

Nebuchadnezzar's Humiliation

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[0:00] Daniel chapter 4. King Nebuchadnezzar to the peoples nation and men of every language who live in all the world may you prosper greatly.

! It is my pleasure to tell you about the miraculous signs and wonders that the Most High God has performed for me. How greater is signs how mighty his wonders.

His kingdom is an eternal kingdom. His dominion endures from generation to generation. I, Nebuchadnezzar, was at home in my palace, contented and prosperous.

I had a dream that made me afraid. As I was lying in my bed, the images and visions that passed through my mind terrified me. So I commanded that all the wise men of Babylon be brought before me to interpret the dream for me.

When the magicians and chanters and astrologers and diviners came, I told them the dream, but they could not interpret it for me. Finally, Daniel came into my presence and I told him the dream.

[1:09] He's called Belteshazzar after the name of my God and the spirit of the holy gods is in him. I said, Belteshazzar, chief of the magicians.

I know that the spirit of the holy gods is in you and no mystery is too difficult for you. Here is my dream. Interpret it for me. These are the visions I saw while lying in my bed.

I looked and there before me stood a tree in the middle of the land. Its height was enormous. The tree grew large and strong and its top touched the sky.

It was visible to the ends of the earth. Its leaves were beautiful, its fruit abundant. And on it was food for all. Under it, the beasts of the field found shelter.

And the birds of the air lived in its branches. From it, every creature was fed. In the visions I saw while lying in my bed, I looked and there before me was a messenger, a holy one coming down from heaven.

[2:18] He called in a loud voice. Cut down the tree and trim off its branches. Strip off its leaves and scatter its fruit. Let the animals flee from under it and the birds from its branches.

But let the stump and its roots bound with iron and bronze remain in the ground in the grass of the field. Let him be drenched with the dew of heaven and let him live with the animals among the plants of the earth.

Let his mind be changed from that of a man and let him be given the mind of an animal till seven times pass by for him. The decision is announced by messengers.

The holy ones declare the verdict so that the living may know that the most high is sovereign over the kingdoms of men and gives them to anyone he wishes and sets over them the lowliest of men. This is the dream that I, King Nebuchadnezzar, had. Now, Belteshazzar, tell me what it means for none of the wise men in my kingdom can interpret it for me. But you can because the spirit of the holy gods is in you.

[3:31] Then Daniel, also called Belteshazzar, was greatly perplexed for a time and his thoughts terrified him. So the king said, Belteshazzar, do not let the dream or its meaning alarm you.

Belteshazzar answered, my lord, if only the dream applied to your enemies and its meaning to your adversaries. The tree you saw, which grew large and strong with its top touching the sky, visible to the whole earth with beautiful leaves and abundant fruit, providing food for all, giving shelter to the beasts of the field and having nesting places in its branches for the birds of the air.

You, O king, are that tree. You have become great and strong. Your greatness has grown until it reaches the sky and your dominion extends to distant parts of the earth.

You, O king, saw a messenger, a holy one coming down from heaven and saying, cut down the tree and destroy it. But leave the stump bound with iron and bronze in the grass of the field while its roots remain in the ground.

Let him be drenched with the dew of heaven. Let him live like the wild animals until seven times pass by for him. This is the interpretation, O king.

[4:54] And this is the decree. The most high is issued against my lord, the king. You will be driven away from people and will live with the wild animals.

You will eat grass like cattle and be drenched with the dew of heaven. Seven times will pass by for you until you acknowledge that the most high is sovereign over the kingdoms of men and gives them to anyone he wishes.

The command to leave the stump of the tree with its roots means that your kingdom will be restored to you when you acknowledge that heaven rules. Therefore, O king, be pleased to accept my advice.

Renounce your sins by doing what is right and your wickedness by being kind to the oppressed. It may be that then your prosperity will continue.

All this happened to King Nebuchadnezzar. Twelve months later, as the king was walking on the roof of the royal palace of Babylon, he said, Is not this the great Babylon I have built as the royal residence by my mighty power and for the glory of my majesty?

[6:06] The words were still on his lips when a voice came from heaven. This is what is decreed for you, King Nebuchadnezzar. Your royal authority has been taken away from you.

