

Nebuchadnezzar's Dream

Daniel 2:1-49

MEMORY VERSE

DANIEL 2:47

“Truly your God is the God of gods, the Lord of kings, and a revealer of secrets.”

WHAT YOU WILL NEED:

Two plastic spoons and two hard-boiled eggs.

A cardboard tube for each child, two 4” squares of clear plastic wrap for each child, tape, metallic confetti, yellow paper and markers.

A copy of the “Drawing the King’s Dream” template for each child.

ATTENTION GETTER!

Keep Your Focus

You will need two plastic spoons and two hard boiled eggs. Have children form two lines facing each other and about 2’ apart. Choose a child from each line to hold a plastic spoon with a hard boiled egg balanced on it. Have the “egg walkers” start from opposite ends of the lines and try to walk between the groups as children try to distract them. Make sure to explain that they cannot get out of line or touch the “egg walkers.” When everyone has had a chance to go down the line, talk about the things that may distract our focus from Jesus and how we can direct our focus back to Jesus.

Daniel was in a difficult time in our story today. An edict went out that all of the king’s advisors were to be killed. But Daniel kept his focus on God and God delivered him. God used Daniel in a great way because his focus was in the right place.

LESSON TIME!

Have you ever had a dream that you did not fully remember, yet you could not forget that you had the dream? That is what happened to Nebuchadnezzar, the King of Babylon. He had a dream one night that really troubled him, and he asked his magicians, astrologers and sorcerers to tell him what his dream meant. He put them in an interesting situation, as we shall see in this story. **God knows and controls the future.**

DANIEL 2:1-13

Now in the second year of Nebuchadnezzar's reign, Nebuchadnezzar had dreams; and his spirit was so troubled that his sleep left him.

Then the king gave the command to call the magicians, the astrologers, the sorcerers, and the Chaldeans to tell the king his dreams. So they came and stood before the king.

And the king said to them, "I have had a dream, and my spirit is anxious to know the dream."

Then the Chaldeans spoke to the king in Aramaic, "O king, live forever! Tell your servants the dream, and we will give the interpretation."

The king answered and said to the Chaldeans, "My decision is firm: if you do not make known the dream to me, and its interpretation, you shall be cut in pieces, and your houses shall be made an ash heap.

"However, if you tell the dream and its interpretation, you shall receive from me gifts,

rewards, and great honor. Therefore tell me the dream and its interpretation."

They answered again and said, "Let the king tell his servants the dream, and we will give its interpretation."

The king answered and said, "I know for certain that you would gain time, because you see that my decision is firm:

"if you do not make known the dream to me, there is only one decree for you! For you have agreed to speak lying and corrupt words before me till the time has changed. Therefore tell me the dream, and I shall know that you can give me its interpretation."

The Chaldeans answered the king, and said, "There is not a man on earth who can tell the king's matter; therefore no king, lord, or ruler has ever asked such things of any magician, astrologer, or Chaldean.

"It is a difficult thing that the king requests, and there is no other who can tell it to the king except the gods, whose dwelling is not with flesh."

For this reason the king was angry and very furious, and gave a command to destroy all the wise men of Babylon.

So the decree went out, and they began killing the wise men; and they sought Daniel and his companions, to kill them.

Daniel and his three friends, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, had finished their training and entered into the service of King

Nebuchadnezzar. The King dreamed a dream that disturbed him so much that he called all the wise men of Babylon to not only tell him what the dream meant, but also what it was that he dreamed.

The men that Nebuchadnezzar sent for were considered to be his “wise men,” and they were magicians, astrologers and sorcerers. Though they had some power and some knowledge, the depths of Nebuchadnezzar's dream were far from them. They were of this world and their power was not from God, but from the enemy, the devil.

King Nebuchadnezzar’s dream came not from this world, but from heaven where God Almighty dwells. He had asked a very difficult thing of them, not only to give him the interpretation of the dream, but also to tell him what it was he dreamt. Of course, they could not tell him the dream or give the interpretation of it; and when they were not able to do this, the king's anger became so great that he commanded that they should all be destroyed. Thus, an order went out that the wise men should be killed, including Daniel and his friends. **God knows and controls the future.**

Now, for most men, that would be impossible, but for a man who believes in the power of God, “The things which are impossible with men are possible with God” (Luke 18:27).

