

How Are the Mighty Fallen!

Scripture: Daniel 4:1–37

Code: 27-12

INTRODUCTION

A. The Condemnation of Pride

1. Explained

Perhaps the most destructive attitude of all is pride. It has damned not only Satan and his angels, but also men and women throughout history. Pride is worthy of condemnation because it violates the first commandment: having no other gods before God Himself (Ex. 20:3). God alone is to be worshiped and served because His will is supreme. But pride asserts that man should take supremacy over God. God proclaimed through Isaiah, "My glory I will not give to another" (Isa. 48:11, NASB). God will not tolerate a usurper who attempts to rise above Him.

2. Expressed

The book of Proverbs gives us insight into how God feels about pride:

a) Proverbs 21:4--"An high look, and a proud heart ... are sin." b) Proverbs 6:17--The Lord hates "a proud look." c) Proverbs 16:5--"Every one who is proud in heart is an abomination to the Lord." d) Proverbs 8:13--"The fear of the Lord is to hate evil; pride, and arrogance ... do I hate." e) Proverbs 16:18--"Pride goeth before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall." f) Proverbs 29:23--"A man's pride shall bring him low." g) Proverbs 11:2--"When pride cometh, then cometh shame."

Pride is a serious sin that is condemned repeatedly throughout Scripture. It is an abomination because it desecrates the name of God. And it also brings about destruction because the end of pride is judgment.

3. Exemplified

A specific example of judgment against pride concerns a prophecy about Edom--a territory southeast of Jerusalem in the desert. The city of Petra, its capital, was well fortified. It was nestled between high cliffs, and the only entrance was just wide enough for a single individual to pass through. It could be guarded by just one soldier, making it virtually impenetrable.

Jeremiah 49:16-17 is a prophecy against Edom: "Thy terribleness hath deceived thee, and the pride of thine heart, O thou that dwellest in the clefts of the rock, that holdest the height of the hill; though thou shouldest make thy nest as high as the eagle, I will bring thee down from there, saith the Lord. Also Edom shall be a desolation; everyone that goeth by it shall be appalled, and shall hiss at all its plagues." Today Petra is empty. Its destruction came when its water supply, carried by troughs that flowed down the sides of the cliffs, was cut off by its adversaries. Eventually the people had to surrender. God brought that city down from its pride.

B. The Consequences of Pride

James 4:6 summarizes God's response to pride: He "resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble" (cf. Prov. 3:34). Daniel 4 is a graphic illustration of that truth. It shows the importance of properly recognizing the sovereignty and supremacy of God and the humble state of man. That theme is capsulized in verse 17: "This matter is ... to the intent that the living may know that the Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men." No man can set himself up above God. That same principle is repeated: "The Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men" (v. 25, 32). King Nebuchadnezzar finally got the message: "I blessed the Most High, and I praised and honored him who liveth forever, whose dominion is an everlasting dominion, and his Kingdom is from generation to generation"(v. 34).

In Daniel 4 we meet a proud man. Nebuchadnezzar was the monarch of the first of four empires that ruled his part of the world. As king of such a great empire, he became proud and set himself up as God. He had ninety-foot image of himself built out of gold and forced the people to bow down and worship it (Dan. 3:5). However when Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego refused to do so, they were thrown into a fiery furnace (vv. 12, 20). Such was the strength of Nebuchadnezzar's ego. But in Daniel 4 God brings him down and then gives him grace after Nebuchadnezzar humbles himself. There is more to Daniel 4 than a historical account of Nebuchadnezzar. He stands as a symbol of several things: First, he is a symbol of any leader who exalts himself. He is a warning to all the Shahs, Ayatollahs, Amins, Hitlers, and Mussolinis who pridefully seek to establish their empires in place of God. But he is also a warning to those of us who desire to rule the little empires we invent within ourselves, in which we crown ourselves as king. Nebuchadnezzar also serves as a symbol of how God deals with all the proud empires of the times of the Gentiles. He crushed the Babylonian, Medo-Persian, Greek, and Roman empires, and will ultimately destroy the revived Roman Empire before He establishes the kingdom of Christ.

