Study in Daniel - Part 4

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Preacher: Rev Kenneth Stewart

[0:00] Seeking the Lord's blessing, we'll turn to the passage of scripture we read. Daniel, chapter 4, and the last verse of the chapter.

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.
Those that walk in pride he is able to abase. Now you'll notice that in this, the fourth chapter of Daniel, the focus turns from Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, to King Nebuchadnezzar himself, the King of Babylon.
In fact, in many respects, he is almost the author of chapter 4. Because although it was written by Daniel, the words were actually spoken by Nebuchadnezzar himself.
And the whole chapter takes the form of a needy, which he issued to all people, nations, and languages that dwell in all the earth.
[1:29] In other words, in the fourth chapter, Nebuchadnezzar is telling his own experience of how God brought him low. And he's publishing it in the form of an edict to every single part of his own empire, so that everyone would know the way in which the Lord dealt with himself.

And the significance of that we'll see a little later on. Now the whole chapter turns around this dream that Nebuchadnezzar received. And it's the second major dream that he has had in his life.
He had one nearly 30 years before this, when he saw a great statue, partly gold, partly silver, partly bronze, and partly iron and clay.
And you remember that we looked at that dream already. Now this dream comes to him in the same kind of way, and leaves him troubled and perplexed. And he has a strong feeling that the dream has a significance, and that it speaks to him in a particular way.
Now the dream comes to him when he is at rest and when he is flourishing. You'll notice in verse 4 it says this, that I, Nebuchadnezzar, was at rest in my house and flourishing in my palace.
[2:51] Now, first of all, he was at rest in his house. And that rest is the same kind of rest that David speaks of, when he says that the Lord had given him rest from all his enemies.

His wars were over, and in fact, his life's course was nearly finished. Nebuchadnezzar was a king for a very long time. He reigned for 43 years in Babylon.
And this takes us pretty near the end of his reign, when he had subjected the empire to himself, and he was now at rest, and what you would call taking satisfaction in his retirement.
He had built his empire, and he was now enjoying it. And he also describes himself as flourishing. And that word means that he was growing green.
In other words, he was comparing himself to a tree before he ever saw the dream. And before the dream ever came to him, he was comparing himself to a tree that had grown from small beginnings, from a seed, now to be a large, flourishing, green and fruitful tree.
[3:57] He couldn't help but think that he was the most powerful man in the world, at the head of the most powerful empire that the world had ever seen. So he was at rest, and he was flourishing.

And he saw this dream one night, of a tree flourishing, just as he thought of himself. And it grew so large that it was visible from every part of the world.
The birds found shelter in its branches, and even the beasts of the field came to rest underneath its shade. And then suddenly a watcher, or a holy one, appeared from heaven.
And that is a reference, no doubt, to an angel. And this is one of the very few occasions when angels are referred to as watchers. But it brings before us that they are vigilant.
And they are vigilant in God's service. They never sleep. They are always awake to execute the will of God, to speak in his name, and to do his bidding.

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[5:00] He sees this watcher, or holy one, appearing in heaven. And he issues a command. And the command is to cut the tree, and to cut it to its stumps.

And to bind the stump with a band of iron and bronze, so that that stump is secure in the ground. And all the beasts vanish, and all the birds that were taking shelter in the branches, they disappear too.
And as this angel speaks, it becomes clear that the tree represents a man. And I think it's important for us to understand that Nebuchadnezzar himself understood that in his dream, that the tree represented a man.
Because what the angels say is this, Hew down the tree, verse 14, cut off its branches. Verse 15, Leave the stump of his roots in the earth, with a band of iron and brass or bronze, and let it be wet with the dew of heaven.
And listen to this change. Now the word times, when it appears like this in the book of Daniel and Ezekiel, refers to a period of time, probably a year.
[6:34] Certainly a time is usually a year. But it's rather difficult to understand it here as referring to a year. Maybe it refers to a month. It's not necessary for us to say, but for seven periods of time, whether it be months or years, let the heart of this be changed from a man's heart unto a beast's heart.

