



Church of God Sunday School

DANIEL BECOMES A RULER

Daniel 2:1-49

After three years of being educated in the ways and laws of the Babylonians, Daniel and his three friends (Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego) were chosen to fill certain positions in the king's palace. About a year later, King Nebuchadnezzar dreamed a dream that bothered him very much.

Nebuchadnezzar wanted to know what the dream meant, so he called for all his magicians and astrologers to come and tell him the meaning of his dream. When the men had gathered, King Nebuchadnezzar told them, "I have dreamed a dream, and my spirit was troubled to know [understand] the dream."

The wise men told Nebuchadnezzar, "Tell thy servants the dream," then they would explain its meaning. But King Nebuchadnezzar said that the dream was "gone" from him. Nebuchadnezzar promised rewards and honor if they could tell him the dream and its interpretation.

The king said, "Tell me the dream, and I shall know that ye can show me the interpretation." (By making the wise men tell him the dream *and* the interpretation, Nebuchadnezzar would know if they were just making it all up.) However, if they could not, he would have them all killed!

The wise men said, "There is not a man upon the earth that can" do this. They said that "no king, lord, nor ruler" had ever asked such a thing. They told the king that only the gods could reveal dreams and their meanings. King Nebuchadnezzar became furious! In a rage, he declared that all the wise men of Babylon should be destroyed. Arioch (*AIR-ee-ok*), captain of the king's guard, was sent to carry out the order.

For some reason, Daniel and his three friends had not appeared before King Nebuchadnezzar with the rest of the wise men, and they were truly the wisest men of them all. (Remember how they had been found to be ten times wiser than the others?) So when Arioch "sought Daniel and his fellows to be slain," Daniel asked him, "Why is the decree so hasty from the king?" In other words, "Why did King Nebuchadnezzar order such a harsh and hurried thing?"

After Arioch told Daniel about the king's dream, Daniel went to Nebuchadnezzar. He asked Nebuchadnezzar to give him some time, and he would give the interpretation of the dream.

Daniel went back and told his three friends about the dream. He asked them to pray for mercy from God "concerning this secret." God revealed the dream to Daniel during the night. Daniel was so thankful to God that he prayed a beautiful prayer, blessing and thanking the Lord for showing mercy to them.

Daniel went back to Arioch. He told him not to kill the wise men but to bring him before the king. Daniel said that he would tell the king what he wanted to know. Arioch quickly took Daniel to King Nebuchadnezzar.

The king asked if Daniel could "make known" the dream and the interpretation. Daniel said that only the God of Heaven could reveal such secrets, not man. Then Daniel told King Nebuchadnezzar that before he had gone to sleep, he had wondered about the future. So, God showed him, through his dream, what was going to happen.

Daniel said that the king had seen a great, magnificent image in his dream. This image had a head of gold. The breast and arms were silver. The belly and thighs were brass. The legs were iron. The feet were part iron and part clay.

King Nebuchadnezzar had also seen that a "stone was cut out of the mountain without hands." It struck the great image in its feet and broke them all to pieces! This caused the whole image to fall to the ground and crumble to dust. Then the wind came and blew all the dust away until none of it could be found. But "the stone that smote the image became a great mountain, and



filled the whole earth."

The interpretation (or meaning) of the dream was this: the image represented four kingdoms. The first kingdom was the powerful kingdom of which King Nebuchadnezzar was the ruler. God had made him the most powerful ruler on the earth. He ruled over the people and even the birds and animals. His kingdom was the head of gold.

The silver breast and arms represented the second kingdom that would come next. It would not be as great as the first kingdom. The brass belly and the brass thighs represented the third kingdom that would rule over all the earth.

Finally, the legs of iron and the feet of iron and clay stood for the fourth kingdom. This kingdom would be strong, as iron is strong. But just as clay and iron cannot mix, this kingdom would be a divided kingdom.

In the days of these kingdoms, God was going to set up His own kingdom. It was represented by the "stone [Jesus] cut out of the mountain without hands." God's kingdom would break down those other kingdoms, and it would never be destroyed.

Then Daniel said, "The great God hath made known to the king what shall come to pass hereafter: and the dream is certain [true], and the interpretation thereof sure [trustworthy]."

King Nebuchadnezzar fell on his face and worshiped Daniel. No doubt, Daniel reminded the king that the God in Heaven is the One who reveals dreams. So the king said, "Of a truth it is, that your God is a God of gods, and a Lord of kings, and a revealer of secrets, seeing thou couldst reveal this secret."

King Nebuchadnezzar made Daniel a great man. He gave Daniel many gifts. He also promoted him to be the "ruler over the whole province of Babylon, and chief of the governors over all the wise men of Babylon."

Daniel (or Belteshazzar as he was called) asked King Nebuchadnezzar to promote Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah as well (or Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego), for they had helped Daniel by praying. So they, too, were given honorable positions in the province of Babylon.

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**MEMORY VERSE:**

*"But there is a God in heaven that revealeth secrets, and maketh known to the king Nebuchadnezzar what shall be in the latter days."*

—Daniel 2:28a

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Match the words to the shapes

Babylon
Daniel
kingdom
ruler
palace
future
Arioch
magicians
image
dream