C. The Conversion of Pride

1. Its process

Daniel 4 is the climax of Nebuchadnezzar's spiritual biography. The Lord began His work on him by bringing Daniel and his three friends into his life. When they defied him by not accepting the royal food and drink, he was immediately confronted by their unique integrity, understanding, and wisdom - characteristics superior to those of anyone in his kingdom (Dan. 1). After God established their credibility before the king, He enabled Daniel to solve an incredible dream that no one else in Nebuchadnezzar's kingdom knew about or could interpret (Dan. 2). Struck by Daniel's divinely given capability of knowing and interpreting visions and dreams, Nebuchadnezzar was led to an even deeper understanding of God. When Daniel's three friends refused to obey the decree to worship Nebuchadnezzar's image, they were thrown into a fiery furnace but miraculously protected by one "like a son of the gods" (Dan. 3:25). Again Nebuchadnezzar saw God at work.

2. Its pinnacle

In Daniel 4 we will see what I believe is Nebuchadnezzar's conversion to faith in the true God. Some commentators have appropriately entitled the chapter, "The Conversion of Nebuchadnezzar." It relates how God broke his pride by humbling him and then turned his heart toward Him in faith. God did so, in part, through another dream.

Daniel 4:1-3 say, "Nebuchadnezzar, the king, unto all people, nations, and languages that dwell in all the earth: Peace be multiplied unto you. I thought it good to show the signs and wonders that the High God hath wrought toward me. How great are his signs! And how mighty are his wonders! His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and his dominion is from generation to generation."

Nebuchadnezzar is the writer of chapter 4. I don't believe he was an inspired author of Scripture, but I do believe God made sure that what Nebuchadnezzar said was accurately recorded by Daniel. The Bible maintains its accuracy by faithfully recording events and conversations. For example, when the devil is quoted in the Bible, he is quoted accurately although what he said may have been false. Therefore, when Nebuchadnezzar gave this testimony, Daniel accurately recorded it under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit.

Nebuchadnezzar recorded his testimony in the first person. As such it is his personal testimony of how he came to believe in God, whom he recognized as above all the deities of his people.

LESSON

I. THE RECEPTION OF THE DREAM (vv. 4-8)

A. Its Impact on Nebuchadnezzar (vv. 4-5)

"I, Nebuchadnezzar, was at rest in mine house, and flourishing in my palace. I saw a dream which made me afraid, and the thoughts upon my bed and the visions of my head troubled me."

The Aramaic word translated "rest" means that Nebuchadnezzar was free from apprehension and fear. At that time his kingdom had no significant internal problems or serious external opposition. And he was prospering--the Aramaic word translated "flourishing" means that his life was literally "growing green."

The setting of Daniel 4 probably took place between the thirtieth and thirty-fifth years of his reign, approximately twenty-five to thirty years after the incident of the fiery furnace. Daniel was between forty-five to fifty years of age. That was when God gave Nebuchadnezzar a second dream. And the dream panicked him, forcing him out of his peaceful condition. In his fear he summoned help.

B. The Inability of the Wise Men (vv. 6-7)

"Therefore made I a decree to bring in all the wise men of Babylon before me, that they might make known unto me the interpretation of the dream. Then came in the magicians, the astrologers, the Chaldeans, and the soothsayers; and I told the dream to them, but they did not make known unto me its interpretation."

Nebuchadnezzar called upon the court wise men, who were unable to recount and interpret his previous dream (Dan. 2:10-11). Once again they couldn't interpret his dream. Their inability demonstrates the limit and folly of human wisdom to comprehend spiritual truth apart from God. First Corinthians 2:14 says, "The natural man receiveth [understands] not the things of the Spirit of God." Jesus said that God had hidden the truth "from the wise and prudent, and ... revealed them unto babes" (Matt. 11:25). The unbelieving world is "ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth" (2 Tim. 3:7).

C. The Influence of Daniel (v. 8)

"But at the last Daniel came in before me, whose name is Belteshazzar, according to the name of my god, and in whom is the spirit of the holy gods [Aram. elahin, "gods" or "God"]."

Nebuchadnezzar used Daniel's Babylonian name because his testimony was directed to the Babylonians. Daniel demonstrated a strategic sense of timing when he came to provide the interpretation of the dream after the failure of the wise men.