You will be driven away from people and will live with the wild animals. You will eat grass like cattle. Seven times will pass by for you until you acknowledge that the Most High is sovereign over the kingdoms of men and gives them to anyone he wishes.

Immediately, what had been said about Nebuchadnezzar was fulfilled. He was driven away from people and ate grass like cattle. His body was drenched with the dew of heaven until his hair grew like the feathers of an eagle and his nails like the claws of a bird.

At the time of at the end of that time, I, Nebuchadnezzar, raised my eyes toward heaven and my sanity was restored. Then I praised the Most High.

I honored and glorified him who lives forever. His dominion is an eternal dominion. His kingdom endures from generation to generation. All the peoples of the earth are regarded as nothing.

[7:15] He does as he pleases with the powers of heaven and the peoples of the earth. No one can hold back his hand or say to him, What have you done?

At the same time that my sanity was restored, my honor and splendor were returned to me for the glory of my kingdom. My advisors and nobles sought me out and I was restored to my throne and became even greater than before.

Now I, Nebuchadnezzar, praise and exalt and glorify the King of heaven because everything he does is right and all his ways are just.

And those who walk in pride, he is able to humble. I'm certain the one thing that we need to hear and understand better than what we do is the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The reason we are depressed so often, the reason we are worried, the reason we struggle in relationships is not because we don't understand the law of God or it's not because we just can't remember what we're supposed to be doing.

[8:35] It's because we have forgotten what Jesus has already done for us. And that's why we need to hear and feel the goodness of the gospel from Daniel chapter 4 again.

Daniel chapter 4 is a beautiful, fascinating, frightening picture of what lengths God will do or go to save a person, to rescue a person from himself.

And it comes, chapter 4 comes from the mouth of Nebuchadnezzar. It's his testimony of God's grace and goodness in his life. And you can see that in verse 2, chapter 4, verse 2.

It is my pleasure to tell you about the miraculous signs and wonders that the Most High God has performed for me. This is something very personal to Nebuchadnezzar, what we have in chapter 4. This is God's dealings with him. Nebuchadnezzar has a story of deep sin. And he has a story of deeper love.

[9:47] It's the gospel of grace, and it's a story we need to hear. So this sermon has three points. And the first point is that God's love is patient.

And the second is that God's love is wise. And the third is that God's love is gracious. It's better than we would ever deserve. It's more than we've ever earned.

So first, God's love is patient. And I guess before we start this, I do want to say that Daniel chapter 4 could have a lot of sermons preached out of it.

And I think we're going to hit on a lot of the themes that we see here in Daniel chapter 4 in the later chapters. But today, I just want to focus on God's dealings with Nebuchadnezzar personally. So first, God's love is patient. Daniel's chapter 1 through 4 is all about Daniel and his three friends and their dealings with Nebuchadnezzar.

[10:46] And through these four chapters, we get a clear picture of God pursuing Nebuchadnezzar. He keeps going back to him again and again to save him because Nebuchadnezzar was deeply sinful and yet he was deeply loved.

In Daniel chapter 1, for the first time, Nebuchadnezzar meets some believers. It's probably the first time in his entire life. He's an unbeliever. He's very arrogant.

He's very self-dependent, independent, wealthy, intelligent, powerful man. He has everything going for him. Very talented. And yet, he is lost.

He's very lost. And he's at war with God. He might not recognize that, but he's at war with God. And remember, Daniel and his three friends, they made an impression on him. There were no one else like these four Hebrews.

They lived godly lives. They were wise. They were competent. They had a great witness in front of Nebuchadnezzar, but Nebuchadnezzar was yet untouched.

[11:56] His heart is unchanged. And then in chapter 2, God sends a dream to Nebuchadnezzar, and you remember what that dream is. And in that dream, God told Nebuchadnezzar that his kingdom, that Nebuchadnezzar's kingdom, wouldn't last.

It couldn't last. And that God was going to build a kingdom that would fill the entire earth and that would last forever. And that wasn't just information for Nebuchadnezzar.

That was a call to repentance. That was a call for Nebuchadnezzar to stop seeking his own kingdom and to seek first the kingdom of God.

Now, King Nebuchadnezzar was glad to hear that. He says that. He was glad to know the meaning of the dream. And to some extent, he was impressed with God. He was impressed with Daniel.

