

THE GLORY BELONGS TO GOD ALONE

SCRIPTURE REFERENCE: DANIEL 4



The glory for all we do belongs to God.

The STORY

Pray with children to start class.

Teaching Points for Class Discussion:

Daniel interpreted Nebuchadnezzar's second dream and warned him – Nebuchadnezzar had another dream which disturbed him. He called in his advisors who were unable to interpret the dream. Daniel was then summoned and interpreted the dream as a warning to Nebuchadnezzar from God. There was a promise of restoration in the interpretation (Daniel 4:25) The judgment would not be permanent but would end when Nebuchadnezzar knew the rule of heaven (Daniel 4:26). Daniel suggested that the king repent and show mercy to the oppressed so that God might, in turn, show mercy to the king.

Nebuchadnezzar was humbled – The sin of Nebuchadnezzar was exposed in his prideful declaration and exaltation of himself in Daniel 4:30. Nebuchadnezzar attributed his success to his own might. He took the glory to himself. Immediately, he received the foretold judgment. Daniel tells us he lost his right mind and became like an ox. God made him eat grass, and he was driven away from among men. Even his physical appearance changed. He had long hair growing upon his body and his nails became like claws.

Nebuchadnezzar was restored – At the end of the seven seasons, Nebuchadnezzar lifted his eyes to heaven (Daniel 4:34). His sanity returned to him. He immediately blessed, praised, and honored the Most High God. Nebuchadnezzar gave glory to God in a wonderful prayer and finished with a declaration of worship that God was able to humble those who walked in pride. The period of his humbling was completely defined by God. Nebuchadnezzar did nothing to earn his restoration. Nebuchadnezzar's restoration was by God's grace alone.

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Where is Jesus?

Please use the following comments connecting today's lesson to the Gospel to help inform your understanding and serve you by aiding your preparation for class. Remember, we want to do more than present disconnected Bible stories and lessons to our young children. We want them to understand how each story in the Bible plays a part in God's greater plan of redemption.

Nothing happens by mere chance or by accident apart from the sovereign control of God. Every part of the story of King Nebuchadnezzar happened just as God ordained that it would. Throughout history God moved in such a way so as to allow His people to survive to return from exile. In his letter to the Ephesians, Paul tells us:

In him we were also chosen, having been predestined according to the plan of him who works out everything in conformity with the purpose of his will, in order that we, who were the first to hope in Christ, might be for the praise of his glory. (Ephesians 1:11-12)

In other words, all the things that happened to King Nebuchadnezzar happened according to God's plan. God worked in Nebuchadnezzar's life and ultimately brought this pagan king to faith. All the while God was preserving a remnant of Israel who would later return and rebuild the walls of Jerusalem. Our Savior would later come out of this remnant. God gave His word to Abraham that all nations would be blessed through Abraham's offspring. The Word of the Lord stands forever!

All men are like grass, and all their glory is like the flowers of the field; the grass withers and the flowers fall, but the word of the Lord stands forever. (1 Peter 1:24-25)



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ON THE ROAD TO EMMAUS

Read the following Bible passage from the Old Testament. Use the following questions to help the children understand how this passage points to Christ in the New Testament.

Bible Passage: Psalm 118:22

Connecting the passage to Christ:

This verse is cited in Matthew 21:42 and Mark 12:10 as referring to Jesus. Jesus is the stone that the builders rejected that now has become the cornerstone. Jesus was rejected as the Messiah by His own people who were looking for someone to overthrow Rome and restore an earthly kingdom of Israel. Jesus was not an earthly cornerstone but a heavenly one. He was rejected by men but has become the most precious cornerstone, see 1 Peter 2:4-9.

Questions for reflection:

- How do we know 1 Peter 2:4-9 refers to Jesus? (Jesus is mentioned in 1 Peter 2:5 as the subject of the discussion. Jesus is the object of our faith.)
- Why was Jesus rejected? (Jesus was building a heavenly kingdom not an earthly kingdom. The rulers and people of Jesus' day wanted to rebuild Israel. In a sense, they didn't want a spiritual cornerstone; they wanted an earthly cornerstone for earthly greatness.)

SWORD BIBLE MEMORY

BE A DOER OF THE WORD

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.



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ACTIVITIES & OBJECT LESSONS

Use the following activities for practical application and discovery of this lesson. For the younger children, review the preschool questions and use them to help the children relate to the passage. For older children, ask them why they think this passage is in the Bible for us today. How is it supposed to affect our lives?

WHO IS THE GREATEST?

Ask the class who is the greatest person they have ever heard of. List their answers on the board. If they cannot come up with anyone give them a hint by suggesting great leaders, inventors, or sports figures. If they suggest Jesus, agree that He was the greatest person but you want to limit the discussion to those other than Christ.

After you have a list, ask them by a show of hands to vote on the greatest. Then ask the class the following questions:

- What made this person great? (They should describe what they did and how amazing it was.)
- Who made this person great? (God made this person great. Apart from God's grace the person they chose would not have even existed. And apart from the grace of God this person would have not accomplished anything.)
- Who should get the glory (credit) for what this person did? (The Bible tells us that it is good to give honor to men for their accomplishments but that the glory, ultimate credit for what they did, belongs to God alone.)



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NONE CAN STAY THE HAND OF GOD

Supplies

large, strong man

The object of this lesson is to help the children visualize the reality of Nebuchadnezzar's prayer in Daniel 4:35.

Ask for five volunteers from among the boys in your class. When they come forward introduce your guest and explain that these five volunteers are going to attempt to beat your guest at arm wrestling. Of course they will view this as an impossible task. Go through the motions of all five getting beat anyway.

