

## NEBUCHADNEZZAR'S DREAM

### *Daniel 2*

Remind the older classes that the book of Daniel, like the book of Psalms, is not in the Hebrew canon of Scripture but was given a proper place in the Word for Christians by the Lord Himself. For the younger children a reminder of the fall of Judah and the carrying away of the people to Babylon will lead into the story of Daniel.

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#### **Doctrinal Points**

*Divine providence controls history.*

*Revelation was often given to the prophets in dreams.*

*True faith comes from the Lord.*

*Humility is essential to charity.*

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#### **Notes for Parents**

After the good king Josiah died, the people of Judah went back to their evil ways, and the time soon came when they could no longer be protected by the Lord. First the king of Egypt came in and made them pay tribute to him; then the king of Babylon took all the Holy Land away from the king of Egypt. For a time he allowed one or another of Josiah's sons to rule Judah under him, but they foolishly rebelled, and then Nebuchadnezzar destroyed Jerusalem and the temple and carried away to Babylon all but the poorest of the people.

The first of the people of Judah to be taken to Babylon—some time before the final destruction and deportation—were a group of the young princes, who were chosen, because of their ability and superior education, to be trained in all the learning of the Chaldeans, the native culture of Babylon, so that they could serve Nebuchadnezzar in special ways. One of these young princes was Daniel.

Many of the stories about Daniel are familiar to all of us. He was an outstanding example of the wisdom and courage which are developed through humility and obedience to the Lord. The story we have read for our lesson today tells how he came to be made one of the chief rulers of Babylon. It reminds us of the story of Joseph in Egypt. The account of Nebuchadnezzar's dream of the great image is a striking one, and we can all see in it a picture of how one who thinks himself wise and great gradually loses his wisdom and goodness and eventually is seen to be worthless. Daniel interpreted the dream to Nebuchadnezzar in terms of the future history of Babylon, but its application is much wider than that. Everything in the Word of God has deeper and deeper meanings as we continue to study it.

There are some things in the story which we should notice especially. First Daniel prayed to the Lord to show him the truth he needed, and he asked his friends to pray too. Second, when he went before Nebuchadnezzar to tell him the dream, he took no credit to himself for his knowledge, but said plainly that it was the Lord who was revealing the truth. And because of this, after the dream was explained, Nebuchadnezzar not only gave Daniel riches and power but also acknowledged Daniel's God as the greatest of all gods. In our daily life and in our work for the church we should realize that we do not lead people to the Lord by calling attention to ourselves or by trying to appear better and wiser than others. As parents we should watch for and check in our children the little beginnings of this tendency—which is in all of us—to self-praise and the desire to rule.

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### Primary

The teacher should tell the children the beginning of the story of Daniel as we find it in chapter 1. Stress Daniel's courage in refusing to do what he had been taught was wrong, and the fact that the Lord can help us when we do right. This was the foundation of Daniel's becoming a great man. At the end of the lesson draw a parallel between Daniel and Joseph. See how much the children remember of the Joseph story.

Do you remember our story about good king Josiah who had the temple repaired, and how the book of the law was found and read to him? Josiah tried hard to do everything the Lord commanded in the book of the law, and he tried to make the people of Judah give up their evil ways and obey the Lord again. But the people had become too bad. After Josiah died, they went back to their same old evil ways and finally the Lord allowed the king of Babylon, whose name was Nebuchadnezzar, to conquer Judah and take most of the people away to Babylon.

Among the very first to be taken were some young princes. Nebuchadnezzar wanted some especially bright and well-educated young men who could be taught the language and the learning of the Chaldeans (the people of Babylon) and so be very useful to him.

One of these young men was Daniel. The king gave him the Chaldean name of Belteshazzar. Daniel was just the kind of person the king wanted, but he was also one of those who was determined to worship his own God. Even at the risk of offending the king he would not do anything he had been brought up to believe was wrong. So the Lord could be with him and he was very wise.

One night king Nebuchadnezzar had a strange dream.

In the morning he could not remember it.

None of his wise men could tell him what it was.

But Daniel prayed to the Lord and the Lord showed him what to tell the king.

What was the king's dream?

What were the different parts of the image made of?

What destroyed the image?

What happened to the stone afterward?

Daniel also told the king what the dream meant.

The king decided that Daniel's God must be the greatest god of all and that Daniel was the wisest man in his kingdom. So he made Daniel very rich and made him chief ruler under himself in the kingdom, just as the king of Egypt had made Joseph ruler of Egypt long before. But Daniel did not become proud, and always continued to obey the Lord in all things.



### Junior

There are some good lessons in this chapter for Juniors. The example of Daniel, like that of Joseph, points to humility and trust in the Lord as the way to real success in life. In taking up the interpretation of the destruction of the image as Daniel gave it to Nebuchadnezzar, point out that the stone introduces a lasting kingdom which “the God of heaven” is to set up, and say that this image has deeper meanings which they will study when they are older. They can understand now that the only lasting kingdom is the rule of the Lord in our hearts and minds—the kingdom of heaven.