DANIEL 2:14-18

Then with counsel and wisdom Daniel answered Arioch, the captain of the king's guard, who had gone out to kill the wise men of Babylon;

he answered and said to Arioch the king's captain, "Why is the decree from the king so urgent?" Then Arioch made the decision known to Daniel.

So Daniel went in and asked the king to give him time, that he might tell the king the interpretation.

Then Daniel went to his house, and made the decision known to Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, his companions, that they might seek mercies from the God of heaven concerning this secret, so that Daniel and his companions might not perish with the rest of the wise men of Babylon.

Verse 14 gives us a glimpse of Daniel's character. It says, "Then Daniel answered with counsel and wisdom..." It is an honor for a man to be able to answer with counsel and wisdom, for it comes only from a true knowledge of God. The man Daniel spoke to, Arioch, who was the captain of the king's guard, which had gone out to kill all the wise men.

As Daniel faced his possible executioner, his mind was not shaken, perplexed or angry. He knew his God, and completely trusted in Him, and was thus able to answer Arioch. He asked why the king was so hasty in his actions. The other wise men were busy defending themselves, saying that what the king asked was impossible, but Daniel only asked for more time so that he may satisfy the king's requests.

Notice that Daniel does not ask that he might live longer, but only that he might be able to interpret the dream for the king. Notice also what Daniel does after his request is granted. He went into his own house and asked his friends, Shadrach, Meshach and Abendego to pray and ask God for His mercy to reveal this secret, so that they might not perish with the rest of the wise men of Babylon.

What lessons do we see in this passage that we might apply to our lives? First, Daniel was a man of counsel and wisdom, as his responses show us. We can ask ourselves, "How do I respond when I am in a difficult situation?" Do we respond by trying to defend ourselves, or justify our situation, or shift the blame somewhere

else? Let us learn from Daniel to answer a matter with wisdom. Proverbs 15:1 tells us, "A soft answer turns away much wrath, but grievous words stir up anger."

We can also see whom Daniel turns to in a very difficult situation. He runs to the Lord in prayer, asking for mercy. Our God is merciful, and hears our cries. How did Daniel know that he could trust the One who made him? By intimacy with his Heavenly Father, Daniel was a man of prayer, and it is good for us to look at our prayer life and ask ourselves where we run when we are in trouble. How do we see our Lord? Is He a God of mercy to you? He should be. **God knows and controls the future.**

DANIEL 2:19-23

Then the secret was revealed to Daniel in a night vision. So Daniel blessed the God of heaven.

Daniel answered and said: "Blessed be the name of God forever and ever, For wisdom and might are His.

And He changes the times and the seasons; He removes kings and raises up kings; He gives wisdom to the wise And knowledge to those who have understanding.

He reveals deep and secret things; He knows what is in the darkness, And light dwells with Him.

"I thank You and praise You, O God of my fathers; You have given me wisdom and might, And have now made known to me what we asked of You, For You have made known to us the king's demand."

Now we see the faithfulness of our Lord. As Daniel and his friends earnestly pray to God, God answers their prayers and reveals the secret to Daniel. God revealed the secret to Daniel in a night-

vision. How we see the truth of James 5:16b, "the effectual fervent prayer of a righteous avails much." Daniel and his friends sent their petitions to God above, and He answered them here below.

How does Daniel now respond as he is given this great revelation of Nebuchadnezzar's dream, which no one else could interrupt? Not even the greatest of the king's wise men could know the dream. Now, think first, what would you do? Would you run to the king and let him know that you were the only one who could know the dream? Or would you run to all the other wise men and tell them of your success? Would you run through the streets of the city proclaiming your ability? Or would you do what Daniel did? Daniel immediately gave thanks to the everlasting God. Daniel declares "the name of God" will be praised forever and ever. He continually bears witness that it is God who possesses wisdom and strength.

Next we see the evidence of the wisdom and power of God - He changes times and seasons. He sets up and casts down kings. He gives wisdom to the wise and knowledge to those that possess insight. He reveals the deep and hidden things; He knows what is in darkness; and light dwells with Him. As we see these wonderful things about our King, we along with Daniel can only realize that praise and thanksgiving belong to God, and to God alone. Through the revelation of the secret, hidden to the wise men of this world, He has proved Himself to Daniel as the true God in opposition to the gods of the heathen. **God knows and controls the future.**

DANIEL 2:24-30

Therefore Daniel went to Arioch, whom the king had appointed to destroy the wise men of Babylon. He went and said thus to him: "Do not destroy the wise men of Babylon; take me before the king, and I will tell the king the interpretation."

