grace and his power and his Holy Spirit comes, that changes. Our hearts are broken. Our pride is humbled. It's not completely gone. We still fight with ourselves and all of these things.

But can you follow Nebuchadnezzar where he's saying that God has taken me down from where I used to be. My circumstances might be the same, but my attitudes about myself, about God, about everyone else, can I say with the Apostle Paul, unto me who am less than the least of all the saints. [38 : 28] When in fact, he was way down the line ahead of so many of them in terms of his relationship with God, in terms of his spirituality, in terms of so many things, but he saw himself as nothing.

Can you identify with that? Can I? God grant it to us that God would bless his word to us and that we would know his power and grace in our lives. We'll pray together.