

DANIEL (DARE TO BE GOD'S MESSENGER)
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SERIES: Daniel (Dare To Be God's Messenger)

TITLE: Program 13 – Beware Of Pride!

WEDNESDAY

OPEN

Beware my friend, of notoriety. Beware of success. Beware of prosperity. Beware because what happens is many times when we achieve those things we forget that we are only there by the grace of God. You may say, I don't even believe in God. It doesn't matter. You're only there by the grace of God. You need to understand that it is God who's in control. We'll talk about it today.

PART ONE

If you've been following our study on Daniel, you know that Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon had achieved it all. I mean he had achieved notoriety. He had been an extremely successful man and prosperity, I mean it was coming out his ears; now popularity, no. But he had achieved it all and he didn't need popularity as long as he had the other things. And so as you know, God had to make him understand that He was

the Ruler over the realm of mankind and not Nebuchadnezzar. God had used Nebuchadnezzar, as His rod of judgment against the nations because the nations had forgotten that God was God and they had turned their back on Him. And God will often take a cruel despot and use that despot as His rod of judgment and yet He always then judges that despot because in the mystery of it all, God is sovereign. He rules over the realm of mankind and yet man is accountable. And you can never go to an extreme with man's accountability and throw out God's sovereignty or say God is sovereign and so therefore queue sera sera, what will be will be and man is not accountable. You can never do that not if you handle the Word of God accurately, not if you know and understand the whole counsel of God. So you and I know if you've been studying Daniel, chapter 4, that Daniel, interprets a dream that is given to Nebuchadnezzar, a dream that is given to him by God, a dream to warn him to turn from this wrong thinking and to recognize that God is the ruler of mankind and to submit to Him and to be merciful to the poor and to live in righteousness and to give up his sins and to turn to God. Now He gives Nebuchadnezzar this dream and the dream centers around a tree, a tree that is supplying everything that the birds of the field and the beasts of the earth need and food that is needed by everyone. And it's a wonderful and beautiful, luxuriant tree. But then the angelic watcher says come and chop down the tree. Leave the stump. Put a band of iron and bronze around it. He tells that Nebuchadnezzar will someday come out of this, but God's judgment is coming. Now we were looking at the tree. And I wanted you to see how God speaks and uses trees as a metaphor for nations and people that exalt themselves and how God brings low and chops down trees. I also want you to see, as we look at this how God uses mountains, in a sense, as a reference to a kingdom. All right, so we looked at Isaiah, chapter 2, verses 12 and 13 and Isaiah, chapter 10, verse 34. Now I want us to go to Ezekiel, chapter 31, verse 2 to 18, Ezekiel, chapter 31, verse 2. Now listen carefully. He says son of man, say to Pharaoh King of Egypt

and to his multitude, whom are you like in your greatness? Now he's speaking to Egypt. Now you've got to remember Egypt is a country today. You've got to remember that Babylon is present day Iraq. These are countries that existed at that time, but now listen, that have ramifications for the future. And God has much to say in Isaiah, and in Jeremiah and in Ezekiel about these nations, not only for the past, but also for the future. So we're looking at trees. We're looking at trees being symbols of nations. And he says son of man, say to Pharaoh, king of Egypt and to his multitude, whom are you like in your greatness? Behold, Assyria was cedar in Lebanon. Remember in Isaiah how we saw that He had cut down the cedars of Lebanon. Well, Assyria was a cedar in Lebanon, and it's present day Lebanon. And Assyria, the Assyrian empire went over into that. The Assyrian empire was northeast and north of Israel. All right and Israel's kind of like the center of the earth. As a matter of fact, if you look at it, it is the center of the earth just like God says in the book of Job. He says behold Syria was a cedar in Lebanon with beautiful branches and forest shade and very high; and its top was among the clouds. In other words, this nation had achieved greatness, probably at this time in history, greater than any other nation. The waters made it grow, made the tree grow. The deep made it high. With its rivers it continually extended all around its planting place, and it sent out channels to all the trees of the field. So here is Assyria, then sending out channels of water affecting the trees of the field, the other nations. When Assyria captured the Northern Kingdom, Samaria and the Northern Kingdom of Israel, the ten tribes of Israel, they took a lot of people home to Assyria, but then they sent Assyrians back to live in the northern part of the kingdom. Those Assyrians married with the Jews that were left there and that's where we get the Samaritans from. All right, he goes on to say how the birds, verse 6, all the birds of the heavens nested in its boughs. Do you see the parallel between this and Babylon? And under its branches all the beasts of the field gave birth, and all great nations lived in its shade. And it

