



CORNERSTONE CONNECTIONS

AUGUST 08 2020

God even gave the dream

Scripture Story: Daniel 2.

Commentary: *Prophets and Kings* (or *Royalty and Ruin*), chapter 40.

PREPARING TO TEACH

I. SYNOPSIS

The story of Daniel is a story of reliance on God to give him not only the interpretation of the dream, but the dream itself. This is important for a number of reasons: (1) It showed that the wise men of the kingdom were incapable of knowing the dream, let alone its interpretation. (2) It proved the power of God to King Nebuchadnezzar. (3) It showed God's power, wisdom, and grace. This story offers valuable lessons about God's personal involvement and foreknowledge of the events in human history. This account presents an amazing prophecy that highlights major historical periods from the time of the Babylonian Empire to the end of human history and the reign of God, Whose kingdom will be eternal.

What a powerful God we serve! He not only allows certain situations in our lives, but also provides the way of escape to deliver His people from trouble. He knows the end from the beginning as revealed in the vision to King Nebuchadnezzar and to His servant Daniel many thousands of years ago.

We have countless reasons to be grateful and to praise and worship God.

II. TARGET

The students will:

- Realize that God sets up situations as well as decides their outcome. (*Know*)
- Understand that total dependence on faith is what God asks of us. (*Feel*)

- Learn to look for ways to depend more fully on God. (*Respond*)

III. EXPLORE

- Faith
- Sovereignty of God
- His connection to His people

TEACHING

I. GETTING STARTED

Activity

Refer the students to the What Do You Think? section of their lesson. After they have completed it, discuss their responses.

Why is Daniel chapter 2 a remarkable passage? How did the vision of the great statue reveal the future? In what kingdom was gold a popular metal? What kingdom used silver as standard currency? In what kingdom was the armor of the soldiers made of bronze? In what kingdom was the armor of the soldiers made of iron?

In what period in history are we living now in light of the historical segments presented in the vision of the great statue? What event will mark the end of human history and will usher in God's kingdom of glory?

Illustration

Share this illustration in your own words:

In 1853, when young Hudson Taylor was making his first voyage to China, his vessel was delayed near

New Guinea because the winds had stopped. A rapid current was carrying the ship toward some reefs, and the situation was becoming dangerous. Even the sailors using a longboat could not row the vessel out of the current. “We have done everything that can be done,” said the captain to Taylor. But Taylor replied, “No, there is one thing we have not done yet.” There were three other believers on the ship, and Taylor suggested that each retire to his own cabin and pray for a breeze. They did, and while he was at prayer, Taylor was impressed with the confidence that God would send the much-needed wind. He went up on deck and suggested to the first officer, an unbeliever, that he let down the mainsail because a breeze was on its way. The man refused, but then they saw the corner of the sail begin to stir. The breeze had come! They let down the sail and in a short time were on their way! (Taken from W. Wiersbe, *Wycliffe Handbook of Preaching and Preachers*, p. 240.)

II. TEACHING THE STORY

Bridge to the Story

Share the following in your own words:

When we trust in God, oftentimes what seems like it might be ordinary becomes extraordinary. Whether it is discernment we should not have had, or wisdom that comes from beyond us, it is always an exciting adventure to experience God working. By faith we can truly see God at work in current events and in our lives.

Out of the Story for Teachers

After you read the Into the Story section with your students, use the following in your own words to process it with them.

- What does the giant statue’s head of gold represent? (See Daniel 2:36-38.)
- What is the meaning of the chest and arms of silver? (See verse 39.)
- What kingdom did the belly and thighs of bronze represent? (See verse 39.)
- What kingdom did the legs of iron represent? (See verse 40.)
- What do the feet partly of iron and partly of clay represent? What are the characteristics of the statue’s feet? (See verses 41-43.)
- What glorious event will mark the end of the history presented in the vision about the great statue? (See verses 44, 45.)

- What significant truths can you share about this amazing prophecy with someone who does not believe in God? Study carefully the historical facts that prove the accuracy of this prophecy. Consider the identifying marks of the kingdoms described in the vision and their succession. What does the accurate fulfillment of this prophecy reveal about God?

Use the following as more teachable passages that relate to today’s story: Genesis 41.

Sharing Context and Background

Use the following information to shed more light on the story for your students. Share it in your own words.

“The gold head stood not only for Nebuchadnezzar but also for his kingdom of Babylon [604-538 B.C.] . . .

Media and Persia were united together and conquered Babylon in 539 B.C.

“. . . In 331 B.C., [The Medo-Persian Empire 538-331 B.C.] was vanquished by Alexander the Great, founder of the Macedonian-Greek Empire. After Alexander’s death his dominion was divided into a number of Hellenistic Greek kingdoms. Meanwhile Rome was evolving in the west, and in due course, began to influence the Hellenistic kingdoms. By 168 B.C. Rome dominated the Mediterranean as the fourth empire of the statue prophecy.