But still to this point, it wasn't anything personal. He hadn't felt that call to repent. In chapter 2, he said to Daniel, Surely your God is the God of gods and the Lord of kings and revealer of mysteries.

[13:03] For you were able to reveal this mystery. Was God his God? No. He was still Daniel's God. He was a great God, but he was your God.

He wasn't my God. But God is still on his trail. God is still seeking him out. In chapter 3, Nebuchadnezzar responds to the dream. Remembering how he responded.

He builds a statue of his own. And when the light comes, the light came into Nebuchadnezzar's heart. He didn't embrace it.

He instead had a rebellious, arrogant response. He sees the light, but it falls on a heart that's so proud that it demands a rebellious response.

And so Nebuchadnezzar builds a statue to his own glory, to his own hopes of an enduring kingdom. And it's in direct rebellion against God's word. And yet, here comes three believers, and they confront him in a way, and he hates them for it.

[14:10] They tell him the truth, and he hates them, and he has them thrown into the fire with the words, with what God will be able to save you from my hands. And he soon found out, didn't he?

And they walked out unscathed. And what was Nebuchadnezzar's response? He's amazed this time. He even offers praise to God. But notice again, in chapter 3, verse 28, Nebuchadnezzar still isn't owning God to be his God.

He hasn't come to the place where he is humbling himself before the Lord and owning who he is and who God is. Look, 3:28, praise to the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego.

And then in verse 29, no one can speak against the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. In a way, this is a good response. And yet, it wasn't coming from a heart of humility.

It wasn't coming from a heart of faith. He was still commanding. He was still threatening. He was still acting like he's the King of Kings. It's very different from how chapter 4 begins, where he says, let me tell you about what God has done and may you prosper greatly.

[15:26] It's a different spirit in chapter 4. But then chapter 4 begins. Now at this point, some years have passed. And God has been blessing Nebuchadnezzar.

He's been building up his kingdom. He's been giving him success. Everywhere he looks, Nebuchadnezzar is seeing God's blessing. And the Lord is pursuing him through this goodness.

Through his goodness. Remember, the goodness of God is meant to lead to repentance. And God is pursuing Nebuchadnezzar. And yet, Nebuchadnezzar isn't responding. He's deeply sinful. And yet, he's deeply loved. Does he believe? No. His heart is still hard. But God is patient. And God isn't done yet. And so God sends another dream to Nebuchadnezzar. Now, we just read what this dream was. And you know what that dream was. [16 : 26] He dreamed of a tree. And it was a tree in the middle of the land. And it was so tall that its top touched the very heavens. It was like what the people at Babel wanted when they built their tower.

It was touching heaven. And it was enormous. And it was so tall that no matter where you were at in the land, you could look and you could see that tree. And its leaves were beautiful and its fruit was abundant.

And all the animals gathered around and gathered under it. But then an angel, a watchman, a messenger, came. And the angel cried out, Cut down the tree. Trim its branches. Scatter its fruit. And there it is. It's a stump. A stump in the land. A stump with an iron band around it.

And then the angel cried again. And this time he uses the word him. The word he. He changes it from it to something personal. He says, Let him be drenched with the dew of heaven.

[17 : 27] Let him live with the animals. Let his mind be changed from that of a man into an animal until seven times pass by for him. And now Nebuchadnezzar has this dream and he wakes up.

And he's shaken again. This is such a vivid nightmare. And I don't think there is any doubt that some part of that agitation that Nebuchadnezzar felt was because he knew that this was about him. He probably didn't understand what it meant. But there's no doubt that part of that agitation was he knew that it had something to say about him and it wasn't good.

So he calls the wise men, probably hoping for some comfort, probably hoping for some alternative to what he has a feeling is what this dream is about. But of course, they're of no use.

They were in chapter 2. They were of no use again. And so finally Daniel comes in and through Daniel, God speaks to Nebuchadnezzar. And he says, O king, you are that tree.

[18 : 34] You are great, but you are going to be cut down. You will be left out with the animals and you will eat grass like a cow. But even in this doom, there is hope.

O king, you will be restored when you acknowledge that heaven rules. So there is hope connected to this judgment. So brothers and sisters, do you see the patience of God?