Then Arioch quickly brought Daniel before the king, and said thus to him, "I have found a man of the captives of Judah, who will make known to the king the interpretation."

The king answered and said to Daniel, whose name was Belteshazzar, "Are you able to make known to me the dream which I have seen, and its interpretation?"

Daniel answered in the presence of the king, and said, "The secret which the king has demanded, the wise men, the astrologers, the magicians, and the soothsayers cannot declare to the king.

"But there is a God in heaven who reveals secrets, and He has made known to King Nebuchadnezzar what will be in the latter days. Your dream, and the visions of your head upon your bed, were these:

"As for you, O king, thoughts came to your mind while on your bed, about what would come to pass after this; and He who reveals secrets has made known to you what will be.

"But as for me, this secret has not been revealed to me because I have more wisdom than anyone living, but for our sakes who make known the interpretation to the king, and that you may know the thoughts of your heart.

Daniel now announced to the king that he was prepared to make known to him the dream and its interpretation, because God had revealed to Daniel the king's dream. When the king asks Daniel if he is able to make known the dream and the interpretation of it to him, Daniel directs the king correctly. Daniel takes him from man's understanding and knowledge to a far greater understanding

and knowledge, for only God in heaven reveals secrets. **God knows and controls the future.**

Here we again see Daniel's wisdom exercised. He boldly declares the existence of God and testifies of a God in heaven as the One who is able to reveal hidden things. As he does so, he is denying the ability of all the pagan gods, magicians, astrologers and sorcerers.

Daniel tells him that the thoughts of the king are not his dream, but thoughts about the future of his kingdom that filled his mind as he lay on his bed, and to which God gave him an answer in the dream. Thus, they are different from the thoughts of his heart, for these are the thoughts that troubled the king, which came from the revelations of the dream to him. Daniel never takes credit for himself, and his humility is evident in verse 30, "But as for me, this secret is not revealed to me for any wisdom that I have more than any living, but for their sakes that shall make known the interpretation to the king..." Let us again learn from Daniel the value of humility.

DANIEL 2:31-35

"You, O king, were watching; and behold, a great image! This great image, whose splendor was excellent, stood before you; and its form was awesome.

"This image's head was of fine gold, its chest and arms of silver, its belly and thighs of bronze,

"its legs of iron, its feet partly of iron and partly of clay.

"You watched while a stone was cut out without hands, which struck the image on its feet of iron and clay, and broke them in pieces.

"Then the iron, the clay, the bronze, the silver, and the gold were crushed together, and became like chaff from the summer threshing floors; the wind carried them away so that no trace of them was found. And the stone that struck the image became a great mountain and filled the whole earth.

Now Daniel tells King Nebuchadnezzar what it was that he dreamed. He tells the king how he was gazing upon a "statue," and was fascinated by what he saw. He was not able to take his eyes off of what he saw. One of the things that fascinated the king was the size of the image, and its extraordinary splendor.

Next, Daniel describes the statue to Nebuchadnezzar. The head was of fine gold. The "breast" or chest, plus the arms were of silver. The abdomen and the thighs, the upper half of the legs were bronze, or brass. The legs from the thighs to the feet were iron, and the feet were a mixture of two materials - iron and clay.

Quite an image to look at - it would definitely get someone's attention. It is interesting that the material of this image becomes inferior from the head downward - gold, silver, brass, iron, clay; so that, the whole image of metal becomes inferior, and finally ends in clay, losing itself in common earthly matter. The material becomes harder, until it is iron, yet it then suddenly becomes weak and brittle clay at the end.

Then, here stands this huge, immovable figure, and a stone is "cut loose" or merely "detached" from a mountainside, and it crushes the feet of iron and clay, or the most vulnerable part of the whole image. It broke the whole image into pieces, and ground to powder all its material from the head even to the feet, so that it was scattered like chaff of the summer thrashing floor. The stone that brought this destruction itself became a great mountain that filled the whole earth. **God knows and controls the future.**

Drawing the King's Dream

You will need a copy of the enclosed template for each child. Simply follow the instructions on the template. Use the craft to discuss the meaning of the dream with your children and to reinforce today's theme.

DANIEL 2:36-45

"This is the dream. Now we will tell the interpretation of it before the king.