was so beautiful in its greatness, in the length of its branches; for its roots extended to many waters. The cedars in God's garden could not match it. In other words the cedars in Israel couldn't match Assyria. The cypresses could not compare with its boughs, and the plane trees could not match its branches. No tree, in God's garden could compare with its beauty. I made it beautiful with the multitude of its branches, and all the trees of Eden, which were in the garden of God, were jealous of it. Now listen, all the trees of Eden, which were in the garden of God, were jealous of it. Now where was Eden? Where was the Garden of Eden? Well when you open the book of Genesis it tells us. And it was where modern day Babylon was. So he's saying king of Egypt, remember this, remember how beautiful Assyria was. It was so beautiful that the people living in Babylon, down in the area of the Garden of Eden were jealous of Assyria. Now, and, and you can probably see where I'm going because now who's the great tree, according to Daniel, chapter 4? It's Babylon. It says therefore, thus says the Lord God, because it is high in stature and it has its top among the clouds, and its heart is in it, and its heart is lofty in, haughty in its loftiness. Now take these nations, take these descriptions and apply them to you. Okay, this is why you have to beware of prosperity, why you have to beware of success, why you have to beware of popularity, why you have to beware if notoriety, because then you grow tall, you grow, grow haughty and you forget, you forget what you were. I mean, do you ever watch Biography on, on television? If you watch that you see the lives of so many people and you see what happens to them when they become successful. I mean they might be married for 20 or 30 years in a happy marriage and then all of a sudden because they're so successful, because they're so prosperous, because they're so busy, because they're so achieving, all of a sudden their marriage falls apart or all of a sudden they're no longer home with their kids or all of a sudden, I mean, they have achieved so much materially that they are just caught up in that world, and nothing is satisfying them and they're pushing themselves so

hard that pretty soon they're popping pills or they're taking a little nip here and a little nip there, a little bit more alcohol, something to get me to sleep, something to wake me up. I mean look at it and take note and watch. What is your goal? What are you headed for? He says therefore, because they're haughty, I will give it into the hands of a despot of the nations; he will thoroughly deal with it. According to its wickedness I have driven it away. Who's the despot of the nations? The despot of the nations that he's talking about is Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon. He was a despot. He had achieved this greatness. And it says an alien tyrants of the nations have cut it down and left it; on the mountains and in all the valleys its branches have fallen and its boughs have been broken. Now he's not talking about Babylon yet, but he's talking about how God uses Babylon to bring down Assyria and how God uses Babylon to bring down Egypt. It says on its ruin all the birds of the heavens will dwell. And all the beasts of the field will be on its fallen branches, in order that all the trees by the waters may not be exalted in their stature, not set their top among the clouds, nor their well watered might ones shall stand erect in their height. For they have all been given over to death, to the earth beneath, among the sons of men, with those that go down to the pit. God brings down the lofty. You see God always forewarns us. When God gets ready to bring a judgment upon us, there's a forewarning. It may be a nagging in your heart. It may be a sense of discomfort, a sense of maybe guilt is good. I hope you know that. If you're sinning, guilt's good because guilt tells you hey, something's wrong. You're guilty and you better do something about it, so you better straighten out. You better repent. You better return or otherwise I'm going to have to judge you. So God is longsuffering. And God waits on us to repent. And God waits on us to return to Him.

PART TWO

God warns us. He warns us because we see other people doing the things that we are doing and God brings them down. We see other people and we hear that they get caught on the Internet in pornography or they get caught or they get exposed or an athlete gets exposed for his drunkenness or a congressman gets exposed for his wild driving and all of a sudden the rod of judgment falls on iniquity. That's because God is a righteous judge. So this is what He's saying to, He's saying to Pharaoh, king of Egypt: Look, I raised up a despot to come against Assyria. Now watch what He says in verse 15. Thus says the Lord God, on the day when it went down to Sheol... Now Sheol is a picture of the grave, or a picture of the underworld. On the day when it went down to Sheol I caused lamentation; I closed the deep over it, held back its rivers. He's talking about Assyria. And its many waters were stopped up, and I made Lebanon mourn for it. All the trees of the field wilted away on account of it. I made the nations quake at the sound of its fall when I made it go down to Sheol with those who go down to the pit; all the well-watered trees of Eden, the choice and the best of Lebanon were comforted in the earth beneath. They also went down to Sheol, to those who were slain by the sword; and those who were its strength lived under its shade among the nations. To which among the trees of Eden are you thus equal in glory and greatness? Now who is He speaking to now? Well, verse 2, He said son of man say to Pharaoh, king of Egypt. So He's saying say to Pharaoh, king of Egypt, you know what Assyria was like and you know that you were jealous of Assyria. And you know what I did to Assyria. All right, now I want you to put this down in your notes. Assyria fell. When it says that I brought you down to Sheol, Assyria fell to Babylon in 612 B.C. Assyria fell to Babylon in 612 B.C. And then He says to which among the trees of Eden are you thus equal in glory and greatness? Yet you will be brought down with the trees of Eden to the earth beneath. I cut down Assyria. Egypt, I'm going to cut down you. I used Nebuchadnezzar, the king

