

The Great I Am – Part 2

Intro:

Psalm 36:1–2 “¹An oracle is within my heart concerning the sinfulness of the wicked:

There is no fear of God before his eyes.

²For in his own eyes he flatters himself too much to **DETECT** or **HATE** his sin.”

- Wicked
- No Fear
- Do not Hate
- Do not Detect

- Righteous
- Awe of God
- Hate
- Able to Detect

Previous two classes we looked at the Symptoms

1. Not hear it at all.
2. Overwhelmed, feel like a failure ...
3. See it, but not see it as serious.

What is the right attitude?

- See pride for all that it is and hate it!

Why don't we hate it?

- We don't understand its consequences.

So, this morning I want to talk about ...

The Consequences of Pride

So, the question is not whether we have Pride in our Lives or not.

- That is a Fact.

The question is do we see where it is heading?

- And does it put a Holy Fear into us?

How does God feel about Pride?

Proverbs 8:13 '...I **HATE** pride and arrogance..'

...

James 4:6 'God **OPPOSES** ^[or is hostile] the proud but gives grace to the humble.'

...

Proverbs 3:34 'He **MOCKS** ^[or treats with contempt] proud mockers but gives grace to the humble.'

...

Psalm 101:5 "...whoever has haughty eyes and a proud heart, **I WILL NOT TOLERATE.**"

...

Psalm 31:23 'The LORD preserves the faithful, but the proud he **PAYS BACK IN FULL.**'

...

Isaiah 2:12 "The Lord Almighty has a day in store for all the proud and lofty, for all that is exalted (and they will be humbled)."

...

Where does pride lead to? What are its consequences?

- Either you deal with it or it will deal with you.

So the question is not "if" you will be humbled ...

- But rather, "when" and "how" you will be humbled?

We are going to look 4 stories

- That will shed more light on the When and the How?

HEROD AGRIPPA 1

Acts 12:21-23

Judean King in 1st Century.

- Was a persecutor of the Church.
- Had James the brother of John put to death by the sword.

He had a very Self-Inflated view.

- We are going to read his story in Acts 12.
- It is a short story, the shortest of the 4.
- This is the option you don't want to go for.

Acts 12:21–23 ²¹On an appointed day Herod put on his royal robes, took his seat upon the throne, and delivered an oration to them. ²²And the people were shouting, "The voice of a god, and not of a man!" ²³Immediately an angel of the Lord struck him down, because HE DID NOT GIVE GOD THE GLORY, and he was eaten by worms and breathed his last.

There is no way to pretty up this story.

- He makes a great speech.
- And the people say, WOW, what a great speech.
- This is not the voice of a man, but of a god.

And because he did not give praise and glory to God.

- The angel struck him down and he was eaten by worms.
- And he died.
- That's it!

Here is our **1ST OPTION**, let's call it the Worm/ immediate death option.

When and How does this happen?

- This is when you are so arrogant in heart.
- That God says, "There is no Hope for you."

I created you for my glory ...

- But you are so consumed with the Great I AM!
- That you will never change.

So, there is no reason to delay the inevitable judgment that you WILL face.

- Therefore, let me just take you out, right here right now.

So, he takes your life. That's it.

- It is a done deal.

It happened back then and I believe it still happens today.

- Herod, was proud and he was humbled.

NEBUCHADNEZZAR

King of Babylon

Daniel 4:4-37

Daniel 4:4–7 ⁴ I, Nebuchadnezzar, was at home in my palace, contented and prosperous. ⁵ I had a dream that made me afraid. As I was lying in bed, the images and visions that passed through my mind terrified me. ⁶ So I commanded that all the wise men of Babylon be brought before me to interpret the dream for me. ⁷ When the magicians, enchanters, astrologers and diviners came, I told them the dream, but they could not interpret it for me.

⁸ Finally, Daniel came into my presence and I told him the dream. (He is called Belteshazzar, (Bel-te-sha-zer) after the name of my god, and the spirit of the holy gods is in him.) ⁹ I said, “Belteshazzar, chief of the magicians, I know that the spirit of the holy gods is in you, and no mystery is too difficult for you. Here is my dream; interpret it for me.

¹⁰ These are the visions I saw while lying in bed: I looked, and there before me stood a tree in the middle of the land. Its height was enormous. ¹¹ The tree grew large and strong and its top touched the sky; it was visible to the ends of the earth. ¹² Its leaves were beautiful, its fruit abundant, and on it was food for all. Under it the wild animals found shelter, and the birds lived in its branches; from it every creature was fed.

