

## Small Group Guide: The Humbling of Nebuchadnezzar

### Daniel 4



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#### Opening Prayer

Begin your group time by asking God to open hearts and minds to His truth, and to help each person reflect honestly on areas of pride in their own lives.

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#### Icebreaker Question

Share about a time when you were humbled by a situation or circumstance. How did that experience change your perspective?

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#### Sermon Summary

This sermon walks through Daniel 4, which chronicles King Nebuchadnezzar's final chapter. Despite multiple encounters with God's power through Daniel and his friends, Nebuchadnezzar's pride repeatedly returned. After ignoring Daniel's warning to humble himself, God caused the king to lose his sanity for seven years, living like an animal in the fields. Only when Nebuchadnezzar lifted his eyes to heaven and acknowledged God's

sovereignty was his sanity and kingdom restored. His final act was to publicly glorify God before his entire nation.

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### Key Takeaways

1. **Truth is persistent** - God repeatedly revealed Himself to Nebuchadnezzar through dreams, miraculous deliverances, and Daniel's faithfulness
  2. **Pride is progressive** - Even after moments of humility, Nebuchadnezzar's pride returned and grew stronger over time
  3. **God humbles the proud** - When Nebuchadnezzar declared his own greatness, God immediately acted to humble him
  4. **Restoration comes through surrender** - Only by acknowledging God's sovereignty was Nebuchadnezzar's sanity and kingdom restored
  5. **No one is too far gone** - If Nebuchadnezzar can end up in heaven, anyone can be saved
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### Discussion Questions

#### Understanding the Text

1. What pattern do you notice in Nebuchadnezzar's spiritual journey throughout chapters 1-4 of Daniel? Why do you think he kept returning to pride?
2. Daniel gave Nebuchadnezzar specific advice in verse 27: "Break off your sins by practicing righteousness and your iniquities by showing mercy to the oppressed." Why do you think Nebuchadnezzar ignored this counsel?
3. What is the significance of God leaving the "stump" of the tree in Nebuchadnezzar's dream? What does this reveal about God's character?

#### Personal Reflection

4. The sermon highlighted three actions: **Seek truth, Surrender to it, Share your story**. Which of these three is most challenging for you personally? Why?
5. Nebuchadnezzar had a year between the dream and its fulfillment. Have you ever had a "grace period" where God warned you about something before consequences came? How did you respond?

6. The pastor noted that Nebuchadnezzar kept relying on "the occult backing him, and the practices that his fathers had left for him." What cultural practices or family traditions do you sometimes rely on instead of God's truth?
7. Where in your life might pride be sneaking in? (Consider areas like: work accomplishments, parenting, spiritual disciplines, knowledge, social status, etc.)

### **Application**

8. Nebuchadnezzar's pride manifested in the statement: "Is not this great Babylon, which I have built by my mighty power?" When are you most tempted to take credit for what God has done?
9. The sermon emphasized that "this side of heaven we'll never learn all that there is to learn about Him." How are you actively seeking to grow in your knowledge of God? What specific steps could you take this week?
10. Who in your life seems "too far gone" to come to faith? How does Nebuchadnezzar's story give you hope for that person? What might change in how you pray for them or interact with them?

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### **Practical Applications**

Choose one or two of the following to commit to this week:

#### **Individual Actions**

- **Daily Humility Check:** Each evening, ask yourself, "Where did I take credit for something God did today?" Confess and give Him glory.
- **Truth Seeking:** Commit to reading one chapter of Scripture daily with the specific question: "What truth is God revealing about Himself here?"
- **Pride Inventory:** Write down three areas where pride might be taking root in your life. Ask God to reveal them and surrender each one to Him.

#### **Relational Actions**

- **Share Your Story:** Identify one person this week with whom you can share what God has done in your life, particularly a time when He humbled you.
- **Intercession:** Make a list of people you're praying for who don't know Christ. Commit to praying for them daily, remembering that no one is too far gone.

- **Accountability:** Ask a trusted friend or group member to check in with you about an area of pride you're struggling with.

### Community Actions

- **Public Testimony:** Like Nebuchadnezzar's final address, look for an opportunity to publicly glorify God (in conversation, on social media, at work) for something He's done.
- **Mercy Ministry:** Following Daniel's advice to Nebuchadnezzar, find one practical way to show mercy to someone who is oppressed or marginalized this week.

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### Memory Verse

**Daniel 4:37** - "Now I, Nebuchadnezzar, praise and extol and honor the King of heaven, for all his works are right and his ways are just; and those who walk in pride he is able to humble."

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### Closing Reflection

Nebuchadnezzar's journey reminds us that:

- God is patient with us, even when we repeatedly return to pride
- Humility is not a one-time event but a daily choice
- Our stories of God's faithfulness are meant to be shared
- Restoration always comes through surrender to God's sovereignty

Take a moment of silence to ask God: "Where do I need to lift my eyes to heaven and acknowledge Your rule in my life?"

