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Redemption: The King’s Deliverance
4: 34-37 and 1-3

Redemption: The King’s Deliverance DIG: What position regarding “all the world” and “the Most High God” is Nebuchadnezzar assuming? If people do “prosper greatly,” who would like to take the credit? What does that say about this king? Was king Nebuchadnezzar part of the Righteous of the TaNaKh of his day? Why? Why not?

REFLECT: Think of a time when you were given a second chance at something. How do you suppose Nebuchadnezzar approached his kingship and kingdom differently after receiving his second chance? How does sanity begin with a realistic self-appraisal before God? Why should God exalt the humble? How can you raise your eyes to Yeshua?

ADONAI is the God of second chances.

The king’s restoration (4:34-35): At the end of the king’s humiliation (**to see link click Bx – Humiliation: The King’s Disciple**)**, restored** to **his** right mind, **Nebuchadnezzar** took over the narrative again, reverting to the first person, with the simple explanation: **I, Nebuchadnezzar, raised my eyes toward heaven.** For all that time **he** behaved like **an ox**. **His eyes** were focused on the ground, where **he** could look for grass. However, the day came when **Nebuchadnezzar** lifted **his eyes** skyward, and that was the turning point in **his** madness. The ability to recognize **ADONAI** is a fundamental difference between man and beast. As **Nebuchadnezzar** raised **his eyes toward heaven, his sanity returned**. **Then I praised the Most High; I honored and glorified Him who lives forever (4:34a).**

Just as Dani’el 4:3 contained noteworthy biblical terminology (see below), Nebuchadnezzar’s words in this verse also include scriptures that are well known from other parts of the TaNaKh. His dominion is an eternal dominion; His kingdom endures from generation to generation (4:34b). David said: **Your Kingdom is an everlasting Kingdom, and Your dominion**

endures throughout all generations (Psalm 145:13a). Thus, **he** acknowledged **God's** sovereign authority, and because **He** is sovereign, **He** can do as **He** pleases, and nobody can hinder **Him** or call **Him** to account **(Romans 9:14-23)**. The heart of sinful mankind rebels at the very idea of a sovereign **God**, for the human heart wants to be "free" of all outside control. Sinners think they are "free" and don't realize how much they are in bondage to their fallen nature and to the forces of Satan and the world. We are free because **ADONAI** is sovereign.

All the peoples of the earth are regarded as nothing (4:35a). Isaiah said: **All the nations who do not know Him are as nothing; they are regarded by Him as worthless and less than nothing (formless or confusion) (Isaiah 40:17a).** There are three Hebrew words that are used beautifully here. The first word means *nothing*, the second word means *nothingness*, and the third word means *confusion*. This word *confusion* is the same word that is used in **Genesis 1:2,** where we read that **the earth was formless and empty**, or the earth was **formless and** *confused.* **The nations** are nothing, nothingness, and mere confusion. Therefore, there is no comparison between the greatness of **God** and the triviality, insufficiency and confusion of **the nations**. This bold appraisal does not mean **the LORD** doesn't value **the** Gentile **nations**. **He** doesn't think **they** are worthless and the many statements in the TaNaKh make this clear. It is merely that by comparison with **ADONAI** (in the sense of **His** *presence*), Assyria and its gods, Babylonia and its gods, Persia and its gods, fade into insignificance.

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" (4:35b)? Isaiah also said: **Woe to those who argue with their Creator. Does the clay pot argue with its maker? Does the clay say to the potter, "What are you making?" Does your work say, "How clumsy can you be" (Isaiah 45:9)?** Also **the king** confessed that **mankind** is answerable to **YHVH** and no one has the right to question **Him (Job 33:12b-13; Isaiah 29:16; Romans 9:19-20)**.