And when Nebuchadnezzar woke from his dream, he was troubled. And he was troubled, simply because he recognized that the dream was speaking to him.
And that there was a power behind the dream, that the gods had spoken, or that God had spoken. The God who had manifested himself so much in the life of Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, that that God had spoken to him.
And he was troubled too, because of no doubt he recognized that the dream referred to himself. Although he may have been unsure what the details meant, and that was what troubled him. What did it mean to be reduced to a stump?
What did it mean to be bound with a band of iron and bronze? What did it mean for your heart to be changed from the heart of a man to the heart of an animal? Although he didn't know the details, he well suspected that the dream referred to himself, because he thought of himself as a man flourishing in his empire and in his palace.
[7:57] And again he calls for all the wise men in the kingdom. And in God's providence, the wise men who are not the servants of God come first.

And they are found as empty, and as clueless as they were found in the second chapter. They can't explain the dream. And even if they can fathom what a part of it means, they're too scared to say it. And they certainly can't understand the rest of the details. And God allows that, so that Nebuchadnezzar would see again in his life the emptiness of the religion with which he surrounded. The emptiness of the false gods, and of the materialism, the pride and the sensuality. They're psychiatrists, they're astrologers. The emptiness of the whole thing without God.
Because last of all, it is Daniel who comes forward. And Daniel comes forward with the true interpretation of the dream. He gives its meaning.
[8:52] But when Daniel hears it, we're told that he was astonished for one hour. Now in spite of everything, it seems that Daniel had some feeling for this man. And he was shocked at what he heard from Nebuchadnezzar's own lips.

But he doesn't stumble in giving him the message. He says to him quite simply, It is thou, O king. Just as Nathan said to David, Thou art the man.
So he says, The king, or the tree, is you, O king. You have grown and become strong. But hew the tree down and destroy it.
And Daniel tells him that changing the heart of a man to the heart of a beast is going to become very real in his experience. That he is actually going to be reduced to the situation where he is going to eat grass like an oxen.
And where he is going to be cast out and to be wet with the dew of heaven. And his portion is going to be with the beasts of the field. But Daniel says, The stump that is left is your throne, your kingdom.
[10:05] That will remain, he says, and God will tie a band of iron and bronze around it. And I think we can understand that to be God's own decree. That God decrees that in spite of the insanity that's going to come upon Nebuchadnezzar, God will keep his throne and kingdom.

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As he alone is able to keep it, he puts the band of his own decree around about his throne. So that when the madness is over and the insanity comes to an end, Nebuchadnezzar will again resume his throne in the kingdom.
And when Daniel is finished, he says this to him, Wherefore, let my counsel be acceptable to thee. It is not an easy message for me to give, but break off your sins, break off your iniquities, and maybe your tranquility will be lengthened.
In other words, turn to the Lord himself, and perhaps this shall be postponed. Now I want to look with you at the way in which this dream is fulfilled, and the lessons that we can draw from that. And then finally, the effect that it has on Nebuchadnezzar. The fulfillment of the dream and what it teaches us, and then secondly, the effect that it had upon Nebuchadnezzar.
[11:27] Now first of all, it's fulfillment. We're told in verse 28 that all this came upon King Nebuchadnezzar. And it came upon him at the end of 12 months.

He was walking in his palace, no doubt on the roof of it. And from the roof of his palace, he could see right across the city, as it were to the horizon itself.
And whichever way he looked, all he saw was his own land and his own territory, so that he was monarch of all he surveyed. And he said, it's not this great Babylon that I have built for the house of the kingdom by the might of my power and for the honor of my majesty.
Now, his own work was in human terms something to boast of. That is, if we were going to speak like men, it was something to boast of. It was a marvelous city.
From the walls that surrounded it to the palaces on the inside of it. It was surrounded by a famous, unintricate double wall, which was 17 miles long altogether.
[12:38] And both these walls were so thick that you could drive chariots abreast across the top of them all. And there were eight gates, eight marvelous gates, in these walls.

One of them, the Ishtar Gate, is still preserved and has been well restored and gives you some kind of idea of the beauty and magnificence of Babylon when it was at its peak under Nebuchadnezzar. And that Ishtar Gate, the best known of those gates, led across a hundred meter road right to the temple of Marduk, which formed part of the heart of the city of Babylon.
And right along that path or that great road, there were walls on each side, enameled bricks with great paintings and mosaics of lions and of dragons.
And that indicates as well the wealth, the pride, and the splendor, the arrogance, and the magnificence of the kingdom and the capital that Nebuchadnezzar had built.
[13:41] And when I say pride, pride's there because nearly every single brick uncovered in Babylon has the name Nebuchadnezzar stamped into it. He had his own name more or less in every brick.

