

LESSON 72

Nebuchadnezzar's Dream

DANIEL 2:1-49



BIBLE TRUTH

GOD'S WISDOM PREVAILS

LESSON SNAPSHOT

- 1. OPENING REVIEW 5 MIN**
Use last week’s lesson outline to review with the children what they learned.
- 2. BIBLE STORY 10 MIN**
Read Daniel 2:4–10 from the Scriptures or read story 72, “Nebuchadnezzar’s Dream,” from *The Gospel Story Bible*.
- 3. OBJECT LESSON 1 10 MIN**
Answer the Riddle
SUPPLIES:
✓ a book of children’s riddles or a few taken off the Internet
- 4. TEACHING/DISCUSSION 10 MIN**
- 5. OBJECT LESSON 2 10 MIN**
Finding the Kingdom
SUPPLIES:
✓ Bibles with simple concordances
- 6. SWORD BIBLE MEMORY 5 MIN**
- 7. ACTIVITY TIME 15 MIN**
The Statue from the King’s Dream
SUPPLIES:
✓ modeling clay
- 8. CLOSING PRAYER 5 MIN**
- 9. BONUS OBJECT LESSON 10 MIN**
Crush the Statue
SUPPLIES:
✓ a large eight-inch-diameter rock

TOTAL 80 MIN

PREPARING TO TEACH

TEACHING POINTS

The wise men cannot interpret the king's dream—Daniel is a prophet of God. He and his friends are among those who were taken from Judah and brought to Babylon when Nebuchadnezzar invaded Judah. Even though they are foreigners and captives, God has given them favor so that they are counted among the wise men of Babylon.

After experiencing an alarming dream, Nebuchadnezzar wants to make sure he receives an accurate interpretation from his advisers, which he no longer trusts. This is why he demands that the wise men tell him the dream as well as what it means. But they cannot, believing his request to be an impossible task. Nebuchadnezzar orders that all the wise men be killed, having exposed them as frauds.

It is when Daniel learns that he and his companions are about to be killed that he asks to speak to King Nebuchadnezzar. Daniel knows that God is Lord over dreams and trusts that God will help him identify Nebuchadnezzar's dream and then interpret it.

Daniel pleads for the lives of the other wise men—After asking to speak with the king, Daniel returns to his house and pleads with his companions to pray to God for mercy. Daniel's faith here is amazing. Facing a death sentence if he cannot do what the king asks, Daniel does not despair like the other wise men but trusts the Lord. He knows that his God is the true God who knows all things.

In answer to his prayers, God gives Daniel the dream and its interpretation. When he returns to the king, Daniel's first action is to plead for the lives of all the wise men who have been sentenced to death. This shows that Daniel is interested in others not just himself. Then Daniel reveals the dream and its interpretation to Nebuchadnezzar. Rather than steal the honor, Daniel gives the glory to God.

Daniel interprets the king's dream—Daniel tells Nebuchadnezzar his dream, which involves a large statue made of different materials. Each material represents a human kingdom. (Today, Bible scholars believe the head of gold represents King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon; the arms and chest of silver represent the Medo-Persian Empire; the belly and thighs of bronze represent the Greek Empire; and the legs of iron represent the Roman Empire.)

The dream also involves a stone not cut out by human hands. This stone strikes the statue, crumbling it to dust, and then grows into a huge mountain. The stone represents Christ who brings into the world the kingdom of God, which eventually triumphs over all human kingdoms.

A LITTLE BIT MORE

The Kingdom of God

The kingdom of God refers to God's rule and reign. King Nebuchadnezzar received a prophetic look ahead at the institution of the kingdom of God. Sometimes it is called the kingdom of heaven or the kingdom of Christ, but they all refer to the same kingdom. God's kingdom has a present reality that has come with the ministry of Christ (see Luke 11:20). Even though God's kingdom is a present reality, it has not yet been fully established, and there is a component that has not yet come. In the end, God's reign will be complete with death and sin destroyed and God reigning among his redeemed people.

WHERE IS JESUS? _____

How does today's Bible story fit into God's greater plan of redemption?

