

## Daniel 4

## “Pride and Consequence”

There are at least three key verses in understanding Daniel 4.

-- v. 17 – a **message to** the king of pride –

“This matter is by the decree of the watchers, and the demand by the word of the holy ones: to the intent that the living may know that the Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever He will, and setteth up over it the basest of men.”

v. 30 - READ

v. 37 - This is a **testimony from** the king of Pride –

“Now I Nebuchadnezzar praise and extol and honor the King of heaven, all whose works are truth, and His ways judgment: and those that walk in pride he is able to abase.”

It is a strange thing that after the Lordship and Worship issue of chapter 3, this pagan man could still be swollen with pride.

And when PRIDE is present, God acts. Deeply rooted pride often is rooted out by severe measures.

-- The Bible says:

“Pride goeth before destruction and a haughty spirit before a fall.”

--Proverbs 16:18

And so in chapter 4, God deals with the problem of pride in a pagan.

But there is more to chapter 4 than that one issue.

These earlier chapters of Daniel are building the foundation from which the facts of the prophetic future will be presented in the later chapters. These chapters are presenting the credentials for the claims which will yet be presented about tomorrow.

And in chapter 4 Pagan Pride raises its ugly head – and then is abased.

In the chapter we will study the following:

- I. Pride – An Introduction
- II. Pride – And The Condition Which Nurtures It – v 1-7
- III. Pride – And The Factors Which Reveal It – v 8-18
- IV. Pride – And The Prophetic Authority Which Confronts It – v 19-27
- V. Pride – And The Hour That Judges It – v 28-33
- VI. Pride – And The Mercy Which Defeats It – v 34-37

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**I. PRIDE – An Overview of its Curse**

- 1. It blinds us to our own blindness
- 2. It prevents us from seeking appropriate help.
- 3. It deceives us about our coming destruction.
- 4. It keeps us from enjoying the blessings of God.
- 5. It stops us from being a blessing to others.
  - The pride of a husband that will not humble himself before his wife and children.
  - An employee, etc.

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**II. PRIDE – And the Condition Which Nurtures It**

- 1. Insincere Religious Confession (v 1-3)
  - Nebuchadnezzar had not put all of his marbles in one jar. When we say great things about God we should live Godly.
- 2. Physical Comfort (v 4)
- 3. Inappropriate Counselors (v 5-7)

- It is an amazing contradiction that Nebuchadnezzar would say what he said in v1-3 and do what he did in v5-7.
- They have no answers to the questions of life and none for the problems of life. They could not produce an answer because they would not admit the problem.

### **III. PRIDE – And the Factors Which Reveal It**

- Chapter 4 v 8-18
- 1. The messenger of God – v 8-9
  - God will have His witness available.
- 2. The message of God – v 10-17
  - (1) I see the evidence of physical success
    - v. 10-12
  - (2) I reveal the evidence of Divine authority
    - v 13-14
  - (3) I affirm the evidence of Divine purpose – v 15-17
    - “Till you know”
    - “Leave the stump...to the intent that the living may know that the most High ruleth in the kingdom of men.”
- 3. The method of God – v 18
  - (1) God will wait for man to ask for help.
    - “O Belteshazzar, declare the interpretation thereof...”
  - (2) God will wait for man to acknowledge failure.

-- “Forasmuch as all the wise men of my kingdom are not able to make known unto me the interpretation”

(3) God will wait for man to admit dependency

-- “But you are able, for the spirit of the holy gods is in you.”

#### **IV. PRIDE – And The Prophetic Authority Which Confronts It – v 19-27**

INTRO – Three things to keep in mind at this stage of our study of Daniel

1. The Authority of the Prophet
2. The Destiny of Man
3. The Supremacy of God

(How A Godly Man Of Sincere Humility Ministers To A Pagan King Ruined By Pride)

1. The authority of a compassionate heart – v 19
2. The gentleness of a courteous servant – v 20-22
3. The honesty of a courageous prophet – v 23-26

-- Compare Ahab and the lying prophets – I Kings 22:5-8

-- Ahab hated Micaiah because Micaiah told him the truth.  
(2 Kings 22:8)

4. The challenge of a concerned friend – v. 27
  - (1) To break off sin in favor of righteousness
  - (2) To break off iniquity by showing mercy to the poor
  - (3) To experience a lengthening of personal peace

#### **V. PRIDE – And The Hour That Judges It – v 28-33**

-- There are three things we learn about the certainty of God’s judgment upon the sin of Man’s pride

1. Judgment Delayed - v 28-30

-- It is one of the most difficult things in all of life to understand why God delays His judgment in the face and flaunting of human sin.

-- Mt. 25:1-5

2. Judgment Decreed – v 31-32

3. Judgment Delivered – v 33

Illustration – Mt. 24:37-39 / Mt. 25:6-13

**VI. PRIDE – And The Mercy Which Defeats It – v 34-37**

-- There are at least seven aspects of this mercy just in these few verses.

1. The mercy of a new focus

-- v 34 “I lifted up my eyes to heaven.”

2. The mercy of a new mind

-- v 34 “..mine understanding returned to me.”

-- Paganism is not only a spiritual problem, it is also a mental problem. That is acknowledged by one of history’s leading pagans.

3. The mercy of a new heart

-- v 34b “I blessed the Most High, and praised and honored Him that liveth forever...”

4. The mercy of a new authority

-- v 34b-35 “I praised and honoured Him that liveth for ever, whose dominion is an everlasting dominion, and his kingdom is from generation to generation: And all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing: and he doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of

the earth: and none can stay his hand or say unto him, What doest thou?"

5. The mercy of a new chance

-- READ v 36 (Read entire verse)

6. The mercy of a new worship

-- v 37a "Now I Nebuchadnezzar praise and extol and honour the king of heaven, all whose works are truth, and his ways judgment..."

7. And the concluding mercy is that of a new submission.

-- v 37b "...those that walk in pride He is able to abase."

-- It is the victory described by the words –

"There is victory in surrender when we are conquered by Christ."

-- It is the victory desired by John the Baptist

-- John 3:30 "He must increase, but I must decrease."