of Babylon, that despot to bring Assyria down. I'm going to use him to bring you down. You will lie in the midst of the uncircumcised with those who were slain by the sword. So is Pharaoh and all his multitude declares the Lord. Now, I want you to go down to chapter 32, to verse 9. And I want you to see that He's going to let them know that they're going to be conquered by Babylon. He said I will also the trouble the hearts of many people, when I bring your destruction among the nations, Egypt's destruction. He's still talking to pharaoh. He hasn't stopped talking to him. Into lands which you have not known. And I will make many peoples appalled at you, and their kings shall be horribly afraid of you when I brandish My sword before them; and you, they will tremble every moment, each man in his own life, on the day of your fall. Thus says the Lord; the sword of the king of Babylon shall come upon you. The sword of the king of Babylon shall come upon you. Now listen, he is told how God has used Nebuchadnezzar to bring down Assyria and how He is going to use Nebuchadnezzar to bring down Pharaoh, the pharaoh of Egypt, to bring down the nation of Egypt. Why? Because they have achieved and they think that they have done it on their own. There is a lesson here for us. Don't miss the lesson. Now let's go back to Daniel, chapter 4. We want to go back to Daniel, chapter 4 because I want to show you what happened twelve months after the dream, twelve months after the interpretation. Remember Nebuchadnezzar was warned. Nebuchadnezzar was told to break away from his sins, and from his iniquities, to do righteousness, to show mercy to the poor in case that there might be a prolonging of his prosperity. All right now, verse 28. All this happened to Nebuchadnezzar the king. Twelve months later he was walking on the roof of the royal palace of Babylon. And the king reflected and said: Is this not Babylon? Is this not Babylon the great, which I myself have built as a royal residence by the might of my power and for the glory of my majesty? Do you see why I want you to mark every reference to Nebuchadnezzar and every pronoun that goes with him? Because what do you see? He has

achieved it all. He has achieved it all and he thinks he's achieved it. Nebuchadnezzar ruled from 605 B.C., that's when he had conquered Jerusalem and then found out his father Nabopolassar, had died, all right, to 562 B.C. All right, there was a tablet that was found that said in the 37th year of Nebuchadnezzar he conquered Egypt. It was on the 23rd of April. They're putting it on our month, 23rd of April in 568 B.C., in 568 B.C. Now when is all this happening? When is this dream being given? The dream was probably between 570 and 569 B.C. So it was a year later now that this terrible thing is going to happen to him. He is going to be brought low. He is going to become like an animal and he is going to crawl on the ground. He is going to eat the grass of the field and the green juice of that grass is going to come down over his chin. His nails are going to grow like eagle's nails, and hair is going to grow on him. Listen; do you know what the symbol of Babylon was? The symbol of Babylon was a lion with two wings on it. And every royal palace had two lions with wings on it, showing that they were the mighty conquerors and here you're going to see, as we look at it in our next program, you're going to see him groveling on the ground. Why? Because he was not aware of the danger of prosperity and fame and notoriety. He began to think that he had achieved all these things himself. I mean he had just, he had conquered Tyre. He had conquered Babylon. He had conquered Israel. We'll look at it. He had conquered now Egypt. He's home. He's home. He's walking out and he looks and he says is this not Babylon the great, my kingdom, which I have built? Oh beloved, I just feel like God is warning some of you. He's saying be careful. Do not forget that I am God and there is no other. Humble yourself because God resists the proud. He resists the proud, but He gives grace to the humble. To humble yourself is to bow low before Him and say I am man and You are God and I submit myself to You.