

Daniel 4:37

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

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

Analysis

Nebuchadnezzar's concluding testimony represents the chapter's theological climax: "Now I Nebuchadnezzar praise and extol and honour the King of heaven." The threefold affirmation—"praise" (meshabbeach, מְשַׁבְּחַ, to commend), "extol" (merommem, מְרוּמָה, to lift up or magnify), and "honour" (mehadar, מְהֻדָּר, to glorify)—emphasizes comprehensive worship using multiple Hebrew terms for exaltation. This contrasts starkly with his earlier self-exaltation (v. 30), demonstrating complete transformation from pride to humility.

The title "King of heaven" (Malka shemaya, מֶלֶךְ שְׁמָיָה) acknowledges God's absolute sovereignty over earthly rulers. The phrase "all whose works are truth, and his ways judgment" confesses divine perfection in both action ("works are truth") and governance ("ways judgment"). This represents mature theological understanding—God's deeds align perfectly with reality, and His governance reflects perfect justice. Nebuchadnezzar affirms what he previously resisted: God's right to rule and His perfect wisdom in exercising sovereignty.

The concluding statement "those that walk in pride he is able to abase" represents personal testimony from experience. The word "abase" (hashpilah, הַשְׁפִּילָה, to bring low or humble) describes precisely what Nebuchadnezzar experienced. His testimony warns others against pride while testifying to God's power to humble the proud. This points to the gospel's central paradox: Christ humbled Himself and

was therefore highly exalted (Philippians 2:8-11), and believers must humble themselves to be exalted by God (James 4:10, 1 Peter 5:6).

Historical Context

Nebuchadnezzar's final testimony (likely near the end of his reign, before his death in 562 BC) represents Scripture's most extensive conversion narrative of a pagan ruler. Unlike Pharaoh who hardened his heart despite repeated warnings, Nebuchadnezzar progresses from grudging acknowledgment (chapter 2) through incomplete recognition (chapter 3) to full confession of God's sovereignty (chapter 4). This theological development spans decades and multiple divine interventions.

The chapter's unique literary structure—a royal proclamation distributed throughout the empire—means Nebuchadnezzar's testimony served evangelistic purposes, proclaiming Yahweh's sovereignty to pagan nations. This fulfilled God's promise to Abraham that through his seed "all nations of the earth" would be blessed (Genesis 22:18). Nebuchadnezzar's humbling and restoration demonstrated God's power to bring even the mightiest kings to acknowledge His sovereignty, encouraging Jewish exiles that their God remained supreme despite circumstances suggesting abandonment.

Related Passages

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Study Questions

1. How does Nebuchadnezzar's transformation from proud self-exaltation to humble worship model genuine conversion and sanctification?
2. In what specific areas might God be calling you to acknowledge His sovereignty where you currently assert self-sufficient control?

Interlinear Text

לֹתֶת לְגַת וּמִבְּדָר וּמִרְומָם מִשְׁבַּח חַנְכָּנָצָר אָנָּה כָּעֵד |
Now I Nebuchadnezzar praise and extol and honour the King
H3705 H576 H5020 H7624 H7313 H1922 H4430

אֱלֹהִים כָּל־דַּי שְׁמֵי אֵל וְאֶתְּנָתָת הַקְּשָׁת מִעֲבָד וְהִי כָּל־יְדֵי אֱלֹהִים וְאֶתְּנָתָת הַדְּבָרִים וְאֶתְּנָתָת הַשְׁפָּטָה
of heaven all whose works are truth and his ways judgment
H8065 H1768 H3606 H4567 H7187 H735 H1780

לְבַשְׁפָּלָה: מְהֻלָּךְ יְהִי בָּנֵי הָאָדָם יְהִי לְבַשְׁפָּלָה:
and those that walk in pride he is able to abase
H1981 H1467 H3202 H8214

Additional Cross-References

1 Samuel 2:3 (Parallel theme): Talk no more so exceeding proudly; let not arrogancy come out of your mouth: for the LORD is a God of knowledge, and by him actions are weighed.

Deuteronomy 32:4 (Judgment): He is the Rock, his work is perfect: for all his ways are judgment: a God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is he.

Acts 17:24 (Parallel theme): God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands;

Exodus 18:11 (Parallel theme): Now I know that the LORD is greater than all gods: for in the thing wherein they dealt proudly he was above them.

Psalms 119:75 (Judgment): I know, O LORD, that thy judgments are right, and that thou in faithfulness hast afflicted me.

Ezekiel 16:63 (Parallel theme): That thou mayest remember, and be confounded, and never open thy mouth any more because of thy shame, when I am pacified toward thee for all that thou hast done, saith the Lord GOD.