¹³ “In the visions I saw while lying in bed, I looked, and there before me was a holy one, a messenger, coming down from heaven. ¹⁴ He called in a loud voice: ‘Cut down the tree and trim off its branches; strip off its leaves and scatter its fruit. Let the animals flee from under it and the birds from its branches.

¹⁵ But let the stump and its roots, bound with iron and bronze, remain in the ground, in the grass of the field. “Let him be drenched with the dew of heaven, and let him live with the animals among the plants of the earth. ¹⁶ Let his mind be changed from that of a man and let him be given the mind of an animal, till seven times ^[or years] pass by for him.

¹⁷ “ ‘The decision is announced by messengers, the holy ones declare the verdict, so that the living may know that the Most High is sovereign over all kingdoms on earth and gives them to anyone he wishes and sets over them the lowliest of people.’

¹⁸ “This is the dream that I, King Nebuchadnezzar, had. Now, Belteshazzar, tell me what it means, for none of the wise men in my kingdom can interpret it for me. But you can, because the spirit of the holy gods is in you.”

¹⁹ Then Daniel (also called Belteshazzar) was greatly perplexed for a time, and his thoughts terrified him. So the king said, “Belteshazzar, do not let the dream or its meaning alarm you.” Belteshazzar answered, “My lord, if only the dream applied to your enemies and its meaning to your adversaries!

²⁰ The tree you saw, which grew large and strong, with its top touching the sky, visible to the whole earth, ²¹ with beautiful leaves and abundant fruit, providing food for all, giving shelter to the wild animals, and having nesting places in its branches for the birds—

²² Your Majesty, you are that tree! You have become great and strong; your greatness has grown until it reaches the sky, and your dominion extends to distant parts of the earth.

²³ “Your Majesty saw a holy one, a messenger, coming down from heaven and saying, ‘Cut down the tree and destroy it, but leave the stump, bound with iron and bronze, in the grass of the field, while its roots remain in the ground. Let him be

drenched with the dew of heaven; let him live with the wild animals, until seven times pass by for him.'

²⁴ "This is the interpretation, Your Majesty, and this is the decree the Most High has issued against my lord the king: ²⁵ You will be driven away from people and will live with the wild animals; you will eat grass like the ox and be drenched with the dew of heaven. Seven times will pass by for you until you acknowledge that the Most High is sovereign over all kingdoms on earth and gives them to anyone he wishes.

²⁶ The command to leave the stump of the tree with its roots means that your kingdom will be restored to you when you acknowledge that Heaven rules. ²⁷ Therefore, Your Majesty, be pleased to accept my advice: Renounce your sins by doing what is right, and your wickedness by being kind to the oppressed. It may be that then your prosperity will continue." ²⁸ All this happened to King Nebuchadnezzar.

Can you Imagine someone brining you a Message like that?

You take me out for a cup of Coffee

- Mfondesi, I had a dream.
- Can you maybe tell me what it means?

And I say ... This is what it means.

- You are the tree buddy and the messenger is God.
- He is going to cut you down and you are going to live amongst animals
- Until you realize that you only have what you have
- Because he gave it to you.
- And it is going to take 7 years
- Before you acknowledge that heaven rules.

How would you Respond to such a Message?

- So, what did Nebuchadnezzar do with regards to the message.
- Nothing! He simply ignored it!

Daniel 4:29–37 ²⁹ Twelve months later, as the king was walking on the roof of the royal palace of Babylon, ³⁰ he said, “Is not this the great Babylon I have built as the royal residence, by my mighty power and for the glory of my majesty?”

³¹ The words were still on his lips when a voice came from heaven, “This is what is decreed for you, King Nebuchadnezzar: Your royal authority has been taken from you.

³² You will be driven away from people and will live with the wild animals; you will eat grass like cattle. Seven years will pass by for you until you acknowledge that the Most High is sovereign over the kingdoms of men and gives them to anyone he wishes.”

³³ Immediately what had been said about Nebuchadnezzar was fulfilled. He was driven away from people and ate grass like cattle. His body was drenched with the dew of heaven until his hair grew like the feathers of an eagle and his nails like the claws of a bird.

³⁴ At the end of that time, I, Nebuchadnezzar, raised my Eyes toward heaven, and my SANITY was restored. Then I praised the Most High; I honored and glorified him who lives forever. His dominion is an eternal dominion; his kingdom endures from generation to generation.

³⁵ All the peoples of the earth are regarded as nothing. 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?”

³⁶ 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 and became even greater than before.

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. And those who walk in pride he is able to humble.

What a Story.

- He says no matter who you are or what you do.
- God is able to Humble.

He does as he pleases with the powers of heaven and the people of the earth and no one can hold back his hand or say to him, what have you done!