Throughout the years of his association with Daniel, Nebuchadnezzar came to recognize that the Spirit of God dwelt in him. It was clear that Daniel served a different God than the wise men, because the deities of the Babylonians were not holy. Pagan deities are no better than the men who worship them. But the Holy Spirit indwelt Daniel, and Nebuchadnezzar came to know that was true. By this time Nebuchadnezzar had a fuller understanding of the nature of God than he ever had before. But how did Nebuchadnezzar know that the God that resided with Daniel was the Holy God?

1. God's holiness explained

Twenty-five or thirty years had passed since Daniel revealed and interpreted the king's first dream. It seems logical to conclude that Daniel, who was the prime minister of Babylon, told Nebuchadnezzar all he could about God in those intervening years. Daniel cared about him.

2. God's holiness exemplified

Nebuchadnezzar also gained an understanding of what God was like by the exemplary life of Daniel. He didn't defile himself with the king's food or wine, nor did he indulge in the immoralities of a pagan society. Daniel lived a pure and a virtuous life. The logical conclusion is that he obeyed a holy and virtuous God, because a man's life will reflect the God he worships.

When Henry Stanley found David Livingstone in the heart of Africa, he stayed with him for four months. Stanley was a professed skeptic when he found Livingstone, but came away a Christian. Asked what Livingstone said that converted him, Stanley replied that it was what Livingstone was that brought him to Christ. According to Stanley's report Livingstone never asked him if he was a Christian, never preached to him, and never appeared to pray for his conversion. But Livingstone was so thoroughly a Christian that it dawned on Stanley that one who was not a Christian was something less than a Christian. Livingstone was a man of God who permitted the Lord to live through him. Consequently his life was one of victory and blessing. By the sheer influence and

impact of his virtue Livingstone brought Stanley to Christ (see Henry Stanley's How I Found Livingstone [N.Y.: C. Scribner, 1913]). That is probably what happened between Daniel and Nebuchadnezzar: Daniel not only spoke of the character of God, but manifested it as well.

II. THE RECITATION OF THE DREAM (vv. 9-18)

A. The Ability of Daniel (v. 9)

"O Belteshazzar, master of the magicians, because I know that the spirit of the holy [God] is in thee, and no secret troubleth thee, tell me the visions of my dream that I have seen, and the interpretation of it."

By giving Daniel the highest title he could think of "master of the magicians," Nebuchadnezzar acknowledged Daniel's superiority to the other wise men. The Aramaic word translated "magicians" is best understood to refer to scholars. Daniel was the chief scholar--the most erudite, knowledgeable, and gifted of the wise men. The name Daniel became a byword for knowledge and wisdom. Ezekiel said of the prince of Tyre, "Behold, thou art wiser than Daniel" (Ezek. 28:3). Since Nebuchadnezzar knew that Daniel had incredible knowledge and wisdom, and that he possessed the Spirit of God, he knew he could interpret his dream.

B. The Parts of the Dream (vv. 10-17)

1. The tree (vv. 10-12)

"Thus were the visions of mine head in my bed: I saw and, behold, a tree in the midst of the earth, and the height of it was great. The tree grew, and was strong, and its height reached unto heaven, and the sight of it to the end of all the earth. Its leaves were fair, and its fruit much, and in it was food for all; the beasts of the field had shadow under it, and the fowls of the heavens dwelt in its boughs, and all flesh was fed from it."

A huge tree rose out of the earth, providing food and shelter for all.