God, the patience of God. He doesn't want sinners to perish. He doesn't want sinners to go their own way to destruction. And when he sets his love on a sinner, he's very patient about bringing them to him.

And that was true of you, wasn't it? It was. He sent Christians into your life. He sent believers into your life. But did you come right away?

Did you say, oh, I love these people. These are my people and I love what they're telling me. No. Then he started sending the word into your life. And how did you respond?

[19 : 42] I know that it went one ear and out the other for me for years. And the word came and you don't like it. You don't like the light shining on your darkness.

And God said, I'm building my kingdom and you said, well, that's good, but I'm building my own kingdom and this is the way I want it to be. And then God became even more earnest and he started sending sharp warnings to you.

And he said, this is the way that you're going. Maybe it was seeing one of your friends go a certain way. Sending these sharp warnings. Stop going your own way. Stop going this way.

That way leads to destruction. But did you respond right away? Probably not. But our God is patient. He's so patient.

He kept coming after us again and again. We ran from him and he kept coming. He loves us. He loves us.

[20 : 43] We're deeply sinful yet deeply loved. So he's patient with us. Now that leads us to our second point. God's love is wise.

God's love is wise. Now verse 29, we're skipping a lot of material, verse 29 says that a whole year passed and God is waiting for Nebuchadnezzar to respond.

He's waiting for Nebuchadnezzar to respond. But of course, Nebuchadnezzar doesn't respond. His heart is so proud. It's still hard.

And so now, God knows what has to be done. The warnings have come. The dreams have come. God has been good to him. Everything has been pressing Nebuchadnezzar and yet Nebuchadnezzar is not responding.

But God, in his wisdom, knew exactly what had to be done. So one year later, Nebuchadnezzar is on the top of his palace on the roof and what a sight met his eye.

[21 : 50] What a sight met his eye. He looks down and he sees all these people and they're all people who call him king. And he looked over and he saw the hanging gardens of Babylon.

So imagine like an upside down ziggurat with just plants and trees hanging from it. that's what he made for his beautiful country princess.

She came from the country with mountains and trees and beautiful gardens and she missed them in this new city and so he built this for her. He brought the mountains and the trees to her.

And then he looked out on the wall of the city and this wall that he had built, Herodotus, the Greek historian, said it was so wide that four chariot horses could run down it.

So can you imagine a wall around a city so wide where four chariot, four horses could run down it and even at some points they could turn completely around. It's big.

[22 : 57] It's strong. This is a magnificent city that he sees and as he looks down and as he looks around, everywhere he looks, he's filled with pride until his poor heart breaks forth in worship and he says, Is not this the great Babylon I have built by my mighty power and for the glory of my majesty?

And the words are still on his lips. The last syllable is hanging there when God speaks. God's saving love struck him.

The words were still on his lips and God said, This is what is decreed for you, King Nebuchadnezzar. Now, Nebuchadnezzar was used to decreeing things.

He was used to telling people how it's going to be. He's been doing that a lot in Daniel. He's done that a lot of times. But this time, he receives a decree from the king of heaven and earth and God says, Enough!

So look at verse 31. Your royal authority is taken away from you. You will be driven away from people and you will live with the wild animals. You will eat the grass like cattle and seven times will pass by for you until you acknowledge that the Most High is sovereign over the kingdoms of men and gives them to anyone he wishes.

[24 : 27] Nebuchadnezzar's kingdom had crashed into God's kingdom for the last time. But instead of destroying Nebuchadnezzar, God lovingly, wisely gives Nebuchadnezzar exactly what he needs.

He gives him time. Time on his belly. Time to think. Time to wander in insanity.

Time to think about his own insignificance. Time to think about who God is. Time to think about his own brokenness. God gave Nebuchadnezzar just what he needed.

A view of who he really was. And so God gave Nebuchadnezzar insight through his insanity, through his beastliness, into what God thought of all of Nebuchadnezzar's arrogant kingdom building.

All of Nebuchadnezzar's pursuit, all of his glorious pride, and God says it's insanity and it's beast-like. So God takes what is buried.