No matter who you are.

- God can and will humble you.

Nebuchadnezzar is our **2ND OPTION.**

- The second option is that God decides to get involved.

He sees your arrogance.

- Your self-reliance, self-righteousness.
- Your “No Room” sign pitched in front of your house.
- But, he knows there is hope at the end of the tunnel.
- If he gets involved.

He also knows that the only way to get your arrogance out of you.

- Is to squeeze it out of you.
- So, he puts you in a pressure cooker.

That pressure cooker might be...

- Problems at work.
- Problems in your marriage.
- Sense of frustration, don't get what you want.

The reason that he puts you in the pressure cooker.

- Is to help you see that you are not in control.
- You have to admit that it is heaven that rules ...
- And not you.

OPTION 2

- Wait for God to put you in a pressure cooker.

- Be arrogant, give it a shot.
- See how it works out for you.

SAUL

King of Israel

1 Samuel 9

In his early days, the bible describes Saul as...

1 Samuel 9:2 "... an impressive young man without equal among the Israelites—a head taller than any of the others."

He was a humble young man.

- When Samuel came to anoint him as King ... and tell him that he
- He responded by saying ...

1 Samuel 9:21 "But am I not a Benjamite, from the smallest tribe of Israel, and is not my clan the least of all the clans of the tribe of Benjamin? Why do you say such a thing to me?"

When the time came to present him to the people as their very first king ...

1 Samuel 10:21–22 "... when they looked for him, he was not to be found. ²² So they inquired further of the Lord, "Has the man come here yet?" And the Lord said, "Yes, he has hidden himself among the supplies."

He felt unworthy.

- How could God use a man like him.

Nevertheless, he was appointed as king.

- God filled him with his spirit.
- And touched the hearts of valiant men to follow him.
- And he became a force to be reckoned with.

15 years' pass.

1 Samuel 15:1–12 ¹ Samuel said to Saul, "I am the one the Lord sent to anoint you king over his people Israel; so listen now to the message from the Lord. ² This is what

the Lord Almighty says: 'I will punish the Amalekites for what they did to Israel when they ambushed them as they came up from Egypt. ³ Now go, attack the Amalekites and totally destroy all that belongs to them ...

⁷ Then Saul attacked the Amalekites all the way from Havilah (Ha-vil-la) to Shur (sh-ur), near the eastern border of Egypt. ⁸ He took Agag king of the Amalekites alive, and all his people he totally destroyed with the sword.

⁹ But Saul and the army spared Agag and the best of the sheep and cattle, the fat calves and lambs—everything that was good. These they were unwilling to destroy completely, but everything that was despised and weak they totally destroyed.

¹⁰ Then the word of the Lord came to Samuel: ¹¹ "I regret that I have made Saul king, because he has turned away from me and has not carried out my instructions."

Samuel was angry, and he cried out to the Lord all that night. ¹² Early in the morning Samuel got up and went to meet Saul, but he was told, "Saul has gone to Carmel. There he has set up a monument in his own honor and has turned and gone on down to Gilgal."

So, God says to Samuel, I am grieved that I made Saul king.

- He is not obedient.
- He will not do what I tell him.

I need you to give him a message from me.

- When Samuel looks for Saul he cannot find him for he went to Carmel
- To set up a monument in his own honour.

That doesn't sound good.

- When Samuel finally tracks him down
- Guess what the first words out of Saul's mouth is ... ?

1 Samuel 15:13–22 ¹³ When Samuel reached him, Saul said, "The Lord bless you! I have carried out the Lord's instructions."

¹⁴ But Samuel said, “What then is this bleating of sheep in my ears? What is this lowing of cattle that I hear?” [As in ... Carried out the Lord’s instructions? Why then am I hearing moo and mēêêê??]

¹⁵ Saul answered, [O that ???] “The soldiers brought them from the Amalekites; [As in ... “It wasn’t me.”] they spared the best of the sheep and cattle to sacrifice to the Lord your God, but we totally destroyed the rest.”

¹⁶ “Enough!” Samuel said to Saul. “Let me tell you what the Lord said to me last night.” “Tell me,” Saul replied. ¹⁷ Samuel said, “Although you were once small in your own eyes, did you not become the head of the tribes of Israel? The Lord anointed you king over Israel. ¹⁸ And he sent you on a mission, saying, ‘Go and completely destroy those wicked people, the Amalekites; wage war against them until you have wiped them out.’

¹⁹ Why did you not obey the Lord? Why did you pounce on the plunder and do evil in the eyes of the Lord?”