The king's return (4:36): Submitting to **God's** sovereign will didn't make **Nebuchadnezzar** any less of **a man**; in fact, **his** commitment transformed **him** from living like **a beast** to living like **a man**.[175] At the very moment that **Nebuchadnezzar** acknowledged **the Most High** as **God**, **the king** was **returned** to **his** throne. **At the same time that my sanity was restored, my honor and splendor were returned to me for the glory of my kingdom. My advisers and nobles sought me out, and I was restored to my throne.** Remarkably, **he**

regained **his** position as **king** with **even greater** honor **than before** when **he walked in pride. Where sin increased, grace increased even more (Romans 5:20b).** This return was the fulfillment of **the band of iron and bronze** mentioned in **4:15**. Just as **the band** kept **the stump and the roots of the tree in the ground**, so did it symbolically secure **the king's** power.[176] **ADONAI** is the **God** of second chances (see the commentary on **Jonah Ax – The Ninevites Believed God**).

This is an important point for us to recognize in our own lives. On the one hand, discontent and disaster, or at least profound physical discomfort, are very often necessary for spiritual growth and change. As long as we are comfortable and at ease in this world, we are not normally ready to examine our hearts and undertake deep changes. On the other hand, when our **Lord** disturbs the calm waters of our lives we begin to be ready to seek different paths to pursue. It is often when our career hopes are dashed, or our marriage relationship is in shreds, or the doctor announces that we have only a few more months to live that we are finally persuaded to become serious about spiritual things. If that is true, however, it suggests that we should approach these troubled times of our lives with a far more positive outlook than we normally do. These shattering experiences should prompt within us the expectation and hope that **ADONAI** is going to do something important in our lives. It is precisely through the storms of life that **God** will show us who we really are, and, even more importantly, who **He** really is.[177]

The king's testimony (4:1-3): King Nebuchadnezzar, To the nations and peoples of every language, who live in all the earth: May you prosper greatly (4:1)! It is my pleasure to tell you about the miraculous signs and wonders that the Most High God has performed for me. How great are His signs, how mighty His wonders, namely, the interpretation of **his dream** by **Dani'el** and the deliverance of **the three Hebrews** in **the fiery furnace!**[178] **His Kingdom is an eternal Kingdom; His dominion endures from generation to generation.** In **his** testimony, **the king** declared a number of things about the nature of **God**: (1) **He** lives forever, (2) **He** has an eternal Kingdom, (3) all **the peoples of the earth** are regarded as nothing before **Him**, (4) **He** is **ADONAI-Tzva'ot, the LORD of heaven's** angelic **armies** (see **Joshua 5:13-15; Second Kings 19:31; Psalm 24:10; Second Corinthians 6:18**), (5) **He** does as **He** pleases with **the peoples of the earth**, (6) No one can resist **His** will, and (7) No one can object to **His** will.[179] What an expression of worship.



The king's redemption (4:37): Now I, Nebuchadnezzar, praise and exalt and glorify the King of heaven, because everything He does is right and all His ways are just (4:37a). These verbs indicate continued action, suggesting that **Nebuchadnezzar** did these things consistently. These verbs embody the ideas of reverence, respect, honor, admiration, and worship. Since **Nebuchadnezzar** said that these attributes characterized **his** life, we may conclude that **he** joined **the righteous of the TaNaKh** of **his** time, and was united with **Abraham** in **sh'ol** (see the commentary on **Hebrews Cp – The Faith of Abraham**). **Nebuchadnezzar** confessed that what **Ha'Shem** had done to **him** was **right** and **just**. This is certainly not acknowledged by someone who continues in rebellion against **God**. **The king** also admitted that **he** had **walked in pride (5:20)**, but had been **humbled** by **his** experience. This too would testify to a transformation in **his** character through a newfound trust in **the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob**.[180]

Peter tells us that between **Yeshua's** death on the cross and **His** resurrection, our **Lord** was **put to death in the body but made alive by the Spirit. He** was **spiritually alive** but physically dead. Sometime during those three days **He went and preached to the spirits in prison (First Peter 3:18-19).** With **Messiah** dead on the cross **the demons** must have been celebrating **their** seeming victory only to have the living **Messiah** show up and make a triumphant announcement that **He** had conquered death. **Rabbi Sha'ul** mentions the same thing when **Messiah descended into the low, earthly regions of sh'ol (Ephesians 4:9).** The TaNaKh refers to the place of the dead as **sh'ol** (see the commentary on **Proverbs Af – Sh'ol**).

