



## Daniel – Thriving in Babylon

### Part 3 – God Kills Pride in The Heart

#### Key Passage

#### Daniel 4:28-36

<sup>28</sup>All this came upon King Nebuchadnezzar. <sup>29</sup>At the end of twelve months he was walking on the roof of the royal palace of Babylon, <sup>30</sup>and the king answered and said, “Is not this great Babylon, which I have built by my mighty power as a royal residence and for the glory of my majesty?” <sup>31</sup>While the words were still in the king’s mouth, there fell a voice from heaven, “O King Nebuchadnezzar, to you it is spoken: The kingdom has departed from you, <sup>32</sup>and you shall be driven from among men, and your dwelling shall be with the beasts of the field. And you shall be made to eat grass like an ox, and seven periods of time shall pass over you, until you know that the Most High rules the kingdom of men and gives it to whom he will.” <sup>33</sup>Immediately the word was fulfilled against Nebuchadnezzar. He was driven from among men and ate grass like an ox, and his body was wet with the dew of heaven till his hair grew as long as eagles’ feathers, and his nails were like birds’ claws.

#### Nebuchadnezzar Restored

<sup>34</sup>At the end of the days 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,

for his dominion is an everlasting dominion,  
and his kingdom endures from generation to generation;

<sup>35</sup> all the inhabitants of the earth 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?"

<sup>36</sup>At the same time my reason returned to me, and for the glory of my kingdom, my majesty and splendor returned to me. My counselors and my lords sought me, and I was established in my kingdom, and still more greatness was added to me. <sup>37</sup>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.

C.S. Lewis called pride that "Great Sin." Lewis believed that pride was such a great sin because it was a problem for every single person. In fact, Lewis aptly summarizes our problem with pride when he says

"There is one vice of which no man in the world is free; which everyone in the world loathes when they see it in others; and of which hardly any people, except some Christians, ever imagine that they are guilty themselves. There is no fault which we are more unconscious of in ourselves; and the more we have it in ourselves, the more we dislike it in others."

In this passage of scripture, we see how God goes about dealing with pride. God will not allow humanity to live under the illusion that they are in control, and they live in their own power and for their own purpose. No, God will kill pride in us, no matter what it takes.

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## BELONG

Start the group with an opportunity for community. We want this to be a place where the body of Christ can **belong** by sharing their lives with one another in genuine fellowship.

- How is everyone's week going? Any life updates?
- What is something the group can be praying about?
- What is something the group can praise this week?
- Are there any lingering thoughts from the prior week's discussion?
  
- We know that we all struggle with pride, what does pride look like when it rears its ugly head in our lives?



## FIRST BAPTIST SIMPSONVILLE UPSTATE CHURCH

- Why is pride so hard to recognize in our own life and so easy to spot in others?
- Is there a time when you were walking in pride and God humbled you?

### Believe

Move into the relevant Bible passages and read along together. This is where the body of Christ can learn together to **believe** in Jesus more and love Him better.

Daniel 4: 28-33

<sup>28</sup> All this came upon King Nebuchadnezzar. <sup>29</sup> At the end of twelve months he was walking on the roof of the royal palace of Babylon, <sup>30</sup> and the king answered and said, “Is not this great Babylon, which I have built by my mighty power as a royal residence and for the glory of my majesty?” <sup>31</sup> While the words were still in the king’s mouth, there fell a voice from heaven, “O King Nebuchadnezzar, to you it is spoken: The kingdom has departed from you, <sup>32</sup> and you shall be driven from among men, and your dwelling shall be with the beasts of the field. And you shall be made to eat grass like an ox, and seven periods of time shall pass over you, until you know that the Most High rules the kingdom of men and gives it to whom he will.” <sup>33</sup> Immediately the word was fulfilled against Nebuchadnezzar. He was driven from among men and ate grass like an ox, and his body was wet with the dew of heaven till his hair grew as long as eagles’ feathers, and his nails were like birds’ claws.