Even the great reforms which good king Josiah carried out could not make the people of Judah over into good people, and Judah was finally conquered by the king of Babylon and all but the poorest of the people were carried away into captivity in Babylon. Two of the four men whom we call the Major Prophets were among these captives. They were Ezekiel and Daniel. Look in your Bibles right after the book called *Solomon’s Song* and see whose names are given to the next two books. These were the first two Major Prophets. The book called Lamentations is really just a continuation of Jeremiah.

Now write the names of the four Major Prophets in order.

They were called *Major* because their books are much longer than those of the twelve *Minor* Prophets which follow them.

Daniel was among the very first group to be carried away to Babylon. This was a very special group. Read about it in Daniel 1:1-7. So you see Daniel was really just a boy when he was taken away from his home. But Daniel and his three companions had already been taught carefully in the religion of their nation. The royal children in Judah were brought up under the care of the high priest. And these four young men were brave enough to remain true to their religion even in captivity. Read how they proved this in Daniel 1:8-16. Now read the last four verses of chapter 1. It often looks to us when we are being tempted as if doing right would bring us into difficulty and make us unhappy, but the fact is that it is only when we do right that the Lord can help us.

Our chapter for today reminds us of a story we had earlier. Let us see if you can remember it.

- Who was sold into captivity in Egypt?
- Why was the Lord able to prosper him?
- What special ability did He give him?
- What brought him to Pharaoh's attention?
- What did he do for Pharaoh?
- What office did Pharaoh give him?

See how close this is to Daniel's experience. You remember, too, that Pharaoh's dreams were pictures of something that was to happen to his nation.

- What did Nebuchadnezzar see in his dream?
- What metal was the head of the image made of?
- What were the next two metals?
- What were the legs made of?
- What were the feet made of?
- What was the weak spot in the image?
- What destroyed the image?
- What happened to the stone afterward?
- What did Daniel say the golden head symbolized?
- What were pictured by the other parts of the image?
- What did the king do for Daniel?
- What did Daniel do for his three friends?

There is something else in this story which we should notice particularly. Read Genesis 41:15-16. Now read Daniel 2:27-30. You see that both Joseph and Daniel wanted to be sure that the king knew that their wisdom was not their own but came from the Lord. And in verse 47 of our chapter we find that Nebuchadnezzar acknowledged that Daniel's God must be the greatest of the gods. And it was because he knew that God was with Daniel that he made him ruler in Babylon. Sometimes you will hear people say that a person must have a great deal of self-confidence if he wants to succeed in life. But if we think a little, we realize that we are always a little suspicious of people who think very highly of themselves, and that the people we really trust are those who are trying to do right and thinking of the welfare of other people. We must remember this when we are tempted to try to put ourselves ahead of other people or to despise someone who cannot do just what we can do or who disagrees with us. All our abilities come to us as

gifts from the Lord, and they are meant to be used in His service.

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### Intermediate

The story in itself is a powerful one, and the lessons to be drawn from the letter are important for this age group also. The spiritual meaning is a little beyond children of this age, but the evil represented by Babylon can be understood and should be stressed. The teacher will be able to think of examples of this evil which are within the experience of the class, for it rears its ugly head even on the playground and in the classroom.

In our lessons on the book of Psalms we noted that the ancient Hebrews did not include the Psalms in their canon of most sacred Scripture, but that the Lord Himself restored this book to its proper authority. The same is true of the book of Daniel. The Israelites classed it with their “Sacred Writings,” which were not thought to be divinely inspired; but the Lord in Matthew 24:15 refers to Daniel as one of the Prophets. The four Major Prophets are Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Daniel. They are called *Major* only because of the length of their books. The books of the twelve Minor Prophets are all short.

Daniel was one of the royal children in Judah in the days of Jehoiakim, the second son of Josiah to follow him on the throne. Jehoiakim was placed on the throne by the king of Egypt, who carried off to Egypt his older brother Jehoahaz, who had become king when Josiah died. But we learn from II Kings 24:1 that the king of Babylon began to besiege Jerusalem during Jehoiakim’s reign and from II Kings 24:7 that at that time the king of Babylon took the control of the whole country away from the king of Egypt.

We should read the first chapter of Daniel as an introduction to our lesson for today. We learn from it that Daniel and his three friends—whom we know best by their Chaldee names of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego—were among a group of royal children carried to Babylon because of their superior education and ability, to be brought up in the learning of the Chaldeans. So Daniel was one of the first captives taken to Babylon. We also learn that Daniel

and his three friends were brave enough to remain true to the religion in which they had been brought up, and that for this reason the Lord could prosper them and give them wisdom above their fellows, and that Daniel—like Joseph long before—was given “understanding in all visions and dreams.”