2. The decree (vv. 13-17)

a) The messenger (v. 13)"I saw in the visions of my head on my bed, and, behold, a watcher and an holy one came down from heaven." "A watcher and an holy one" identify the being as an angel. Those terms emphasize his vigilance and his holiness. b) The message (vv. 14-16)"He cried aloud, and said thus: Hew down the tree, and cut off its branches; shake off its leaves, and scatter its fruit; let the beasts get away from under it, and the fowls from its branches. Nevertheless, leave the stump of its roots in the earth, even with a band [fence] of iron and bronze in the tender grass of the field, and let him be wet with the dew of heaven, and let his portion be with the beasts in the grass of the earth. Let his heart be changed from man's, and let a beast's heart be given unto him; and let seven times pass over him." The pronouns "him" and "his" indicates that the tree represents a man. The term "heart" refers to the cognitive processes that determine one's actions. The man's mind would become like that of an animal, reminiscent of the unusual psychological delusion known as lycanthropy (Gk. lukos, "wolf"; anthropos, "man"). The biblical scholar R.K. Harrison recounted this personal experience: "A great many doctors spend an entire, busy professional career without once encountering an instance of the kind of monomania described in the book of Daniel. The present writer, therefore, considers himself particularly fortunate to have actually observed a clinical case of [lycanthropy] in a British mental institution in 1946. The patient was in his early 20's, who reportedly had been hospitalized for about five years. His symptoms were well developed on admission, and diagnosis was immediate and conclusive. He was of average height and weight with good physique, and was in excellent bodily health. His mental symptoms included pronounced anti-social tendencies, and because of this he spent the entire day from dawn to dusk outdoors, in the grounds of the institution...." His daily routine consisted of wandering around the magnificent lawns with which the otherwise dingy hospital situation was graced, and it was his custom to pluck up and eat handfuls of the grass as he went along. On observation he was seen to discriminate carefully between grass and weeds, and on inquiry from the attendant, the writer was told the diet of this patient consisted

exclusively of grass from hospital lawns. He never ate institutional food with other inmates, and his only drink was water...."The writer was able to examine him cursorily, and the only physical abnormality noted consisted of a lengthening of the hair and a coarse, thickened condition of the finger-nails. Without institutional care, the patient would have manifested precisely the same physical conditions as those mentioned in Daniel 4:33" (Introduction to the Old Testament [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1969], pp. 1116-17). The actions of the man reported in Nebuchadnezzar's dream is not an unknown psychological phenomenon. However in this case it was induced by God.c) The meaning (v. 17)"This matter is by the decree of the watchers, and the demand by the word of the holy ones, to the intent that the living may know that the Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will, and setteth up over it the basest of men."Evidently there were more than one angel. Their message was that God sovereignly rules over men and superintends their earthly reigns.

C. The Request of Nebuchadnezzar (v. 18)

"This dream I, King Nebuchadnezzar, have seen. Now thou, O Belteshazzar, declare the interpretation of it, forasmuch as all the wise men of my kingdom are not able to make known unto me the interpretation; but thou art able; for the Spirit of the holy [God] is in thee."

Daniel stood out in his society because he had a Spirit-controlled life.

III. THE REVELATION OF THE DREAM (vv. 19-27)

A. The Compassion of Daniel (v. 19)

1. His attitude (v. 19a)

"Then Daniel, whose name was Belteshazzar, was perplexed for one hour, and his thoughts troubled him."

The "one hour" was probably not a literal hour. The Aramaic phrase means "for a little while."

Daniel's thoughts troubled him not because he didn't know how to interpret the dream, but because of its grave implications toward Nebuchadnezzar.

2. His answer (v. 19b)

"The king spoke, and said, Belteshazzar, let not the dream, or its interpretation, trouble thee.

Belteshazzar answered and said, My lord, the dream be to them that hate thee, and the interpretation of it to thine enemies."

Daniel wished that what he had to say was true of Nebuchadnezzar's enemies and not of him. His restraint probably proved to Nebuchadnezzar that he loved him. If he had blurted out the condemnation, Nebuchadnezzar might have questioned Daniel's compassion. But his restraint proved how deeply he cared. And that is a great lesson. We know the message of salvation is also a message of judgment, but we should never preach it with a vindictive heart. We should never talk to people about the loss of their eternal souls without a sense of sadness and compassion. Daniel hurt inside because he had to tell the king something he didn't want to tell him.

B. The Confrontation by Daniel (vv. 20-26)

1. A parallel in history (vv. 20-22)

"The tree that thou sawest, which grew, and was strong, whose height reached unto the heaven, and the sight of it to all the earth, whose leaves were fair, and its fruit much, and in it was food for all; under which the beasts of the field dwelt, and upon whose branches the fowls of the heaven had their habitation: It is thou, O king."

When Nathan confronted David's sin he said, "Thou art the man" (2 Sam. 12:7). Daniel confronted Nebuchadnezzar in much the same way. Most preachers would back down in a crisis like this one, but Daniel didn't.