And one of the inscriptions that's still held in the British Museum in London is an inscription by Nebuchadnezzar which speaks of his own achievements in rebuilding over 20 temples, which speaks of his work in restoring docks and building docks and forming an elaborate empire.
And it is all dedicated to Marduk, his god. And he stands on top of this palace and all around him he sees one of the wonders of the world.
And all he can do is take it to himself. I have built by the might of my power and for the honor of my majesty. And before he's finished thinking it, while the word we're told was in the king's mouth there fell a voice from heaven.
He heard it distinctly. The voice came to him. To thee it is spoken. The kingdom is departed from thee.
[14:59] And from that moment the edict was fulfilled. That same hour was the thing fulfilled upon Nebuchadnezzar. And he lost his reason. And he became like an animal.

And he lived like an animal. Perhaps for seven years of his life he lived like an animal until the Lord restored him back to his reason and to his senses.
Now there are three things that I want us to note with respect to what the Lord has done to Nebuchadnezzar here. First of all notice carefully that the root of Nebuchadnezzar's problem is pride.
Pride. And that's how he closes the whole chapter. Those that walk in pride he is able to obey. Now pride is well called the root sin.
It is pride that motivates and it is pride that drives. Because if God is not at the heart of your soul and if he is not in the throne of your heart then you're sitting there yourself.

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[16:02] If you have not subjected yourself to the Lord Jesus Christ and bowed the knee to him then you are subject to yourself. You are your own God. You are your own leader and your own guide.

And you follow your father Adam in rejecting God's rule and choosing rule over yourself. You have eaten consciously the fruit of the knowledge of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil and you have said to the Most High that you should find them wrong and you map out a path for yourself in life and you're determined to take it.
That is pride and that is the root and core of every other single thing. The failure to be subject to the rule of God himself.
And when that grows in a man he becomes more and more proud and more and more arrogant.
Hence the significance of Babylon. Babylon first appears in Genesis chapter 11.
when Nimrod built it. And Nimrod was a man who worshipped himself and he persuaded others to worship himself too. And he made his way to the plain of Shinar which is Babylon and there he built the tower of Babel which was a monument to himself.
[17:18] It was a monument to his own power and his own ability to weld people together and to raise a humanistic kingdom that worshipped man and dethroned God.

And from that moment onwards Babylon stands for man without God. Christless man making his own way on his own terms. Right down to Revelation 17 where you have the whore of Babylon drunk with the blood of the martyrs and she is finally destroyed in Revelation 18 when God brings her to nothing.
In other words the pride of man that raised itself at the beginning of time will continue to rise and to fall it will have its own empire until God finally brings the pride of man to nothing and brings his boasting to nothing.
And Isaiah speaks of this in chapter 14 of his own prophecy and verse 12 and this is a prophecy to the king of Babylon but notice how he ties it in to Lucifer or to Satan the prince of darkness because he's the father of pride he was the original man or the original power who set himself to dethrone in God.
Listen to what Isaiah says and he's directing this to the king of Babylon how thou art fallen from heaven oh Lucifer son of the morning how art thou cut down to the ground which didst weaken the angels the nations for thou didst say in thine heart I will ascend into heaven I will exalt my throne above the stars of God I will sit upon the mount of the congregation in the sides of the north I will ascend above the heights of the clouds and I will be like the most high yet thou shalt be brought down to hell and thou shalt be brought down to the sides of the pit that speaks of Lucifer it speaks of Babylon and it speaks of you if you are without Christ that you serve yourself and you serve your own lusts now my friend one way or another God will bring that down and he'll either bring it down in grace or he will bring it down in judgment one thing sure he will not suffer it forever in his own presence he will not suffer it in this earth neither will he suffer it in heaven that must be consigned to the blackness of the pit that is where that pride must be consigned and either he will deal with your self rule and rebellion here or he will deal with it there and if it is not brought out of us by mercy and by grace here by your subjecting yourselves to Jesus
[20:17] Christ and his rule then it shall be brought to fruition there and it shall be cast out of his own presence forever one day in other words your pride will destroy you it will destroy you one day your insistence on rejecting the saviour will destroy you and it will destroy you irrevocably completely utterly and how great will be the ruin of the house of your soul when it falls no my friends that is a serious matter what is to be compared to it to die in rebellion to God means that you go where Lucifer is before you to that place where the worm dieth not and where the fire is not quenched pride was at the heart of Nebuchad and Edzer's problem but then again you see here the long suffering of God because