²⁰ “But I did obey the Lord,” Saul said. “I went on the mission the Lord assigned me. I completely destroyed the Amalekites and brought back Agag their king.

²¹ The soldiers took sheep and cattle from the plunder, the best of what was devoted to God, in order to sacrifice them to the Lord your God at Gilgal.”

²² But Samuel replied: “Does the Lord delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices as much as in obeying the Lord? To obey is better than sacrifice, and to heed is better than the fat of rams.

²³ For rebellion is like the sin of divination, and arrogance like the evil of idolatry. Because you have rejected the word of the LORD, he has rejected you as king.”

²⁴ Then Saul said to Samuel, “I have sinned. I violated the Lord’s command and your instructions. I was afraid of the men and so I gave in to them.

Now he suddenly comes out with the truth.

²⁵ Now I beg you, forgive my sin and come back with me, so that I may worship the Lord.” ²⁶ But Samuel said to him, “I will not go back with you. You have rejected the word of the Lord, and the Lord has rejected you as king over Israel!”

²⁷ As Samuel turned to leave, Saul caught hold of the hem of his robe, and it tore. ²⁸ Samuel said to him, “The Lord has torn the kingdom of Israel from you today and has given it to one of your neighbors—to one better than you.

²⁹ He who is the Glory of Israel does not lie or change his mind; for he is not a human being, that he should change his mind.” ³⁰ Saul replied, “I have sinned. But please honor me before the elders of my people and before Israel; come back with me, so that I may worship the Lord your God

What is he smoking?

- I have sinned, therefore Honour me ...
- Before the elders and the people of Israel.

Most of us know the rest of the story.

- God is not with Saul anymore and decides to appoint a new king ...
- A man after his own heart.
- A man who would do whatever God commands him to do.

But for the time being Saul continues his reign.

- And actually, tries to hunt down and kill David (the new king) ...
- For the next 18 years.

For 18 years, Saul had the opportunity to humble himself.

- For 18 years he could have said, listen it is obvious that God has left me.
- It is obvious that my days as king are done.
- It is obvious that I am arrogant.

God I am so sorry for what I have done.

- Let me take of my crown.
- Kneel before and put your Crown before your new king, David

Personally, I believe that if he had done that, God would have forgiven him.

- Not kept him as king, but forgiven him.
- But Saul wouldn't humble himself.

As time roles by Samuel dies and Saul goes from disaster to disaster ...

- And doesn't know the way forward.

So, what does he do?

- He goes to see a Witch and in order to call up Samuel's spirit.
- To get advice from him.

1 Samuel 28:15-19 ¹⁵ Samuel said to Saul, "Why have you disturbed me by bringing me up?" "I am in great distress," Saul said. "The Philistines are fighting against me, and God has departed from me. He no longer answers me, either by prophets or by dreams. So I have called on you to tell me what to do."

¹⁶ Samuel said, "Why do you consult me, now that the Lord has departed from you and become your enemy? ¹⁷ The Lord has done what he predicted through me. The Lord has torn the kingdom out of your hands and given it to one of your neighbors—to David. ¹⁸ Because you did not obey the Lord or carry out his fierce wrath against the Amalekites, the Lord has done this to you today.

¹⁹ The Lord will deliver both Israel and you into the hands of the Philistines, and tomorrow you and your sons will be with me. The Lord will also give the army of Israel into the hands of the Philistines."

What does he do? Humble himself? NO, he doesn't.

- The next day he is overcome by the enemy.
- And because he was too embarrassed to be killed by the enemy.
- He took his own life.

OPTION 3

- Option 3 is a scary option.
- Option 3 is God decides NOT to get involved
- And he simply hands you over to yourself.

He says, I am NOT going to kill him or her.

- I am NOT going to put them into the pressure cooker.
- I am going to allow them to go their own way.
- I am going to allow them to NOT Surrender.
- And let's see where that leads them.

And he actually steps aside and hands you over to yourself.

Our final story...

JOSIAH

King of Judah

2 Kings 22:1–20

¹ Josiah was eight years old when he became king, and he reigned in Jerusalem thirty-one years ... ² He did what was right in the eyes of the Lord and followed completely the ways of his father David, not turning aside to the right or to the left.

³ In the eighteenth year of his reign, King Josiah sent the secretary, Shaphan (Sh-ń-vaan) son of Azaliah (A-ze-lia), the son of Meshullam (Me-shel-lum), to the temple of the Lord. He said: ⁴ “Go up to Hilkiah the high priest and have him get ready the money that has been brought into the temple of the Lord, which the doorkeepers have collected from the people.

18 years into his reign he feels prompted “restore” the temple of the Lord.