2. A lesson in humility (vv. 23-25)

"Whereas the king saw a watcher and an holy one coming down from heaven, and saying, Hew the tree down, and destroy it; yet leave the stump of its roots in the earth, even with a band [fence] of

iron and bronze, in the tender grass of the field; and let him be wet with the dew of heaven, and let his portion be with the beasts of the field, till seven times pass over him; this is the interpretation, O king, and this is the decree of the Most High, which is come upon my lord, the king: That they shall drive thee from men, and thy dwelling shall be with the beasts of the field, and they shall make thee to eat grass [lit. "herbage"] like oxen, and they shall wet thee with the dew of heaven, and seven times [years] shall pass over thee, till thou know that the Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will."

Nebuchadnezzar would be humiliated for seven years. He would become insane and act like an animal.

3. A ray of hope (v. 26)

"Whereas they commanded to leave the stump of the tree roots, thy kingdom shall be sure unto thee, after thou shalt have known that the heavens do rule."

That the tree stump remained indicated Nebuchadnezzar wouldn't die. After seven years he would reclaim his throne once again, but only after learning that every kingdom belongs to God, the ruler of everything. Any one man who rules a kingdom does so only because God has allowed him to.

C. The Counsel of Daniel (v. 27)

"Wherefore, O king, let my counsel be acceptable unto thee, and break off thy sins by righteousness, and thine iniquities by showing mercy to the poor, if there may be a lengthening of thy tranquillity."

The proof of the king's righteousness would be good deeds to those in need. Daniel was calling for Nebuchadnezzar to repent of his sin, enter into a righteous relationship with God, and begin to live a merciful life. Such a confrontation was particularly appropriate for Nebuchadnezzar since he had been a merciless, murderous king.

Yet in spite of the dream and its interpretation, Nebuchadnezzar refused to repent. He responded to Daniel's admonition like Felix, the Roman procurator of Judea, responded to the apostle Paul's:

"When I have a convenient season, I will call for thee" (Acts 24:25). Nebuchadnezzar postponed dealing with the issue. Yet if he had repented, God wouldn't have judged him. God said He would destroy Nineveh, but Nineveh repented and He didn't. God may warn of coming judgment, but when you repent, He turns from His judgment.

IV. THE REALIZATION OF THE DREAM (vv. 28-33)

A. The Patience of God (vv. 28-29a)

"All this came upon the king, Nebuchadnezzar. At the end of twelve months."

God is a patient, gracious God! He gave Nebuchadnezzar a year to respond to Daniel's appeal and straighten out his life.

B. The Pride of Nebuchadnezzar (vv. 29b-30)

"He walked in the palace of the kingdom of Babylon. The king spoke, and said, Is 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?"

His extreme pride manifested itself as he boasted about his Babylon, the largest and most powerful city of antiquity.

C. The Punishment by God (vv. 31-33)

"While the word was in the king's mouth, there fell a voice from heaven, saying, O King Nebuchadnezzar, to thee it is spoken. The kingdom is departed from thee. And they shall drive thee from men, and thy dwelling shall be with the beasts of the field; they shall make thee to eat grass like oxen, and seven times shall pass over thee, until thou know that the Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will. The same hour was the thing fulfilled upon

Nebuchadnezzar, and he was driven from men, and did eat grass like oxen, and his body was wet with the dew of heaven, till his hairs were grown like eagle's feathers, and his nails like bird's claws." What an incredible picture! The great king was outside where everyone could see him. He crawled

about like an animal, eating grass. He became a raving maniac for seven years. His unkempt hair resembled the feathers of an eagle and his nails the talons of a bird.

Under such conditions, there were probably many underlings who wanted to take over Nebuchadnezzar's rule. But God never let one ambitious noble lay a hand on his throne because He promised Nebuchadnezzar that he would have it returned. After Nebuchadnezzar's death there was much political intrigue surrounding the throne. But for seven years while he was a raving maniac, no one took over Nebuchadnezzar's throne. I believe God used Daniel to secure and control it until it could be given back to the king.

V. THE RESTORATION OF NEBUCHADNEZZAR (vv. 34-37)

A. An Expression of Repentance (vv. 34-35)

"At the end of the days I, Nebuchadnezzar, lifted up mine eyes unto heaven, and mine understanding returned unto me, and I blessed the Most High, and I praised and honored him who liveth forever, whose dominion is an everlasting dominion, and his kingdom is from generation to generation. And all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing; and he doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth, and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?"