God here is constantly striving with Nebuchad and Edzer striving with him even as he is probably striving with you in fact even as he is certainly striving with you because under the very preaching of the word you are being striven with whether you are conscious of being striven with or not is beside the point God is speaking to you in the proclamation of the word when his word is read and preached the spirit there is striving with you in the very proclamation of the word and look at the ways in which Nebuchad and Edzer himself has been striven with in chapter one he saw Shadrach Meshach Abednego and Daniel flourish being fed by the king being fed by God rather than being fed by the king in chapter two he saw Daniel tell him his dream and interpret his dream to the point

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where Nebuchad and Edzer was impressed by it all he says in chapter two verse forty seven of a truth your
God is a God of gods and a lord of kings and a revealer of secrets seeing you could reveal the secret in chapter three when he saw Shadrach Meshach and Abednego walking loose and unharmed in the fire and when he saw a fourth man a son of the gods with them he was so impressed then that he said this blessed be the God of Shadrach Meshach and Abednego and he makes a decree that every people nation and language would speak anything against the God of Shadrach Meshach and Abednego shall be cut in pieces and their houses made a dunghill because there is no other God that can deliver after this sort and here again God warns him in a dream what the consequences of his life and the consequences of his actions will be if he keeps going the way that he's going did he listen no
Daniel told him cease from his sins and maybe God will lengthen your tranquillity does he listen no how do you know he doesn't listen because it's twelve months later when he's walking in the palace that this comes upon him twelve months when the Lord is waiting to be gracious twelve months when the Lord in his long suffering watches the same Nabuchad and Edsa thinking the same things and doing the same things maybe for a month he was different maybe for a month after he heard it he was worried about it but then after two months he says well I doubt if this is ever going to happen at all after three months he dismisses it from his mind and after twelve months he's able to boast in his own kingdom and to boast in his own power until the moment comes and God speaks and the decree falls from heaven it is enacted and his heart is turned into the heart of a beast because he plays around with the word of
God and he presumes upon the mercy of God because he tastes of his long suffering and just because the hand of God's judgment for a time is arrested in his mercy he assumes it will never fall and you say well what a fool the man was did he not see men walking in a fire unburnt and unharmed had he not heard a dream explained and the future foretold oh well what about yourself are you telling me you've never seen God at work can you honestly tell me that you've never had a trace of God working in your life or in the life of anyone in here or outside of here can you tell me there has never been a moment in your life when you've never been shaken by God's word can you tell me that looking me in the face can you tell me that no but what have you done you've forgotten about it God spoke to you recently on your sickbed God told you what you should do and you knew what you should do you knew it was time to repent and you knew God was giving you time to repent and what have you done with it my friend you're trivializing it you didn't then but you are now now it's as though it never happened and as though God never spoke but nothing will ever change the fact that he did he did and after the passage of time you can forget a dream and you can forget your restoration and you can forget the conversion of your best friend and how it shook you and spoke to you you can forget it all but God never forgets that was etched into you and it was a word from [26:14] God and you ought not to have forgotten it you ought not to have passed it by and thought well there'll be another time or another opportunity God's word now comes to pass and this man is laid low and you're so sure that God is going to speak to you again well my friend I can never exaggerate the greatness of God's love how could I ever speak too highly of his mercy and of his loving kindness who can ever understand why God should have compassion upon people like yourselves but I'll tell you this that an end comes to his overtures of mercy I'll tell you that on the authority of his word an end comes to them and the door that's open to you tonight as a sinner will one day be closed and as I thought with you in the morning he knocks at your heart and he's knocking still but he won't knock forever the time will come when he says my spirit shall not always strive with man there'll come a time when Noah goes into the ark and the door remains open for a time and then it is shut the Lord shuts them in just as the

Lord shuts them out and both are through he shuts it to keep in and he'll shut it to keep out and no amount of wailing and weeping no amount of begging and of crying will ever change it in that way in that day the door was opened and you did not avail yourself of it the long suffering of God it is as though he is most unwilling to bring his judgment upon any but bring it he certainly will and then again there's this not only was pride at the heart not only do we see God long suffering giving opportunity for repentance but we see God bringing him low and bringing him to madness now many people say that there's no record in history of this madness coming upon Nebuchadnezzar well I was going to say that's a fact but of course that's not a fact because this word of God is history here you have it here in Daniel chapter 4 and there it is there is a historical

