

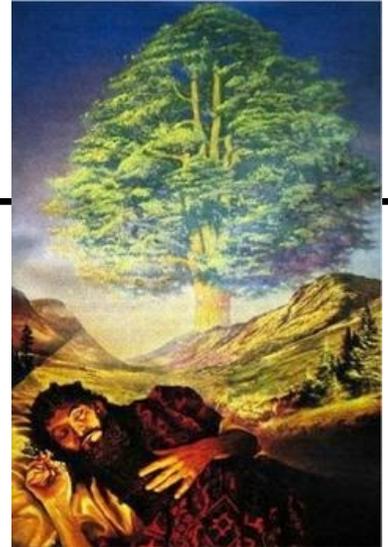
The Corona Chronicle.

Being Church in Partial lockdown.

Sunday May 2nd

West Worthing Evangelical Church. Rugby Road

www.westworthingevangelical.co.uk



Every Knee Shall Bow part 2

Exploring the Book of Daniel

Please read Chapter 4

What Nebuchadnezzar did.

Don't know whether he paid attention to Daniel's advice but if he did the effects of both dream and Daniel's words soon wore off. NB [vv28-31](#). The problem was not his achievements but his arrogance; [v30](#) shows he is totally full of himself. That's what pride is all about – oneself – and Nebuchadnezzar had it in spades, not a vestige of humility. Very easy to get confused about these two attitudes. Is it wrong to be pleased with things that you have accomplished, to recognize a good job of work when you've finished it and to enjoy that sense of satisfaction, to take pride in a job well done? No. Does humility mean that we deny the quality of a task we have accomplished, denigrate what we've achieved? No, but what stops appreciation becoming pride is to appreciate something else - the goodness of God in gifting us and then we are grateful. It's the attitude and mindset behind the way we live and work and operate.

The only person Nebuchadnezzar wanted to glorify was himself. His ego was paramount; so apt that he was king of Babylon for this the very characteristic of Babylon we meet whenever we read of her in the Bible – see [Genesis 11:4](#); [Isaiah 14](#); [Revelation 17-18](#). This, of course, was the very essence of what drove Satan into rebellion against God. What else could have done?!

There was no room in Nebuchadnezzar's mindset to reflect where his gifts and abilities came from, how it was that he was a king and not a slave, no capacity to be thankful to God and acknowledge him. So effectively he did nothing about the warning of coming judgement.

This attitude is alive and well in 2021 Britain – this tendency to make ourselves the centre and orbit of our lives. But it is a position as fragile as it is futile. For we ignore too the warning of eternal judgement that is the alternative to the good news of Jesus that offers salvation. So Nebuchadnezzar is struck down with boanthropy (a condition where someone is convinced they are an ox) and this proud king slobbers around in the field munching grass.

What Nebuchadnezzar discovered. (a) *God's word is accurate.* God had said this would happen but, as time passed Nebuchadnezzar showed he had learned nothing from it. Possibly he had convinced himself there was nothing to fear now.

And then, unexpectedly, at the height of his achievements and the fulness of his pride the judgement fell [v20-21](#). Too late Nebuchadnezzar learnt that God's delays are not God's cancellations!

This is a lesson we all need to heed. Our sin and our disregard of God and his will is under his judgement. Soberly the Lord Jesus Christ, who came to give his life for sinners that they might find God's forgiveness, is the one who spoke most of that judgement. He did so that we might be under no illusions about the seriousness of the decision we need to make. And his promise is that he will come again; he will bring to an end this world order and his eternal kingdom will be seen in all its completeness.

(b) God's power is absolute. In Babylon and throughout the Babylonian Empire people trembled at Nebuchadnezzar's word and dictate. He was the absolute monarch, his word law, he held the power of life and death over all. He was supreme. Then God burst the bubble of his hubris and he is seen to be a mere mortal in the hand of the truly supreme and sovereign God. For God rules, not just in the future but here and now.

A salutary word for our world today – for those who desire power, and those who attain power; those who corrupt their office and brutalize their people, those who seek to serve but ignore the God who raised them to office. No-one, whether king, president, dictator or the most obscure individual in society is outside the reach of his power. And that is a power which is totally just and wise as it calls us to answer. And again, this is not just a future prospect but a present reality.

(c) God's grace is astounding. Seen here in **restoration**. God had promised this was not a final judgement but a temporary punishment. Remember Nebuchadnezzar's record so no deserving here, no Brownie points to brag about – simply God's unwarranted mercy. And this is the greater wonder of the gospel, the good news of Jesus to deliver us, not from a temporary judgement but an everlasting one. And why? Not because of our fine record, our do-gooding, our going to church, our deserving. None of that counts. If we come to God through Jesus' death at Calvary it is purely and simply and profoundly through God's astounding grace!