Nebuchadnezzar finally understood God's message. What a transformation! God can save the high and the mighty if they humble themselves. God will humble everyone someday, so it is advisable to be humbled while having the opportunity to accept His grace.

B. An Explanation of Restoration (vv. 36-37)

1. His returned reason (v. 36)

"At the same time my reason returned unto me; and for the glory of my kingdom, mine honor and brightness returned unto me; and my counselors and my lords sought unto me; and I was established in my kingdom, and excellent majesty was added unto me."

After his reason had returned, he not only regained his former glory, but surpassed it as well. Even his counselors and lords sought him out and accepted him.

2. His right reaction (v. 37)

"Now I, Nebuchadnezzar, praise and extol and honor the King of heaven, all whose works are truth, and his ways justice; and those that walk in pride he is able to abase [humble]."

I believe you'll find Nebuchadnezzar in heaven. Clearly he learned that God resists the proud and gives grace to the humble.

Focusing on the Facts

1. Why is God alone to be worshiped and served? In spite of that, what does pride assert?
2. What does Proverbs teach about pride?
3. Explain how God responds to the proud and the humble (James 4:6).
4. Daniel 4 a warning against pride. To whom is it explicitly and implicitly directed?
5. How had God been progressively working in Nebuchadnezzar's life in the first three chapters of Daniel?
6. Since Nebuchadnezzar essentially wrote Daniel 4 yet wasn't divinely inspired, how could it be an accurate, trustworthy account?
7. What was the condition of Nebuchadnezzar's kingdom at the outset of his testimony (Dan. 4:4)?
8. Why did Nebuchadnezzar summon his wise men?
9. What did Daniel possess that the other wise men didn't?
10. How did Nebuchadnezzar know that the holy God resided with Daniel?
11. According to Daniel 4:9, what was Nebuchadnezzar clearly convinced of?
12. What is a legitimate clinical explanation for the divinely effected transformation that Nebuchadnezzar experienced?

13. According to Daniel 4:17, why did Nebuchadnezzar become insane?
14. Why was Daniel "perplexed" about the interpretation of the dream (Dan. 4:19)?
15. What was symbolic about the stump left in the ground?
16. What was Daniel's counsel to the king (Dan. 4:27)?
17. How did God demonstrate his patience with Nebuchadnezzar (Dan. 4:29)?
18. What was restored to Nebuchadnezzar after seven years?

Pondering the Principles

1. We have seen that God used Daniel over a period of forty years to lead Nebuchadnezzar to faith in Him. Often by the time someone finally comes to Christ, many people will have influenced that person with spiritual truth. What people played a part in your progress toward salvation? Consider calling or writing them to express your appreciation for their concern. Are you currently seeking to influence others for Christ? If not, choose someone in your sphere of influence who needs to be introduced to the Most High God.
2. By the sheer influence and impact of his virtuous life, David Livingstone brought Stanley to Christ. Since actions speak louder than words, take some time to evaluate your actions. Do they reflect the righteousness of Christ? Are they easily understood as coming from pure motives? Do they express your faith in a risen Lord as well as your hope in a returning Lord? If not, determine ways that your life could communicate those things to your family, neighbors, co-workers, and anyone who sees you on a regular basis.
3. Daniel's restraint in telling Nebuchadnezzar the bad news about his coming humiliation demonstrated his compassion. When you communicate the message of God's salvation and judgment, do you do so out of love or out of bitterness to one who is indifferent to the gospel you preach? Read 2 Timothy 2:24-26. What qualities should you demonstrate as you share the good news with those who oppose God?
4. God demonstrated His patience in giving Nebuchadnezzar twelve months to repent. But Nebuchadnezzar had little regard for the kindness and patience of God that should have led him to repentance (Rom. 2:4). Having experienced God's kindness and patience yourself, do you show those qualities towards others who have failed to respond to you in an appropriate way? If not, determine to be patient and kind to those in your life it is toughest to be that way toward. Think back on God's kindness and patience that led you to repentance, and thank Him for His example.

Available online at: <http://www.gty.org>

COPYRIGHT (C) 2026 Grace to You

You may reproduce this Grace to You content for non-commercial purposes in accordance with Grace to You's Copyright Policy (<https://www.gty.org/about#copyright>).