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### Closing Prayer

Close by praying for:

- Humility to recognize areas of pride in our lives
- Courage to surrender fully to God's truth
- Boldness to share our stories of God's faithfulness

- Hope for those we're praying for who seem far from God
  - Hearts that continually seek to know God more deeply
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### **For Next Week**

Read Daniel 5 in preparation for next week's discussion. Pay attention to what happens when Nebuchadnezzar's son, Belshazzar, takes the throne. How does his story contrast with his father's ending?

## 5-Day Devotional: Humbled Before the King



### Day 1: The Pride That Blinds

**Reading:** Daniel 4:28-33; Proverbs 16:18

#### **Devotional:**

Nebuchadnezzar stood atop his palace, surveying his kingdom, declaring, "Look at what I have built by my mighty power." Within moments, God's judgment fell. Pride is deceptive—it whispers that our achievements are self-made, that our success belongs to us alone. Like Nebuchadnezzar, we can acknowledge God's power yet still live as though we're the center of our universe. The king spent a year ignoring Daniel's warning to humble himself. How often do we receive God's truth yet delay our response? Pride doesn't announce itself with fanfare; it creeps in during seasons of prosperity and comfort. Today, examine your heart: What are you crediting to yourself that belongs to God? Humility isn't weakness—it's recognizing the truth about who holds all power.

## **Day 2: When God Removes His Gifts**

**Reading:** Daniel 4:31-33; James 1:17

### **Devotional:**

Everything Nebuchadnezzar possessed—his kingdom, his sanity, his splendor—was stripped away in an instant. For seven years, the most powerful man on earth lived like an animal, his mind gone, his glory vanished. This severe mercy reveals a profound truth: God sometimes removes His gifts to restore our souls. What we think we've earned, we've actually received. Our talents, opportunities, relationships, and even our mental faculties are on loan from heaven. Nebuchadnezzar's humiliation wasn't punishment for punishment's sake—it was surgical intervention to save him from eternal separation from God. Sometimes God must take us to rock bottom before we'll look up. If you're in a season of loss, consider: Is God removing something to give you something infinitely better—Himself?

## **Day 3: Seeking Truth in the Wrong Places**

**Reading:** Daniel 4:4-7; Jeremiah 29:13

### **Devotional:**

Nebuchadnezzar repeatedly turned to magicians, enchanters, and astrologers before consulting Daniel. He knew where the truth was, yet his pride drove him to seek answers everywhere else first. How often do we do the same? We consult self-help books, therapists, friends, and Google before opening Scripture or falling to our knees in prayer. We know God has the answers, but we hope for an easier truth, one that doesn't require surrender. Nebuchadnezzar's false counselors failed him every time because truth doesn't originate from human wisdom or cultural practices—it flows from heaven. The king wasted precious time seeking answers in empty places. Where are you looking for truth today? God promises that when we seek Him with our whole heart, we will find Him. Stop circling the answer and run straight to the Source.

## **Day 4: The Stump That Remained**

**Reading:** Daniel 4:23-26; Romans 11:29

### **Devotional:**

In Nebuchadnezzar's dream, the tree was chopped down, but the stump remained—bound with iron and bronze, preserved in the earth. This detail reveals God's redemptive heart. Even in judgment, He preserves a remnant, a foundation for restoration. God's discipline is never His final word; His mercy endures forever. The stump represented Nebuchadnezzar's kingdom waiting for him, but more importantly, it represented hope. No matter how far we fall, how completely we're cut down by our own pride or sin, God preserves something in us—the image of Himself—waiting for our return to sanity, our return to Him. If you feel like you've been cut down to nothing, look for the stump. God hasn't uprooted you completely. Your restoration is possible the moment you acknowledge that heaven rules.

## **Day 5: Sharing Your Story of Redemption**

**Reading:** Daniel 4:1-3, 34-37; Psalm 107:1-2

### **Devotional:**

Nebuchadnezzar's final act was stunning: the tyrant who destroyed Jerusalem became a witness for Yahweh. He gathered his entire kingdom and testified to God's greatness, mercy, and justice. He didn't hide his humiliation—he proclaimed it as evidence of God's power to humble the proud. Your story, with all its messy detours and painful lessons, is your most powerful tool for pointing others to Christ. We often want to share only our victories, but Nebuchadnezzar understood that his lowest moment revealed God's highest glory. Who needs to hear how God humbled you, restored you, and brought you back to sanity? If Nebuchadnezzar—destroyer of God's temple—could end his life exalting the King of Heaven, no one is beyond redemption. Seek truth, surrender to it, and share your story. Someone is waiting to hear it.