- And instructs Shaphan to run the project.

⁵ Have them entrust it to the men appointed to supervise the work on the temple. And have these men pay the workers who repair the temple of the Lord—⁶ the carpenters, the builders and the masons. Also have them purchase timber and dressed stone to repair the temple. ⁷ But they need not account for the money entrusted to them, because they are honest in their dealings.”

Let’s spare no expense or effort, let’s do this well.

⁸ Hilkiah the high priest said to Shaphan the secretary, “I have found the Book of the Law in the temple of the Lord.” He gave it to Shaphan, who read it. ⁹ Then Shaphan the secretary went to the king and reported to him: “Your officials have paid out the money that was in the temple of the Lord and have entrusted it to the workers and supervisors at the temple.”

¹⁰ Then Shaphan the secretary informed the king, “Hilkiah the priest has given me a book.” And Shaphan read from it in the presence of the king. ¹¹ When the king heard the words of the Book of the Law, he tore his robes.

¹² He gave these orders to Hilkiah the priest, Ahikam (ń –hi-cam) son of Shaphan, Akbor (Ack-bor) son of Micaiah (Mi-ke-ai-ja), Shaphan the secretary and Asaiah (A-ze-ai-ja) the king’s attendant:

¹³ “Go and inquire of the Lord for me and for the people and for all Judah about what is written in this book that has been found.

Scholars believe this to be the book of Deuteronomy.

- Somehow they lost a whole book of the Torah.
- And they were not living according to God’s will.

Great is the Lord’s anger that burns against us because our fathers have not obeyed the words of this book; they have not acted in accordance with all that is written there concerning us.”

What do you Notice? Humility.

- We have not lived the ways of God.

- He tore his Robes.
- Please inquire from God as to what he wants us to do.

They go to a prophet who then says ...

¹⁶“This is what the Lord says: I am going to bring disaster on this place and its people, according to everything written in the book the king of Judah has read. ¹⁷Because they have forsaken me and burned incense to other gods and provoked me to anger by all the idols their hands have made, my anger will burn against this place and will not be quenched.’

¹⁸Tell the king of Judah, who sent you to inquire of the Lord, ‘This is what the Lord, the God of Israel, says concerning the words you heard: ¹⁹**BECAUSE YOUR HEART WAS RESPONSIVE** and **YOU HUMBLLED YOURSELF** before the Lord when you heard what I have spoken against this place and its people, that they would become accursed and laid waste, **and because YOU TORE YOUR ROBES AND WEPT in my presence, I HAVE HEARD YOU**, declares the Lord.

²⁰Therefore I will gather you to your fathers, and you will be buried in peace. Your eyes will not see all the disaster I am going to bring on this place.’ ”

HECTIC!!!!

God says, here is what I am going to do.

- I am going to bring disaster on this place ...
- According to everything written in the book.
- And my anger will not be quenched.

BUT, because you humbled yourself, tore your robes and wept before me.

- I am not going to do it in your life time?
- I am going to wait till you die in peace.
- And only then will I carry out the judgment.

What is **OPTION 4**

- Option 4 is fairly simple, you make a decision to humble yourself.

God, I have been in Sin.

- I have been self-righteous OR I have lived in self-pity ...
- I have not been a relentless learner constantly taking out the notepad
- OR I have not had an affection for correction ...

Or I have not Surrendered, I have not given up.

- I have made excuses, I have fought you.
- I have followed my own ways.
- I have had an OVER INFLATED view of myself and my role.
- And I am so sorry, please forgive me and ...

Please help me to have a change of heart as I humble myself before you.

- As I dig into your word seeking your guidance.
- As I surround myself with other Christians seeking council.
- And as I commit myself to prayer, seeking your voice.
- What do you want me to do?

1 Peter 5:5–6 “God opposes the proud but shows favor to the humble.” ⁶ Humble yourselves, therefore, under God’s mighty hand, that he may lift you up in due time.

Humble yourselves, therefore, under God’s mighty hand ...

- That he may lift you up in due time.

We don’t have to lift ourselves.

- He will come along side us when the time is right.
- And he will lift us.

God is Humble.

- If you take his Job.
- He will take yours.

How serious is Pride?

- Is it something that I should take seriously.

What are our Options.

1. Be as arrogant as you can ...
- And see if God will take you out.

2. Ignore God's warning ...

- And wait for him to squeeze the arrogance right out of you.

3. Wait for him to hand you over to yourself and see where it leads.

4. Humble yourself, I am so sorry, please lead me.

- Please bring people into my life.
- Please guide me.

My prayer for us, is that we will Detect and Hate

- So that God can lift us.