[25 : 44] This is what's the important thing to understand about this whole scene. God takes what is buried, what is a part of Nebuchadnezzar, and he turns it outside so Nebuchadnezzar can see what he really is.

He brings it all out. So you think you are God. You, Nebuchadnezzar, think you are God. That's madness. That's insanity. There's only one God and you are not him.

Pride is always insanity. It's always insanity and God shows him that. To be convinced of sin, to be convicted of sin is to see the madness of what you've been doing.

So, the prodigal son, remember, he was in the pigsty. And remember what Jesus said? He said, when he came to his senses, where was he?

Well, he wasn't all there. He wasn't thinking about anything properly. He was crazy. crazy. But by God's grace, he came to his senses.

[26 : 52] And that prodigal son looked over his past life and then he looked over his present condition and he said, this is insanity. My father's servants are treated better than this and I am the son.

My father's servants are better off than I am. What am I doing here? What have I been thinking? So, God wisely, lovingly, gives Nebuchadnezzar a view of himself, a sight of himself and he falls headlong into insanity.

And then God gave him over to his own heart. Not to destroy him, but to open his eyes to reality. This is, Nebuchadnezzar, what you are to humble him.

And then what did Nebuchadnezzar turn into? A beast. A beast. Wild hair, long nails, eating grass. Can you imagine how frightening that would have actually been to see someone doing that? See, he became a beast on the outside because he was already a beast on the inside.

[28:08] inside. It's just like the story of Beauty and the Beast. You remember how that story begins? The beast was already a beast on the inside when the fairy came and turned him to a beast on the outside.

She just took what was on the inside and put it on the outside. And that's what happened to Nebuchadnezzar. Now, there's a beast theme in the book of Daniel.

Daniel. And this is the beginning of it. We're going to see other beasts. So, the kingdoms of this world and their kings are monsters. That's what Daniel is saying.

That's what Revelation says. It picks up on Daniel. And they oppress and they fight each other and they devour each other. They're ruthless monsters.

And that is what Nebuchadnezzar is. He's a monster. He's ruled like a monster. And that's why Daniel said, renounce your sins, repent of your sins by doing what is right and your wickedness by being kind to the oppressed.

[29:17] What was the point where Daniel called him to repentance? It was the way he was treating everybody. The way he was treating the oppressed. The kings of this earth, including Nebuchadnezzar, build their kingdoms on the broken backs of the oppressed and the weak.

He's a beast. And God said, you want to be a wild beast? Here you go. Here you are. When God convicts us of our sin, he shows us what we really are.

He shows us what we really are in our pride. That we're just as bad as a monster. And so we yell, and we scream at our children.

And we bite, and we devour our brothers and sisters. And we bite and devour each other within the church. It all comes from pride.

And we put them under our feet, and we walk on them. One of the most disturbing pieces of literature is the story of Dr.

[30:25] Jekyll and Mr. Hyde. And of course they're the same person. But Mr. Hyde is a beast. He's an absolute beast. And the one scene that captures it so well, it's written just very shortly, but Mr.

Hyde is walking down the streets of London. And a little girl falls in front of him. And instead of helping her up, he just keeps walking. And he walks right on top of her and puts his feet right on her face and walks and keeps going.

And everyone is appalled by what they see. How can a man be so totally void of love? But brothers and sisters, that's what pride does to us.

It makes us put people under our feet and walk over them and say, well, oh well, we don't care. So what does God give Nebuchadnezzar?

Exactly what he needs. Exactly what he needs. God's love is wise and sometimes it's painful.

Sometimes God gives us exactly what we need even when it brings us to the very brink of ruin and misery.

[31:37] Sometimes God has to gut the house before he can restore it. And so have you seen that in your life? Have you seen that? God knows exactly how to bring you to the end of yourself.

He does. And he does it not because he hates you, but because he's pursuing you in love. And his wise love knows exactly how to get you to see what you really are.

And so he sends a tragedy or he sends a sickness or he just slowly day after day grinds you down and crushes you over a year.

Sometimes he crushes you in an instant. But the thing to recognize is that behind that rod is beating a heart of love because he's showing you what you are.

He's bringing you to the point where you're ready to acknowledge him. And that's what is going on with Nebuchadnezzar. Nebuchadnezzar's pride needs to be destroyed or Nebuchadnezzar won't be rescued.