"You, O king, are a king of kings. For the God of heaven has given you a kingdom, power, strength, and glory;

"and wherever the children of men dwell, or the beasts of the field and the birds of the heaven, He has given them into your hand, and has made you ruler over them all; you are this head of gold.

"But after you shall arise another kingdom inferior to yours; then another, a third kingdom of bronze, which shall rule over all the earth.

"And the fourth kingdom shall be as strong as iron, inasmuch as iron breaks in pieces and shatters everything; and like iron that crushes, that kingdom will break in pieces and crush all the others.

"Whereas you saw the feet and toes, partly of potter's clay and partly of iron, the kingdom shall be divided; yet the strength of the iron shall be in it, just as you saw the iron mixed with ceramic clay.

"And as the toes of the feet were partly of iron and partly of clay, so the kingdom shall be partly strong and partly fragile.

"As you saw iron mixed with ceramic clay, they will mingle with the seed of men; but they will not adhere to one another, just as iron does not mix with clay.

"And in the days of these kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed; and the kingdom shall not be left to other people; it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever.

"Inasmuch as you saw that the stone was cut out of the mountain without hands, and that it broke in pieces the iron, the bronze, the clay, the silver, and the gold; the great God has made known to the king what will come to pass after this. The dream is certain, and its interpretation is sure."

Now that Daniel has told the king his dream, he next gives the king the interpretation of the dream. The dream is a prophetic dream, telling Nebuchadnezzar what will occur in the future. The four metals making up the image are explained as symbolizing four empires: Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece (under Alexander), and Rome.

In verse 37, Daniel tells the king that his coming to the throne and all his success is due to the only true God, the "God of the heavens." Nebuchadnezzar had dominion over men, beasts, and birds. Daniel called Nebuchadnezzar the "head of gold" referring to the world-kingdom founded by him and represented in his person, having all things placed under him by God.

In verse 39 the second and third parts of the image are interpreted as the second and third world-kingdoms. The second, the silver part of the image, being the breast and arms, would arise after the fall of the Babylonian kingdom. We see a little bit now the

deterioration of the metals, from gold to silver. From Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon to Cyrus, king of the Medo-Persians who conquered the Babylonians. Cyrus' kingdom may have been somewhat inferior to the Babylonian because the Medo-Persian Empire was not one and united as the Babylonian kingdom was.

Next we go to the third world-kingdom, the abdomen and thighs of bronze. This refers to the Greek kingdom of Alexander plus the four kingdoms that resulted after the death of Alexander. As the abdomen and the thighs are of bronze, what we can see is that what begins as a unit divides itself into two separate parts, which do not reunite. After Alexander's death the four parts of his realm amounted to practically two: Syria and Egypt. These are the two thighs of the statue. They are still separate when the last empire appears on the scene.

Next is the interpretation of the fourth part of the image, the legs and feet, which represent a fourth world-kingdom, Rome. That kingdom, with the legs of iron, will be hard and firm like iron. Because iron breaks all things in pieces, so shall this kingdom, which is like iron, and it will break in pieces and destroy all these prior kingdoms.

The iron does speak of strength, for we have the phrase, "strong as iron." It does not mean that this kingdom is strong in unity, but that it is very destructive in its strength. It will crush and demolish as iron crushes and smashes all things. A study of history shows that the Romans were noted for their ability to crush all resistance to their power with an iron heel.

Interestingly enough, it is only the legs of the image that are made of iron, for the feet and toes that grow out of the legs are partly of clay and partly of iron. This shows that the kingdom will divide into ten smaller, weaker kingdoms, for clay indicates weakness. Truly prophetic in nature, the ten toes are the future ten nations, ruled by ten kings, which shall come together under the rule of one

man. The indication that the iron would be mixed with the miry clay in verse 41, speaks of a possible resurgence of the Roman government.

In verse 44 we see the time when, in the future, the millennial kingdom will be set up. It will be "in the days of these kings," or the time of the ten kings represented by the ten toes of the statue. These kings did not live during the time when Jesus was on the earth. They couldn't until the powerful Roman government was destroyed, and the world system we have today could be established.

The way the millennial kingdom will be set up is what we saw in verses 34 and 35 and the same repeated in verses 44 and 45, where we see the Smiting Stone that will crush the image that represents the world powers that are hostile to God. What a wonderful hope verse 44 gives to us to know that one-day, Jesus will set up His kingdom and reign supreme over all. It is the Smiting Stone that destroys the Gentile world system in its final form. It does not do it by a slow process but by a sudden, destructive blow. Then this Stone becomes a mountain (symbolic biblically of a kingdom) which fills "the whole earth."