“. . . The Roman Empire [146 B.C.–A.D. 476] did not capitulate to a fifth monolithic empire. It deteriorated over a very long period and was appropriated piecemeal by whatever tribal coalition was ambitious enough to grab a portion. France, Italy, Great Britain, the two Germanies, and other nations of Europe are contemporary results of this piecemeal and long-continued process.

“. . . The feet and toes represent the nations of modern Europe—some strong, some weak—that dwell in the territory of the western Roman Empire. . . .

“Many ambitious and talented men have tried to unite Europe. . . . But the five simple words ‘They will not hold together’ [Daniel 2:43] held true in [each] case.”—Mervyn Maxwell, *God Cares: The Message of Daniel for You and Your Family*, 1981, pp. 35–37

“Will the European countries negate this picture? They may, with difficulty, agree upon certain political principles, and they may enter into agreements to facilitate trade and commerce, but each of these countries may be expected to retain control of its cul-



Tips for Top-Notch Teaching

“Doing” Bible Study

Students learn by doing; this is knowledge that is pretty common. However, how do you have students “do” a lesson study from the Bible? There are numerous ways that they can connect the story to their lives. Anything from song to Scripture reading to role-playing will allow the students to feel as if they are experiencing the story. Even something as silly as getting them to stand when they are used to sitting makes it possible for them to remember things better than they would have otherwise. This is important as they begin to internalize the Scriptures and apply them to their lives.

tural, linguistic, and territorial properties. They may join together for certain common purposes, but according to Daniel’s prophecy, they will never be joined into one complete political entity as was the Roman Empire” (taken from William H. Shea, *Daniel: A Reader’s Guide*, p. 103).

“The next empire portrayed by Daniel’s prophecy will be the worldwide kingdom of God, introduced by Jesus Christ Himself at His glorious second coming (Daniel 2:44)” (taken from Mervyn Maxwell, *God Cares: The Message of Daniel for You and Your Family*, p. 37).

“This is the central fact of the conclusion to this dream-vision: That the God of heaven will one day set up a kingdom that will never be destroyed. It will never be displaced by another metal kingdom that will come down the road of history, for history itself will end in that kingdom of God. It will be history’s great climax. This is the goal toward which history is moving” (taken from William H. Shea, *Daniel: A Reader’s Guide*, p. 104).

When did you experience God’s miraculous power in your life? How does recognizing God’s sovereignty and His intervention in our lives help you trust His will for your life?

III. CLOSING

Activity

Close with an activity and debrief it in your own words.

Bring the students into a circle and have them all hold hands. This will build a sense of community. Ask them each to think of a time when they had to rely

totally on God. Then ask each one of them to pray for the willingness to rely completely on God regardless of the circumstances.

Summary

Share the following thoughts in your own words:

Daniel’s example of full reliance on God is remarkable. It can take awhile for us to learn to surrender every area of our lives to God’s leading, but complete dependence on God will allow Him to guide us and accomplish His goal in our lives. What can we do to learn reliance on God? It seems that crisis often forces

Teaching From . . .

Refer your students to the other sections of their lesson.

- **Key Text**

Invite the students to share the key text with the class if they have committed it to memory.

- **Flashlight**

Read the Flashlight statement, pointing out that most of the time it is from the commentary on this week’s story found in the book *Prophets and Kings*. Ask what relationship they see between the statement and what they have just discussed from *Out of the Story*.

- **Punch Lines**

Point out to your students the verses listed in their lesson that relate to this week’s story. Have them share the verse that speaks most directly to them and allow them to explain why they chose it.

- **Further Insight**

Ask them how the quotes in *Further Insight* convey the point of the story in this lesson.

us to rely on God. This lesson seeks to help students realize their need for leaning on God in faith regardless of the circumstances. What can we do, as teachers and mentors, do to help disciple each young person so that they can more readily see the power of God in their lives, regardless of whether they experience good times or bad times? We can always point them to the

characters in the Scriptures who learned to trust no matter the circumstances. As the prophetic revelations in the book of Daniel indicate, we can trust God to lead us, because He who oversees the events taking place in human history is also intimately concerned and deeply involved in our lives.



Remind the students about the reading plan that will take them through the inspired commentary of the Bible, the Conflict of the Ages Series. The reading that goes with this lesson is *Prophets and Kings* (or *Royalty and Ruin*), chapter 40.

*A special adaptation of *Prophets and Kings* has been created by the Ellen G. White Estate and the Pacific Press Publishing Association. Get more info about it at www.cornerstoneconnections.net.