[32:47] And so God lovingly, wisely gives him exactly what he needed. Now, that leads us to our third point. God's love is gracious. It's more than we could have ever earned.

It's more than we could have ever deserved. So look at verse 34. The seven times pass. We don't know what that means. It's just the completeness, the fullness of those times passed.

Verse 34. And at the end of that time, I, Nebuchadnezzar, raised my eyes toward heaven and my sanity was restored.

Nebuchadnezzar's whole life, he had been looking down. He had been looking around. He was on his roof looking down and looking around, just soaking in the pride.

But now, out of the depths of his suffering, he looks up. He finally looks up to where God is.

[33:55] And so what was in that look? Well, I think there was faith in that look. For the first time, Nebuchadnezzar looked up and he looked to God and Nebuchadnezzar was finally humble.

He was broken and he saw that he needed mercy. He saw that he needed mercy and that's what true humility is. True humility isn't thinking, oh, I'm so bad, woe is me, look how terrible my situation is, look how great a sinner I am.

Humility isn't wallowing in our sin and misery. It's owning what you are and going to God for what you aren't. The reason some of you, I don't know who, it's very common, the reason some of you wallow in sin and misery is because at least it's still all about you.

At least it's still all about you. So when you're depressed, at least you can be thinking about how bad you have it. And you aren't what you want to be.

And so you can't obey. You can't do it on your own. And so you're miserable. That has a look of humility, but that's just pride masquerading as humility.

[35:22] Humility is realizing that it's not up to you, that you can't do it, that you never could do it, that you will never be able to do it, and that God is the only one that can do it for you. Humility is looking away from yourself, and that's what saving faith is.

It's looking up to heaven, and Nebuchadnezzar looked up, and what did he see? Well, he definitely saw a mighty, sovereign God who gives the kingdoms of this world to who he wishes, but he also saw a God who was ready to do miracles for those who trusted in him.

He saw a God who would restore him if he believed. And so, what was in that look? There was dependence. Nebuchadnezzar was at the end of his rope.

He is a beast. He has no kingdom. He has no throne. He has no friends. He has nothing. And so, he looks up to God on high, and he sees that God is on high, and that only God could help him in this situation.

And when he came to the end of himself, he looked up, and he looked expectantly to God. He relied on him. The word that God gave through the angel was, when you acknowledge that heaven rules, you will be restored.

[36:40] When you acknowledge me, you'll be restored. And Nebuchadnezzar believes God. He takes God at his word. And that's all faith is. That's all faith is.

It's just taking God at his word and resting in what he has done. Faith isn't a work that we do. It isn't another work for us to do, another thing for us to work up. It's not something that we just have to get just right before God will be happy with us.

How sad and deceived and miserable we can become when we think that we are saved by our faith instead of through our faith. When we think, if I can just do this right, if I can just believe this, if I can just do this thing that God wants for me to do, then God will be happy with me.

And when I'm not doing it exactly the way that God wants me to do, he's not happy with me. That's not what faith is. That's turning faith into a work that we have to do. Faith is just resting in what God has said.

It's just resting in Jesus' righteousness. It's resting in who God says he is for us. It's only looking. It's just looking.

[37:49] like Nebuchadnezzar looked. So the night that God saved Charles Spurgeon, there was a country preacher preaching, and he preached on this text, look unto me and be saved.

And this is how he began. My dear friends, this is a very simple text indeed. It says look. Now that does not take a good deal of effort.

It's not lifting your foot. It's not, it ain't lifting your foot or your finger. It's just look. Just look. So what is saving faith?

It's only looking to God. It's only looking to God, looking to God in hope, out of a need, out of desperation, out of longing to Jesus.

It's looking at Jesus' life and his righteousness and saying, I need that life. I need that righteousness because I don't have any righteousness of my own. And it's looking at Jesus' death and saying, I need that death.

[39:00] If I don't have that death, I'm going to die. I need that death. It's looking to Jesus to live and to die for you in your place.

It's resting on him. It's laying down on him. It's not something that you have to get exactly right. It's just looking to him. So Nebuchadnezzar looked and what did God do?

