

How could God forgive Nebuchadnezzar for all his offenses?

Here's how: *Nebuchadnezzar was not master of the universe, but he took it as if he was. Jesus Christ was the only One who ever stood on the face of the earth who was the Master of the universe, and he let it all go.*

Jesus had to give up what was truly his in order to die in our place. The sinless for the sinful. The greatest act of mercy ever.

God made him sin, who knew no sin, that we might become the righteousness of God in him. 2 Corinthians 5:21

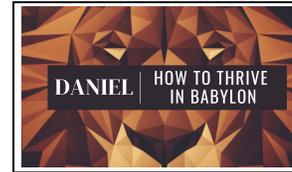
We all deserve judgment, instead because of Christ we get mercy.

Our response should be the same as Nebuchadnezzar.

"Now I, Nebuchadnezzar, praise and glorify and honor the King of heaven. All his acts are just and true, and he is able to humble the proud." Daniel 4:37

Community Group Questions:

1. How might you use Nebuchadnezzar's testimony to share the Gospel?
2. In the end it is God alone who confronts the King and it works. Why do you think it was necessary for Daniel to also confront the King? Vs. 27
3. Can you see your pride in your past and even now?
4. What led you to confess that you deserved nothing but judgment from God?
5. How does God's mercy allow for you to see all of life as a gift from Him?



Learning the Hard Way (God is God and we are not) Daniel 4

King Nebuchadnezzar's Testimony

King Nebuchadnezzar sent this message to the people of every race and nation and language throughout the world: "Peace and prosperity to you! ²"I want you all to know about the miraculous signs and wonders the Most High God has performed for me. ³How great are his signs, how powerful his wonders! His kingdom will last forever, his rule through all generations. Daniel 4:1-3

Nebuchadnezzar's Backstory of His Dream

⁴"I, Nebuchadnezzar, was living in my palace in comfort and prosperity. ⁵"But one night I had a dream that frightened me; I saw visions that terrified me as I lay in my bed. ...⁸At last Daniel came in before me, and I told him the dream. (He was named Belteshazzar after my god, and the spirit of the holy gods is in him.) Daniel 4:4,5,8

Daniel's Explanation of Nebuchadnezzar's Dream

"My lord, if only the dream applied to your enemies and its meaning to your adversaries! ... "This is what the dream means, Your Majesty, and what the Most High has declared will happen to my lord the king. ²⁵You will be driven from human society, and you will live in the fields with the wild animals. You will eat grass like a cow, and you will be drenched with the dew of heaven. Seven periods of time will pass while you live this way, until you learn that the Most High rules over the kingdoms of the world and gives them to anyone he chooses. ²⁶But the stump and roots of the tree were left in the ground. This means that you will receive your kingdom back again when you have learned that heaven rules. Daniel 4:20, 24-26

Daniel Confronts the King

²⁷"King Nebuchadnezzar, please accept my advice. Stop sinning and do what is right. Break from your wicked past and be merciful to the poor. Perhaps then you will continue to prosper. ²⁸"But all these things did happen to (the) King. Daniel 4:27,28

I. The Pride of Self

³⁰As he looked out across the city, he said, 'Look at this great city of Babylon! By my own mighty power, I have built this beautiful city as my royal residence to display my majestic splendor.'

What is Pride? *My own mighty power*, means I love to think of myself as the cause of all my greatness, as the source of all achievement, and *my majestic splendor*, means the recipient of great praise!

Here's why Pride is such a deceptive sin.

It claims to be the author of what is really a gift.

Tim Keller- "Humility looks at life like, '*It's a gift. I don't deserve this. If God gave me what I deserve, I'd be lost.*' Humility receives life as a gift. Humility says, '*I couldn't possibly begin to merit the good things God has given me, my health, my mind, my friends. What I do have? it's all mercy!*'"

What do you have that God hasn't given you? And if everything you have is from God, why boast as though it were not a gift? 1 Corinthians 4:7

Look here, you who say, "Today or tomorrow we are going to a certain town and will stay there a year. We will do business there and make a profit."¹⁴ How do you know what your life will be like tomorrow? Your life is like the morning fog—it's here a little while, then it's gone.¹⁵ What you ought to say is, "If the Lord wants us to, we will live and do this or that."¹⁶ Otherwise you are boasting about your own pretentious plans, and all such boasting is evil. James 4:13-16

A joyous life is that which receives everything as a gift. A self-absorbed life, looks at everything, and says, "*I'm owed this.*"

II. The Outcome of Pride

³¹"While these words were still in his mouth, a voice called down from heaven, 'O King Nebuchadnezzar, this message is for you! You are no longer ruler of this kingdom.'³²You will be driven from human society. You will live in the fields with the wild animals, and you will eat grass like a cow. Daniel 4:31,32

Because Nebuchadnezzar aspired to be more than a man, (i.e. take God's glory for himself) he became less than what he was made to be. He went from God's image to an animal.

III. The Healing of Pride

You will live in the fields with the wild animals, and you will eat grass like a cow... until you learn that the Most High rules over the kingdoms of the world and gives them to anyone he chooses.' Daniel 4: 32

God's discipline upon Nebuchadnezzar is what heals him.

Two things we have to see to be healed of our pride:

1. You have to see you don't deserve anything from God but judgment.

That's what happens to Nebuchadnezzar. He confesses: All the people of the earth are nothing compared to him. Daniel 4:35

He also says, "I've learned."
...until you learn that the Most High rules over the kingdoms of the world and gives them to anyone he chooses.' Daniel 4:32

When bad things happen to you, you can either receive it in pride and say, "*I don't deserve this,*" or else you can do what Nebuchadnezzar did, when he realized, "*I deserve this.*"

2. You have to see you are the object of God's greatest mercy. "When my sanity returned to me, so did my honor and glory and kingdom. My advisers and nobles sought me out, and I was restored as head of my kingdom, with even greater honor than before. Daniel 4:36

Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will lift you up in honor. James 4:10