

**Devotional Thoughts :: More on Humility and Grace by Bob Hoekstra**

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Be clothed with humility, for "God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble"Â...And whoever exalts himself will be abased, and he who humbles himself will be exalted. (1 Peter 5:5 and Matthew 23:12)

The Lord wants humility to be the spiritual attire that adorns our character. "Be clothed with humility." This is crucial, since "God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble." We cannot live by grace unless we are willing to walk in humility. Any other approach is some form of pride, which always meets God's resistance. These are absolutes that every person must face. "Whoever exalts himself will be abased, and he who humbles himself will be exalted." The Scriptures describe numerous individuals who demonstrate these truths.

Nebuchadnezzar exalted himself. "Is not this great Babylon, that I have built for a royal dwelling by my mighty power and for the honor of my majesty?" (Daniel 4:30). God opposed this self-exaltation by driving the king out into the fields to eat grass like an animal. Eventually, this banished king looked to heaven, and the Lord restored him to the throne. Then, magnifying the true King, he proclaimed the great lesson he had learned. "Now I, Nebuchadnezzar, praise and extol and honor the King of heavenÂ...And those who walk in pride He is able to abase" (Daniel 4:37).

Manasseh, while king in Jerusalem, also exalted himself. He did so in a most wicked manner, polluting God's temple with idolatry. "He built altars for all the host of heaven in the two courts of the house of the LORDÂ...He even set a carved image, the idol which he had made, in the house of God" (2 Chronicles 33:5, 7). In doing so, he enticed the people of God into untold abominations. "So Manasseh seduced Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem to do more evil than the nations whom the LORD had destroyed before the children of Israel" (2 Chronicles 33:9). As a consequence of this prideful rebellion, the Lord caused Manasseh to be taken captive into Babylon. Then, Manasseh humbled himself before God. In spite of his arrogant disobedience, the Lord heard his prayer and restored him to the throne. "Now when he was in affliction, he implored the LORD his God, and humbled himself greatly before the God of his fathers, and prayed to Him; and He received his entreaty, heard his supplication, and brought him back to Jerusalem into his kingdom" (2 Chronicles 33:12-13).

Truly, everyone who lifts himself up in pride will be brought low in shame; but any person who walks in humility will be lifted up to liberation and blessing.

Dear King of heaven and earth, I am convicted of times when I have behaved proudly, just as these two kings did. It has always led to my spiritual defeat and bondage. I thank You for drawing my heart toward humility. I humbly turn to You to pour out Your grace upon me, as You did upon them. Through Christ I pray, Amen.