He didn't treat him like his sins deserved. Nebuchadnezzar was deeply sinful, yet deeply loved. And God rescued him and he healed him and he healed his mind and he healed his heart.

You can see it in all of chapter 4. His spirit is different now. He restored his kingdom. He honored him and Nebuchadnezzar praised God and he said, and those who walk in pride, he is able to humble.

And you know, that makes complete sense. That God would humble the proud. God would proud. But why does God ever honor the humble?

[40:13] Why does God ever honor a sinner? Because that's what we see here. Why does he raise up the crushed? Why did he treat Nebuchadnezzar better than Nebuchadnezzar ever deserved?

I mean, Nebuchadnezzar had sacked the city of God. Nebuchadnezzar had killed hundreds of God's people. Nebuchadnezzar had destroyed the kingdom of Judah. And he had done it all for his own pride.

Why did he treat Nebuchadnezzar better than he deserved? Why did God save any of you and restore any of you from your madness and from your beastliness?

And why will he save all those who look to him? Because there was another king who was humbled. He wasn't there. He ruled on high.

And he ruled with angel praises in his ears every day of his entire rule. And that king didn't go from a man to a beast.

[41:18] He went from divine to a servant. And he took upon himself the form of a servant. And he humbled himself.

himself. And he walked around the sinful world with people like us. And he obeyed his sinful mom and his sinful dad.

And when his sinful brothers and sisters were mean to him, he didn't treat them like their sins deserve. He didn't take revenge on them. And when they took his stuff and they called him names, he acted perfectly loving and kind to them.

and he humbled himself. And he humbled himself to death. And so the creator submitted to death. He submitted to the punishment of creation that creation deserved. He who had life, he who was life, died. And he didn't do it for his sins.

[42:23] He didn't have any sins. sins. The king humbled himself to honor, to love sinners. That's the only reason, to honor and love sinners.

And so that in turn they would honor and glorify God. He humbled himself to save his hopelessly arrogant, his hopelessly ruthless, beast-like bride and to make them beautiful in God's sight. To change them from something that they definitely were and to something that they could never have imagined that they would be, to make them beautiful in God's sight. And God saw this king's sacrifice and he was pleased.

And up from the grave he arose with a mighty triumph over his foes and God restored our Lord Jesus and he gave him back his throne. He restored his throne and he gave him a name above every name that at the name of Jesus every knee shall bow.

God's So there he is. He is our king who has humbled himself and now he is exalted. He's humbled himself in love for us. And now God has exalted him on high where he prays for his people.

[43:38] And so he, our king, is our life. He's our death. He's our righteousness. righteousness. And so I want to ask you, will you walk in self-sufficient, self-righteous, satisfied, or maybe sad, miserable, depressed, pride this week?

Or will you trust your Lord Jesus who loved you and gave himself up for you? Will you learn a lesson from Nebuchadnezzar?

And out of your deep sin, will you look to God who has loved you more than you could have ever imagined? ourselves up.

We don't have to be any different than what we are. We only have to come and put all our hope and trust in our Lord Jesus. And for everything that we need, he will be for us.

Righteousness, our cleansing, our life, and our death. Lord, thank you that because we are in Christ, to live is Christ, and to die is gain.

[45:03] I pray, Lord, that you would keep us from wandering away from the gospel, adding any of our own works, which so much of what we do is good.

Keep us from trusting in any of those things for our standing with you, and help us to trust alone in Jesus Christ, alone in what you have promised him to be for us.

Lord Jesus, thank you for loving us, for giving yourself up for us. For the sinner here who hasn't believed, pray, Lord, that you would move powerfully in their lives, show them the goodness of the gospel.

people. They've been thinking that they just can't live up to this. They just can't do it. It works for someone else. I pray, Lord, that you would show them that this is exactly what they need, the Lord Jesus.

And he is exactly what they need, and the things that they can't do, he can. So I pray, Lord Jesus, make yourself powerful and beautiful to some lost sinner here tonight, and make yourself powerful and beautiful to us who have believed.

[46:28] Keep us from wandering away from the gospel and forgetting who we are in him, forgetting what he has done for us. Thank you for your mercy to us, and I pray that you would give us grace to trust in you this week.

In Jesus' name, amen. We are dismissed. Amen.