Then ask the class the following questions:

- When you heard what the volunteers were being called to do, what did you think? (We thought it was impossible for them to beat Mr. _____ at arm wrestling.)
- Read Nebuchadnezzar's prayer in Daniel 4:35. What did Nebuchadnezzar learn about God and "staying his hand?" (Nebuchadnezzar would have been the most powerful man in the world yet he could not stop God from doing what God wanted to do. God was in complete control over Nebuchadnezzar. Here we see that God takes the most powerful man in the world and turns him into and insane cow-like creature in mere seconds.)
- What bigger plan of God was Nebuchadnezzar a part of? (God was protecting and preserving His people who would return to Israel and later bring forth the Messiah. None can stop the purposes of God; none can stay His hand.)



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CAN YOU INTERPRET THE DREAM?

Supplies

large paper
candy for prize

Before class print out the following on large paper:

MOUTH

Taste Bad

Noon T2he

In class, ask the children to help you figure out what the signs say. Offer them candy if they can answer them (they likely cannot)

Answers:

MOUTH - Big mouth

Taste Bad - Bad after taste

Noon T2he - Two in the afternoon

Tell the kids that Daniel was asked to interpret Nebuchadnezzar's dream, but he needed God's help to interpret it. He wasn't just a smart guy, but God showed him the meaning of the dream. These puzzles were hard and they were fun to figure out. But, Daniel was called upon to figure out a dream that wasn't easy to figure out. In the Old testament when someone was called to interpret a dream, if they couldn't they usually were killed. Daniel couldn't do it on his own. He needed God's help to figure out the dream. God helped him to figure out the dream. Daniel needed God to show him these things, as we need God to reveal truth to us through his word and prayer.



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WHAT ARE OUR WARNINGS?

Explain to the children that like Nebuchadnezzar we have been given warnings about what will happen in the future. Share the following warnings and ask the class to explain why God gave them to us and how we might comply with them. Explain to the children that warnings come to us from God to keep our lives in line with His Word.

Exodus 20:12 – If you honor your parents you will live a long life. The implied warning is that if you do not honor your parents you will not live a long life.

Matthew 6:14-15 – If you forgive others, God will forgive you. But if you do not forgive others, God will not forgive you.

John 14:6 – Nobody can come to the Father except through Jesus. The implied warning is that if you try and come to heaven any other way you will not make it.

Matthew 24:44 – We must be ready because we do not know when Jesus will return.

- What happened to Nebuchadnezzar when he ignored Daniel's advice? (He became insane, eating grass like a cow.)
- What would happen if we didn't heed our parents' warnings? (We would receive consequences of disobedience.)
- What will happen to us if we do not heed God's warnings for us? (We will receive the consequences declared in His Word.)

PRAYER

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



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IN CLASS PROJECT

The first and second grade children can use the preschool coloring sheet and questions. Have the older children draw a picture of Nebuchadnezzar like an ox with long hair and long claws.

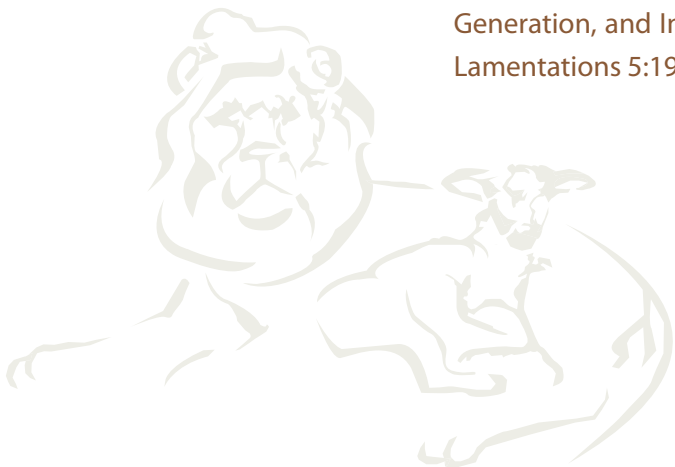
FOR OLDER GRADES

Supplies:
concordance

Read the story in Daniel 4 of Nebuchadnezzar's pride then ask the children the following questions:

- What areas of life are children your age most likely to boast in their own accomplishments? (Accept any answer.)
- What does it mean to give yourself the glory for something that you did? (We can and should acknowledge our accomplishments. If we win first place in a race it is fine for us to tell someone that we won first place in the race. However we cannot tell them that we are great because we won the race or that the glory for winning the race belongs to us.)

Review Nebuchadnezzar's prayer in Daniel 4:34-35 and use the concordance to compare the truths in his prayer with what the scriptures tells us about God. If your classroom Bibles do not have concordance pages, copy the following entries from your own concordance and copy them for use in the class: Dominion, Everlasting, Generation, and Inhabitants. Some key scriptures to look at are Psalm 145:13-16, Lamentations 5:19, Isaiah 51:6, and Romans 9:20-21.



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A LITTLE BIT MORE

Glory – Glory is a word that has a depth of meaning. It can mean honor, praise, renown, reputation, or accomplishment of an individual as well as the shining of their countenance. The Hebrew word for glory means weight, heaviness, or worthiness.

For a man, his glory might be in his wealth, reputation, or possessions. If a man loses these things, he remains a man. God is different. His glory is an integral part of Himself. So, if God should lose His glory – His splendor and majesty, holiness, radiance and beauty – He would cease to be God. God could not be God without His glory.

Ultimately any glory man holds is a reflection of the grace of God and that glory ultimately belongs to God, see Revelation 19:1. To attribute glory to an individual is to give to them that which belongs to God alone, Isaiah 42:8.