Read Romans 9:32–33.

The most important part of Nebuchadnezzar's dream was the part about a great rock from God that destroyed the statue and grew into a mountain and filled the whole earth.

The rock was a picture of Jesus Christ and the mountain a picture of God's kingdom. Throughout the Bible, God uses a rock or stone to represent his work on the earth. Another example is when water came out from a rock in the desert for the children of Israel to drink.

Later in the New Testament, we are told that the rock in the desert represents Christ (1 Corinthians 10:4). Jesus compared a life lived for God to a house that was strong and sturdy because it was built on the rock of God's truth (Matthew 7:24). The apostle Paul said that the rock of God's truth is Jesus (Romans 9:33).

THE LESSON

OPENING REVIEW 5 MIN

Use last week’s lesson outline to review with the children what they learned.

BIBLE STORY 10 MIN

Read Daniel 2:4–10 from the Scriptures or read story 72, “Nebuchadnezzar’s Dream,” from *The Gospel Story Bible*.

OBJECT LESSON 1 10 MIN

Answer the Riddle

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ a book of children’s riddles or a few taken off the Internet

The object of this lesson is to have the children experience just how difficult a task the king put before the wise men.

Announce to the class that you are going to see if they can figure out a few riddles and problems.

Give them an easy riddle or problem to start with such as, “What is black and white and read all over? A newspaper!”

After having fun with a few riddles, ask a volunteer to guess the next one. (You are literally going to ask the volunteer to guess the next riddle not just the answer.)

Bring the volunteer to the front of the class and ask them to tell you the riddle. Press the issue a bit saying, “You volunteered to guess the next one, so what is it?”

Ask the class if there is anyone who can give you both the riddle and the answer.

Read the story of the king’s dream to the class, and then ask the class the following questions:

- Why was it so difficult for the wise men to know the king's dream?
(Only God is all-knowing. The only way the dream could be discovered was by a wild lucky guess or by a revelation from God. The wise men knew this and since they did not know God, they had nowhere to turn.)

- What does this story teach us about God?
(The God of Daniel is all-knowing and powerful.)

TEACHING/DISCUSSION 10 MIN

Using the teaching points, teach through the lesson for today.

OBJECT LESSON 2 10 MIN

Finding the Kingdom

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ Bibles with simple concordances

As a class, read Daniel 2:31–35. Then ask the class who they think the rock is.

Assign students to look up the following verses:

- Isaiah 8:14
- Isaiah 28:16
- Matthew 21:42–44
- Romans 9:32–33
- 1 Peter 2:6–9

Ask the class the following questions:

- What do we learn from all these verses that connects them to the stone in Nebuchadnezzar's dream?
(We learn that Jesus is frequently referred to as a stone and that stone has the power to crush [Luke 21:44].)

- What other component of the vision works with the stone?
(The stone becomes a mountain, which is the kingdom of God.)

If Jesus is to be interpreted as the stone, he would somehow need to be identified as bringing in the kingdom of God. Break the class up into groups and have them find scriptural proof of Jesus' connection to the kingdom of God. This should not be too difficult for there are many verses that speak about Jesus and his relationship to the kingdom of God. Have the children look up the word "kingdom" in their concordance and then look up New Testament references. If you want, you can give different groups different New Testament books to cover.

SWORD BIBLE MEMORY 5 MIN

Take time during the class to review the SWORD Bible Memory verses with the class. Provide the opportunity for each child to recite the verses to an adult worker.

ACTIVITY TIME 15 MIN

The Statue from the King's Dream

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ modeling clay

Have the children make a statue out of clay.

CLOSING PRAYER 5 MIN

Pick several children to pray prayers based on the day's scripture passages.

BONUS OBJECT LESSON 10 MIN

Crush the Statue

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ a large eight-inch-diameter rock

Place the children's clay creations from the activity time on the floor, and one by one drop the rock on top of them. Ask the class if the clay statues have a chance against the rock. They will tell you they do not. Use this as a way to talk about how God's kingdom is greater than the kingdoms of man.