This rock is none other than our Lord Jesus Christ. He did not destroy the world system when He was on the earth before. In fact, the Roman Empire put him to death. After Christ's death, the western part of the Roman Empire fell in 476 A.D. and the eastern part in 1453, and no other empire has been as great or mighty as the Roman Empire. That is because it was only four empires, as the image shows us that would precede Jesus' second coming and His rule.

The world powers still continue today, but when the church is raptured, the ten kings emerge, the world power will end in sudden catastrophic judgment followed by the kingdom of heaven. The dream that God gave to Nebuchadnezzar was a vision of the course

of the history of the world. God assured the king of the truth of the dream and wants him to know that it was of great importance. He should give honor to God who gave him the revelations of the future, and encourages us of what is to yet come to this world. **God knows and controls the future.**

DANIEL 2:46-49

Then King Nebuchadnezzar fell on his face, prostrate before Daniel, and commanded that they should present an offering and incense to him.

The king answered Daniel, and said, "Truly your God is the God of gods, the Lord of kings, and a revealer of secrets, since you could reveal this secret."

Then the king promoted Daniel and gave him many great gifts; and he made him ruler over the whole province of Babylon, and chief administrator over all the wise men of Babylon.

Also Daniel petitioned the king, and he set Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego over the affairs of the province of Babylon; but Daniel sat in the gate of the king.

What Daniel had told King Nebuchadnezzar made an incredible impression upon the king, so much so that Nebuchadnezzar fell down to worship Daniel and ordered a sacrifice to be offered to him. In verse 47 Nebuchadnezzar speaks the truth of truth. He says to Daniel, "...your God is the God of gods, and the Lord of kings, and a revealer of secrets, seeing you could reveal this secret."

God had manifested Himself to the king through Daniel as the supreme God, who rules over kings, and reveals hidden things which none of the Babylonian gods could do. After Nebuchadnezzar had given honor to Daniel's God, he rewarded

Daniel, the servant of this God, with gifts, and by promoting him to a high office.

For Daniel to sit in the gate of the king, as verse 49 tells us is to be in the place of authority. Daniel did not forget the three friends that had become prayer warriors with him through this endeavor. We can learn another lesson from Daniel to remember those that are co-laborers with us in the work of Christ.

God is so gracious to show us what has happened and what will happen in history. He shows us these things because He loves us. We can look forward to the time when the Smiting Stone will come and destroy man's government, for then God will set up His glorious kingdom where He will rule, and we will forever be with Jesus! **God knows and controls the future.**

Krazy Kaleidoscope

For this craft you will need a cardboard tube for each child, two 4-inch squares of clear plastic wrap for each child, tape, metallic confetti, yellow paper and markers.

Give each child a cardboard tube. Have children work in pairs and each tear two 4-inch squares of clear plastic wrap. Tape one piece of plastic over one end of each tube, stretching it tightly and taping the wrap to the tube.

Next, sprinkle about a tablespoon of metallic confetti on top of the plastic and place a yellow paper cross in the confetti. Loosely tape the second piece of plastic wrap over the confetti and tape it to the tube.

Use markers to decorate the tubes.

When finished, invite the children to point them at a light and peek through them.

Sometimes people will look to all kinds of things for the truth. King Nebuchadnezzar looked to his astrologers and magicians. They couldn't help him. Only God knows the future and can help. These kaleidoscopes will help us to remember that we always need to look to Jesus for our answers in life.

PRAYER

Lead the children in a prayer of commitment to trust in the Lord no matter what and to thank the Lord that He has our future in His hands and has a glorious plan for us. If there are any children who have not yet responded to the gospel, give them opportunity to do so.

DRAWING THE KING’S DREAM

King Nebuchadnezzar saw a statue in his dream. In the space to your right draw a picture of the statue that Nebuchadnezzar saw. The statue was divided into 5 parts. On the provided line list the part indicated and whether it was gold, silver, bronze, iron or clay.

----- -

----- -

----- -

After filling in the blanks; next color your statue according to its’ parts:

- Gold – Yellow
- Silver – Gray
- Brass – Orange
- Iron – Black
- Clay – Brown

----- -

----- -