One part of **sh'ol** was a place of torment and agony, occupied by the unrighteous

dead and by the demons **who disobeyed long ago when God waited patiently in the days of Noah while the ark was being built (First Peter 3:20a).** However, another part of **sh'ol** was a place of contentment and rest, inhabited by **the righteous** dead who had put their faith in **ADONAI**. **Abraham's side (Luke 16:22)** was a common name for that side of **sh'ol** at the time of **the Messiah**. **They** resided there until **Yeshua** had paid for **their** sins on the cross. Then, after declaring victory over those very **demons, the Lord of Life** liberated **the** godly **captives** and **led them** to **heaven when He ascended on high (Ephesians 4:8).** Among those who went with **Him** were Adam, Eve, Abel, Seth, Enoch, Methuselah, Lamech, Noah, **Nebuchadnezzar** and all **the righteous of the TaNaKh** before the cross, including **those** mentioned in the hall of **faith** in the book of **Hebrews** (see my commentary on **Hebrews Cl – The Hall of Faith**).

And those who walk in pride, He is able to humble (4:37b). There seems to be a prophetic application in this incident, as well as in the one in **Chapter 3** (see **Bs – The Significance of Dani'el Chapter 3 to Times of the Gentiles**). Even though **ADONAI** has appointed **Gentiles** to a place of prominence during **the Times of the Gentiles**, most **nations** and **people** continue to rebel against **Him**. The Psalter asks: **Why are the nations so angry? Why do they waste their time with futile plans? The kings of the earth prepare for battle; the rulers plot together against ADONAI and against His Messiah. "Let us break their chains," they cry, "and free ourselves from slavery to God" (Psalm 2:1-3 NLT).** Therefore, one purpose of the Great Tribulation, which will precede **Messiah's Second Coming** (see the commentary on **Isaiah Kg – The Second Coming of Jesus Christ to Bozrah**), will be to **humble the nations** and have **them** submit **themselves** to **Messiah's** authority **(Philippians 2:10-11)**.

At the conclusion of **God's** judgment, described in **Revelation Chapters 6-18**, **Yeshua Messiah**, the victorious **Rider** on **the white horse**, will descend from **heaven** and annihilate **the nations** (see the commentary on **Revelation Ex – The Eight Stage Campaign of Armageddon**). Then **an angel** will announce that **the kingdom of the world has become the Kingdom of God and of His Messiah, and He will reign forever and ever (Revelation 11:15)**. **Ha'Shem's** judgment on **Nebuchadnezzar**, designed to **humble him** to **God's** authority, seems to prefigure **Ha'Shem's** judgment on **the nations** and subject **them** to the authority of the **One** who has given **them** the right to rule (see **Bz – Dani'el's Vision of Four Beasts**).[181] As always, our **Lord** has the last word: **For those who exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be**

exalted (Matthew 23:12).

Suffering and redemption: As Iain Duguid relates in his commentary on *Daniel*, how is it possible for **the humble** to be restored through trials? Is there something inherently redemptive about **Nebuchadnezzar's** suffering and ours that earns **God's** favor? Is restoration achieved through a kind of penance, a work suffered that we must learn how to atone for our **pride** and thus get to **heaven**? If we think that, we haven't understood humanity at all. Remember, **Nebuchadnezzar's restoration** did not come when **he** looked at himself, but rather when **he raised his eyes toward heaven**. **He** simply looked to **ADONAI's** grace to restore **him**, not based on anything he had done – not even **his** newfound **humbleness**. **His** hope was simply in **God's** mercy.