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record here for you of the madness that came upon King Nebuchadnezzar it's nowhere else recorded well that is true but so is this that very little is recorded about the last 30 years of Nebuchadnezzar's life anyway and nothing at all about the last 10 and the fact is that this is a record given to us here of the last few years of Nebuchadnezzar's life many people historians have observed and commented on the fact that absolutely nothing is given to us of his last years well that may largely be accounted for by the fact that he disappeared from view for perhaps seven years of his life that he disappeared from view these matters weren't placed abroad except for the fact that he himself recorded it in an edict and this so far is the only historical record of that that is given us and what happened was that God struck him with a madness it's called and it's recognized and was in the ancient world as lycanthropy or sometimes boanthropy and that is behaving like an ox or behaving like a wolf it is a condition that comes upon a person of mental disorder where he thinks himself to be a beast or behaves like a beast and it was a terrible condition and it was terrible as it fell upon
Nebuchadnezzar you could see it outwardly he was out in the dew and he ate the grass like the oxen itself his hair became matted never cleaned never kept grew it became matted so that it looked like eagle's feathers on his head and his nails grew were told to be like claws and the man lived like an animal but this change wasn't just outward it was inward too because the angel said in verse 16 let his heart be changed from man's and let a beast's heart be given to him and let seven times pass over him in other words his heart changed inside he lost reason to the point where he thought himself in some way or another to be like an animal and was given over to the behavior of an animal now I say in one way or another because
I don't understand and no one probably does what exactly came over in Ebuchad and Edzer but I would suggest to you that this is important that he did not now you may quarrel with this but you just bear with me for a moment I would assert that he did not lose a sense of his own identity identity that he did not lose a sense of his own identity and that seems to come through here in verse 34 itself if we're going to emphasize the order of these things look at the order of verse 34 at the end of the days I Nebuchad and Edzer lifted up mine eyes to heaven and my understanding returned to me and I blessed the most high now if you're going to push the order of that I first lifted up my eyes to heaven and then my understanding returned to me in other words that he had in his condition whatever mental disorder it was he had the understanding of God and the understanding of I and that it was possible for him as who he was yet to call upon the name of the
[32:39] Lord and when he did that his disorder vanished and in the twinkling of an eye as suddenly as it had come upon him he was righted and his mental condition whatever it was was put right and he was able to take his place upon the throne which God in his mysterious providence had preserved for him he remained or he retained a sense of his own identity now there's a couple of things that I want to say about this first of all if pride is a root problem then one way or another God must bring us down who shall be the greatest in the kingdom the disciple said to him and the Lord took a little child and set him in the midst of them and he said except you become us little children never mind being great in the kingdom except you become us little children you shall in no wise enter into the kingdom of heaven it is involved in entering the kingdom that you renounce in a sense your adulthood you renounce being master of your own destiny the very thing that perhaps you look forward to having control of your life or whatever that is what you must renounce you must yield yourself to

Jesus Christ as your lord and as your savior you must accept him and cleave to him as the redeemer who paid for sins and also was the lord and master of your life from that point onwards you yield yourself to him as a child yields himself to a parent and how is that unquestioningly confidently you follow your parent as a little child holds his parents and so you are to walk with the lord jesus christ and god must do that in your heart and how difficult it is it sounds easy it's easy to talk about it but you all know how much you love being masters of your own destiny and how much pride keeps you back from many things you're too proud to go to the fellowship you're too proud to go to the prayer meeting you're too proud to ask a question about the lord you're too proud to tell people that you are seeking for god or that you need to be a christian you're too proud to say you're a sinner you're too proud to say you made a mess of your own life you're too proud to admit that you can't control your own life you're too proud full stop we all are it's in us and we need to come down and we need to acknowledge that we are debased and polluted and defiled and now we need the lord in our lives everyone we're all like that but we need to come down

