



Lesson 153

Nebuchadnezzar's Dream

Story Elements

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Text: Daniel 2:1-49 • Setting: circa 608 BC, in Babylon • Main Characters: God, Daniel, and Nebuchadnezzar • Plot: Nebuchadnezzar has a troubling dream and demands authentic | <p style="text-align: right;">interpretation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key word(s): “but there is a God in _____” • Climax: Daniel 2:19 <i>Then was the secret revealed unto Daniel in a night vision. Then Daniel blessed the God of heaven.</i> |
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Nightmare

1. (vv 1-6) During Nebuchadnezzar's second year as king he had a dream that troubled him greatly. Desperate for an authentic interpretation of the dream, he demanded that his counselors do two things: recount the details of his dream and then give the _____. Success would mean their promotion, but failure would mean the complete destruction of all the royal counselors.
2. (vv 7-11) Nebuchadnezzar's counselors confessed their inability and begged for him to reconsider. Undaunted by their pleas for mercy, Nebuchadnezzar commanded that all the wise men be _____.

Night Prayer

3. (vv 12-16) As Arioch (the captain of the guard) went to execute the wise men, Daniel intercepted him and asked for an explanation of the goings-on. Then Daniel went to the king and assured him that the dream and its interpretation would be made known.
4. (vv 17-24) Daniel went home to his three companions and relayed the events of the day.
 - (a) Together, they prayed into the _____ that God would help them. Sometime during the night, God gave Daniel a vision of the dream and its interpretation.
 - (b) Daniel's song of praise is an appropriate theme for the whole book – in it he praises the God of heaven who is in _____ of all things.
5. (vv 25-30) The next day, Daniel is brought before the king. Before he gives Nebuchadnezzar the dream and its interpretation, Daniel takes the opportunity testify about the God of heaven and to give him all the glory for his success: *“But as for me, this secret is not revealed to me for any _____ that I have more than any living...”*

The Great Image

6. (vv 31-35) Daniel then recounted the dream to the king:
 - (a) a great image stood with a head of gold, a chest and arms of silver, an abdomen and thighs of bronze, legs of iron, and feet of iron mixed with _____.
 - (b) Then, a stone cut without hands, fell upon the feet, crushing them and toppling the entire image. The statue crumbled to dust and the mysterious stone stood in its place and grew into a great _____ that filled the whole earth.

7. (vv 36-45) Daniel then gave the interpretation:
- The head of gold represented the _____ kingdom.
 - The chest and arms of silver represented the _____ empire.
 - The belly and thighs of bronze represented the _____ empire.
 - The legs of iron represent the _____ empire – the strongest of all kingdoms. The feet of iron and clay represent the degenerated state of the iron kingdom.
 - The stone that crushes the feet of the statue is the kingdom of _____ through Christ. Its coming brings an end to all human governments and destroys the enemies of God's people (all the kingdoms represented are conquerors of Israel).¹
8. Two things are seen in the different elements of the statue: (1) they descend in _____: from gold to iron; (2) They ascend in _____. Here's an explanation of these distinctions from JFB:
- “... the Persian king was so far dependent on others that he could not deliver Daniel from the princes (Da 6:14, 15); contrast Da 5:18, 19, as to Nebuchadnezzar's power from God, 'whom he would he slew, and whom he would he kept alive' (compare Ezr 7:14; Es 1:13-16). Graeco-Macedonia betrays its deterioration in its divisions, not united as Babylon and Persia. Iron is stronger than brass, but inferior in other respects; so Rome, hardy and strong to tread down the nations, but less kingly and showing its chief deterioration in its last state.”²
9. (vv 46-49) Nebuchadnezzar was amazed at Daniel's recounting of the dream and his interpretation of it. The king praised the God of heaven and promoted Daniel and his companions.

Application

10. We see Daniel's humility all throughout this story: he gives God the glory and shares the credit with his partners in prayer. Matthew Henry notes, “*What honour God puts upon us we should be willing that our brethren may _____ with us in.*”³
11. Jesus initiated the kingdom of God when he came during the rule of Rome. Although Jesus did not destroy all human powers in his first coming, he did inaugurate his kingdom that will one day “*become a great mountain, and fill the whole earth.*” (v 35). Nebuchadnezzar's dream is a powerful Old Testament witness to the truth of _____.

Notes: _____

Answer Key: Key word(s): “heaven” • 1. interpretation • 2. killed • 4. a) night; b) control • 5. wisdom • 6. a) clay; b) mountain • 7. a) Babylonian; b) Medo-Persian; c) Greek; d) Roman; e) God • 8. value; strength • 10. share • 11. Jesus

How to use this worksheet for personal Bible study: (1) Read the Bible passage given in the **Story Elements** section. (2) Read through the worksheet and try to fill in the blanks without looking at the **Answer Key**. (3) Check your answers with the key and make the necessary corrections. Keep in mind that some answers are a matter of opinion, and often more than one answer is correct. (4) Write down your own thoughts, applications, and questions for further study in the **Notes** section.

¹ The image does not represent only linear history but is also emblematic. Notice how all the empires come crashing down at once even though they are hundreds of years removed from each other.

² Jamieson, Robert, A. R. Fausset, and David Brown. *Commentary Critical and Explanatory on the Whole Bible. Vol. 1.* Oak Harbor, WA: Logos Research Systems, Inc., 1997. Print.

³ Henry, Matthew. *Matthew Henry's Commentary on the Whole Bible: Complete and Unabridged in One Volume.* Peabody: Hendrickson, 1994. Print.