Yet, that still begs the question, "Why should **ADONAI** exalt **the humble**?" We may certainly see why **God** should **humble** the proud and show them that they are not as great and important as they think they are. The arrogant of this world need to be taken down a peg or ten. Wicked kings like **Nebuchadnezzar** deserve their punishment. But why should **the LORD exalt the humble**? Why do **they** receive **His** favor?

The answer to that question takes us to the consideration of another **King** who was brought down from the heights to the depths. This **King** could truly have looked out over all creation and said, "Is this not the world **I** have created for **My** royal residence, by **My** mighty power and for **the glory** of **My** majesty?" **He** didn't simply create one of the wonders of the ancient world; **He** created the whole world out of nothing! Yet, instead of exalting **Himself**, this **King** voluntarily **humbled Himself**. Even though **He** was in very nature **God**, this **King** humbled **Himself** and became **a man**. **He** left the comforts and glories of **heaven** and came to **dwell** on the earth among sinful humanity **(John 1:14)**, a step downwards at least as significant as when **Nebuchadnezzar** went to dwell among **the beasts of the field and the birds of the air**. Yet, **He** took **His humbling** even further than that. This **King** took upon **Himself** the form of **a servant (Mark 10:45)**: **He** healed the sick and preached to the poor, and even washed the feet of **His** disciples. **He** carried **His servanthood** all the way to a criminal's death on the cross, even though **He** had done nothing wrong **(Philippians 2:6-8)**. What greater **humbling** experience could there possibly be than for the living **God** to die? Yet, this **King's humbling** was not forced upon **Him** because of **His pride**. On the contrary, it was a voluntary choice on **His** part so that **He** might **redeem** *our* **pride**.

This humble **King** is named **Yeshua**. However, **His** time of humiliation is over and now **He** is once again **exalted** in glory. Now that **He** has accomplished our salvation, **He is seated at the right hand of the Father (Hebrews 10:12-13)**. Now this **Yeshua** is the one who our **worship** is directed, **the One** in **heaven** to whom our **eyes are raised.** This is why **the humble** are **exalted**: not because our **humility** has been earned, but because of our faith/trust/belief in **the Lord**, who was once **humbled** and is now glorified, instead of looking at ourselves. We are united with **Him (John 6:56, 17:20-23; Romans 7:4, 12:5; Ephesians 4:25, 5:30),** so that **His** glorification is our glorification also, minus **His** deity.

So we need to take our **eyes** off of ourselves and our accomplishments. We even need to take our **eyes** off of our failures and disasters. We need to stop comparing ourselves with others. Instead, we need to **raise our eyes heavenward** and look to **Messiah**, the **humbled**, **exalted King**. **His** death and resurrection are the means by which we are restored to our senses and made welcome in the most **exalted** company, **heaven itself**. We need to put away the pride of our successes, be **humbled** by all of our sins and failures, and rejoice in the extraordinary riches of **God's** mercy and grace. We need to **raise** our **eyes to heaven** and praise **ADONAI** that though **He humbles** the proud, **He** also redeems and **exalts the humble**. Through **His** grace, **He** makes us fit to stand in **His** presence forever.[182]

*Dear heavenly **Father**, praise **You** for **Your** great steadfast love that both protects me and seeks to humble the proud, bringing them into **Your sheepfold. Yeshua** declared: **I am the Good Shepherd. The Good Shepherd lays down His life for the sheep . . . I have other sheep that are not from this fold; those also I must lead, and they will listen to My voice. So there shall be one flock, one Shepherd (John 10:11, 16).** How gracious **You** are to desire a relationship with those who have turned from selfish pride to faith in **You** as their **Lord** and **Savior**. **Your** sacrificial death and resurrection paid the way for those who trust in **You** to become part of your family. **But whoever did receive Him, those trusting in His name, to these He gave the right to become children of God (John 1:12).** Thank **You** for using trials to both humble my pride and to refine me to grow closer to **You**. Truly you are worthy of all love, praise and worship! In **Mesiah Yeshua's** holy **Name** and power of **His** resurrection. Amen*