This chapter started with Nebuchadnezzar having a dream. This dream was a warning for him. If he continued to walk in pride, then God would humble him in a very extreme way. Well, as you can see, Nebuchadnezzar refused to be humbled instead he walked in the sickness of pride and paid dearly for it.

#### THE SYMPTOMS OF PRIDE

Before God humbles Nebuchadnezzar, he allows us to see the reason that the King is in such desperate need of a check on his pride. God allows us to witness the symptoms of Nebuchadnezzar’s pride firsthand.

Symptom Number 1 is self-dependence, or self-sufficiency. It is the belief that you are able in your own power to direct the course of your life and determine suitable outcomes. – We see this belief in Nebuchadnezzar when he says, “which I have built by my power” ...



## FIRST BAPTIST SIMPSONVILLE UPSTATE CHURCH

This belief, this self-sufficiency or self-dependence, is an illusion of the highest magnitude. The story of Nebuchadnezzar and the testimony of all of scripture teach us that all of our life, the good and the bad, is subject to one massive truth, “The Most High Reigns”

Nebuchadnezzar had to learn that he was where he was not by his own power but by God’s.

Symptom Number 2 is self-exaltation. This is the belief that your purpose in life is to work for your own purposes, your own kingdom, and ultimately your own glory.

Nebuchadnezzar had to be taught that he did not work for the glory of his name. He worked for the glory of God’s name!

See the symptoms of pride, and then begin to ask yourself, are these symptoms in me?

### THE CONSEQUENCES OF PRIDE

Daniel 4:33

<sup>33</sup> Immediately the word was fulfilled against Nebuchadnezzar. He was driven from among men and ate grass like an ox, and his body was wet with the dew of heaven till his hair grew as long as eagles’ feathers, and his nails were like birds’ claws.

What a horrific outcome for the king. He tried to be like God, to work in his own power and live for his own purpose and it did not turn out well.

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Notice that the consequence for pride, the consequence for opposing God, is that you lose. If you oppose God, you lose.

See this, this showdown, between Nebuchadnezzar and God, is not evenly matched.

This is not Ali v. Frazier where Nebuchadnezzar is opposed to God and we don’t know who is going to come out on top. Not at all, Nebuchadnezzar opposes God, tries to sit in God’s chair, tries to be like God, and he loses. It’s not close either. God reigns and Nebuchadnezzar roams the field like an ox.

The lesson from Nebuchadnezzar is clear: you can be humble before God or you can be humbled by God.

### THE CURE FOR PRIDE

Daniel 4: 34-37

<sup>34</sup> *At the end of the days 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,*



*for his dominion is an everlasting dominion, and his kingdom endures from generation to generation; <sup>35</sup> all the inhabitants of the earth 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?”*

*<sup>36</sup> At the same time my reason returned to me, and for the glory of my kingdom, my majesty and splendor returned to me. My counselors and my lords sought me, and I was established in my kingdom, and still more greatness was added to me. <sup>37</sup> 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.*

As Nebuchadnezzar returns to his senses, he offers us a prescription to cure pride. The prescription is twofold.

Pill Number 1: Realize that God is greater than I can possibly imagine. – Look at the God that Nebuchadnezzar describes. Eternal. Ruling. Sovereign. Impossibly powerful. As we swallow the pill of God’s greatness our pride begins to fade in the light of his majesty.

Pill Number 2: Realize that we are not as awesome as we think we are. – Notice how Nebuchadnezzar describes humanity. Nothing. Powerless. Impossibly inept to stand against God. As we swallow the pill of our own inadequacy our pride begins to fade in the light of our weakness.

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## BECOME

Wrap up the discussion by asking some closing questions. We can **become** more like the people God is calling us to be by reflecting on what we’ve learned and applying it.

- How can I cultivate a bigger view of God so that I don’t walk in pride?
- How can we constantly seek to remind ourselves that we don’t live in our power and for our purposes?
- What does it look like to be a truly humble person? How does Daniel model a humble person in Daniel 4?