But God hadn't finished with Nebuchadnezzar. Not only was there **restoration** but there was **reconstruction**. NB [v37](#) Who's this speaking?! It's the king but with a difference! NB [v36](#) Is this boasting? Is he still full of pride? No! NB [v1-2, 34-35](#). He's telling the world about the humbling experience God has put him through. That's not pride but extolling God, giving him the thanks. His focus has changed, his values have altered, his view of life transformed. And he wants to give God the glory [v37](#).

If you have ever experienced the astounding grace of God touching your life and bringing you into his kingdom you know he isn't finished with you; you're under reconstruction and implicit in that process is our longing that our loving Saviour and God should be glorified and exalted in our lives. We want to give him the glory for all his patience with us and for his astounding grace that brought us to himself. Don't we? Are we?

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WITLLCSHHINKELKIKYE
TQHEPSUNNIPNTOHEXK
IVNGODOTMOMFTDHER
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TRSTLIPSTZEND

Cross out every third letter and then write the letters that are left in the spaces below. Read what Jesus had to say.

Hymns Readings and Prayers

**1 Spirit of God, You know my inmost being;
All of my life is open to Your sight;
Help me to take to heart Your probing counsel;
Help me to yield to love's all-searching light.**

**2 My love, I know, is rarely what it should be;
My joy is all too shallow at its best;
My peace is fragile as a flower's petals;
My patience crumbles at the slightest test;**

**3 Self-interest haunts my kindness and my goodness;
Seldom is true integrity my goal;
I lack my humble, gentle Lord's demeanour;
Old habits undermine my self-control.**

**4 Spirit of God, beyond the flaws and failures
You know the person Christ would have me be.
Come, plough and prune, and make me fit for service;
Come, plant and nurture Your good fruit in me.**

Martin E. Leckebusch

Bible Reading Daniel 4

Too long for our limited space

Prayers

"In using all means, seek God alone. In and through every outward thing, look only to the power of His Spirit, and the merits of His Son. Beware you do not get stuck in the work itself; if you do, it is all lost labour. Nothing short of God can satisfy your soul. Therefore, fix on Him in all, through all, and above all...Remember also to use all means as means-as ordained, not for their own sake..."

— **John Wesley**, [How To Pray: The Best of John Wesley on Prayer](#)

Bible Verses about Humility

[James 4:6](#), But He gives us more grace. That is why Scripture says: "God opposes the proud but shows favour to the humble."

[Philippians 2:3-4](#), Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind regard one another as more important than yourselves; do not merely look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others.

[Ephesians 4:2](#), Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love.

[Proverbs 18:12](#), Before a downfall the heart is haughty, but humility comes before honour.

[Micah 6: 8](#), He has shown you, O mortal, what is good. And what does the Lord require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God.

[1 Peter 5:5](#), In the same way, you who are younger, submit yourselves to your elders. All of you, clothe yourselves with humility toward one another, because, "God opposes the proud but shows favour to the humble."

[1 Corinthians 1:28](#), God chose the lowly things of this world and the despised things—and the things that are not—to nullify the things that are, so that no one may boast before Him.

Prayer for a Humble Heart:

Lord,

We pray for the heart position of humility. Humility in such a way that we do not cheapen our own worth or value within, but that we take the alignment that we are here for a greater purpose than just our own gain. We pray that You will highlight to us what it truly means to live a humble life, and that our own worth will be revealed by Your Light. It is only then that we may truly live in freedom and right standing, for we will hold our own value correctly. Lord, we welcome You to mould and secure our hearts in true humility by Your lead.

In Jesus name, Amen

Prayer to Walk Humbly:

Father,

In [Micah 6:8](#) You say, "O people, the LORD has told you what is good, and this is what He requires of you: to do what is right, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God." Today we choose to walk humbly with You. We choose to live by Your [Holy Spirit](#) and to follow Your lead. Help us to hear You clearly, for we do not want to walk by pride or self-sufficiency, we want to walk with You.

In Jesus name, Amen

Prayer for Humble Spirit:

Father,

Today we ask for Your help to walk humbly with our brothers and sisters. It is all too easy for us to fall prey to our flesh and to walk in arrogance, but pride causes division and we desire peace. Lord, help us to humble ourselves in order that we do not let the lies of the enemy overtake us, rather, help us to count ourselves as equals with one another. It is then that we will stop attempting to be better than others, and we can love their hearts for the unique person You made them to be. Help us to value one another in this humble spirit so that we may live to the fullest.

In Jesus name, Amen

Prayers from Crosswalk