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Naaman went to see Elisha on Naaman's terms he stood in his chariot and sent his messenger into Elisha's house so that he would be healed he was a leper rotting but he covered himself with the clothes of the commander he went down as Naaman the captain of the Syrian host but by the time Elisha was finished with him he became a child willing to deep himself seven times in the Jordan river he became a child you have to become a child too Nebuchadnezzar had to become a child and one way or another God will do it to bring people into his kingdom those that walk in pride he is able to abase and how does he abase him well in a sense what does he do but give him a foretaste of hell on earth itself is that not what he does he gives him a foretaste of hell on earth and I've no doubt that when
God is bringing people to himself again to some degree or another or in one way or another God will do precisely that he gives you a foretaste of what rejection really means and what rebellion really means and what hell in itself is like what else can it be compared to but to lose my reason retaining a sense of my own identity to be so deranged that I eat the grass with the oxen that my nails grow like claws and my hair matted while still conscious of who I am and who I have offended what is that but a measure of hell upon earth and what is hell itself but the retaining of my reason in a sense or the retaining of my identity but the loss of my reason what is it but the loss of everything that is good and restraints taken away so that I become like an animal and yet know who I am and how
I was made and the image that belonged to me what is hell but that and is that not an awful destiny for any man to contemplate is it not awful do we ever take it to heart as we ought and as we should what is madness but your destiny if you're not in Christ what is what befell Nebuchadnezzar but your inheritance and your destiny if you don't believe in Christ madness is not unnatural mad is what we would all be were it not for the restraining grace of God we purchased it when we said no to himself which kept from it in his long suffering in his mercy and in his kindness and will you not come to the Lord Jesus Christ before you descend to that place yourself that is what the gospel is it is an invitation to life with this qualification that if you don't receive it you shall be consigned to eternal death and
[38:46] Nebuchadnezzar had a foretaste of it that brought him to his senses when it was finished he lifted up his eyes to heaven and his understanding returned and he blessed the most high can we take that as repentance that when the work was finished he had grace to look up and to ask the Lord for mercy you ask for that mercy tonight and God will take away this inheritance and destiny from you he will take away the madness and the darkness of a lost eternity and he will give you a life that shall never end that is his promise the reason returns and there are marks of it and there's great debate as to whether Nebuchadnezzar was really converted or not now one thing I would want to say is this that whether I think myself that he was but whether he was or not whether he just came to acknowledge

God as the true God we can say this that the elements of what took place in his life are the elements that God is using when he is bringing anyone to himself chapter opens Nebuchadnezzar the king to all peoples nations and languages I thought it good to show the signs and wonders that the high God has wrought towards me let me put it this way there was no record of this having happened to Nebuchadnezzar there still is not it's clearly large like the
Egyptian habit a tendency to hide anything that was negative with respect to their own king and it's more than likely that Nebuchadnezzar was secluded in a place where he himself roamed and he had this tendency and he lived like this but it was largely unknown to the outside world that his court was still run by the officials and perhaps Daniel himself largely had the supervision of the kingdom but the fact is that when Nebuchadnezzar comes out of it he wishes to tell everybody us and what God has done for him no I can't help but see that as a mark of grace there was another madman called Legion who walked around the tombs crying cutting himself mad but when Christ healed him he said go back and tell the people what I have done for you and he did and Nebuchadnezzar does it here he's not ashamed in a sense he's ashamed of what he was but he's not ashamed to tell it he makes an edict and he publishes the thing to every country in his empire this is what
I was and this is what God did to me whether you've heard about it or whether you've wondered where I've been for seven years or however long it was let me tell you what the Lord has done for me and when Nebuchadnezzar says I was a proud man and God brought me low and notice the words that he says at the close of the chapter I Nebuchadnezzar praise and extol and honour the king of heaven all whose works are truth and his ways judgment now these are words that you

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would find difficult to extract truthfully and meaningfully from someone without grace all whose works are truth and his ways judgment and those that walk in pride he is able to abase how good it would be to think that the last year of
Nebuchadnezzar's life was lived as a man of God a man who was brought not just to know that Daniel's God was powerful but that Daniel's God was gracious and that he was merciful too my friend you might be at rest and you might be flourishing but I saw the wicked great in power spread like a green bay tree and suddenly he was cut down heaven is real hell is real you will be in the one or you will be in the other my friend choose well this day whom you will serve come into this kingdom whatever it will cost you because after all the rewards far outweigh anything that you may have to give up may the Lord enable you so to do let us pray O
[44:11] Lord help us to recognize our own pride which is at the very heart of our lives and give us grace to follow another master besides ourselves may we enlist rather in the army of the Lord where he is the captain of salvation and the author and finisher of faith we ask thee for grace to enter thy kingdom and to serve on thy side and we pray that thou teach us to cease from man and to cease from self and to press into that kingdom before the tree falls for as it falls so it shall lie pardon no sins for Christ's sake Amen above and anywhere feels

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