Before we study the meaning of Nebuchadnezzar's dream, let us notice a lesson which comes to us clearly in the letter of the story. Daniel, like Joseph (Genesis 41:16), did not attribute his wisdom to himself, but recognized and acknowledged openly that it came from the Lord. When he heard the decree of Nebuchadnezzar that the wise men should be killed, his immediate impulse was to turn to the Lord for guidance and help and to ask for the prayers of his friends also. So we have in Daniel an outstanding example of humility and trust in the Lord, as well as of obedience and courage. And the result of this humility was that Nebuchadnezzar afterward in raising Daniel to riches and honor also acknowledged that Daniel's God was “a God of gods, and a Lord of kings.” If we follow Daniel's example and do not take credit to ourselves for any goodness or wisdom we may have, we help to bring other people to a recognition of the Lord, and thus advance the kingdom of heaven. There is also in the letter the example of Daniel's desire to save the other wise men as well as himself and his friends (verse 24), and his immediate thought for his three friends when he came into power (verse 49).

Daniel is the only one of the Prophets who attained worldly success and prosperity. Our doctrines teach us that riches and honors do not hurt those who do not set their hearts on them, but recognize that they are given them as means to serve the Lord. We might note that we have testimony to Daniel's position in Babylon from Ezekiel, the other prophet whose message was given during the captivity (see Ezekiel 14:14 and 28:3). Daniel continued in high honor into the reign of Cyrus, under whom some of the Jews were allowed to return to the Holy Land. True and lasting honor is never attained except by one who is humble and God-fearing.

In the letter Daniel interprets Nebuchadnezzar's dream as fore-

telling the future history of the people of Babylon. Nebuchadnezzar would of course understand it in this way. All history is controlled by divine providence. As Daniel says in our chapter (verse 21), “He removeth kings, and setteth up kings.” The history of that part of the country was one of successive conquest by different nations. In our Bible so far we have seen enemies first from that region called Syria, then Assyria, then Babylon, and before the end of the Old Testament we find Darius the Mede and then Cyrus the Persian ruling there. But even in the letter the final kingdom, which is to last forever, is said to be a kingdom set up by “the God of heaven.” The kingdom of heaven is the only permanent kingdom.

In its spiritual meaning Nebuchadnezzar’s image pictures the decline of the kind of church which is called Babylon. You remember from our lesson on king Josiah that Babylon represents “the love of dominion from the love of self.” How can such a love be associated with a church? The answer is that the love of dominion is something which develops gradually and often is not recognized for a long time. Perhaps you remember from an earlier lesson that when messengers of the king of Babylon visited king Hezekiah, they said they came as friends because their king had heard that Hezekiah had been sick, and Hezekiah received them as friends and showed them all his treasures. And in our story of Daniel Nebuchadnezzar wanted young men brought from Judah who were “skillful in all wisdom,” and after Daniel interpreted his dream, he was willing to acknowledge Daniel’s God. This is why Nebuchadnezzar can be called the head of gold of the image, for the head represents wisdom and gold the good of love to the Lord. In the beginning a person in whom the love of dominion lies hidden may be eager for knowledge of the Lord and active in worship and good deeds. But as the love of dominion begins to assert itself, the person first loses love to the Lord although he still loves the knowledge he has acquired. This is the breast and arms of silver. Then he comes to think that if he does outward good works, he is necessarily a good person and to be praised. This is the belly and



thighs of brass. Then he stops doing good works but thinks he is good because he is perhaps a member of the church and knows its teachings. This is the legs of iron. But by this time a great deal of falsity has become mixed up with his religion. His conduct is directed partly according to true principles and partly by false ones, and the two do not hold together. This is the feet part of iron and part of clay. In the light of genuine truth—the stone cut out without hands—there is then nothing left of his goodness and wisdom. Nebuchadnezzar's image is really a picture of the whole history of mankind who in the beginning, you remember, were in love to the Lord, but gradually turned toward themselves and lost their goodness and then their knowledge, until finally only the coming of the Lord Himself into the world could save them. When Peter said to the Lord, "Thou art the Christ," the Lord said, "On this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." The Lord came into the world as divine truth, and this was the stone which grew into a great mountain.

*Basic Correspondences*

iron = natural truth

clay = natural good turned to evil by being attributed to self

the feet = our daily conduct

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**Senior**

The Seniors should be impressed with the depths of meaning which are to be found in the story of this dream image and with the variety of applications which it has. But the most important lesson for them is the danger of thinking themselves better and wiser than others and so letting the love of dominion creep into their hearts.

You may recall that in the divided kingdom Israel represents the mind and Judah the heart or will. Israel was taken captive by Assyria, which represents false reasoning, but Judah by Babylon, which represents "the love of dominion from the love of self." We meet this love of dominion in many forms in ourselves as well as in

others. We all like to think ourselves better than other people and to criticize others for not thinking and doing as we do. Of course we admit in a general way that we don't know everything and that we have faults, but we tend to excuse ourselves and not to excuse others. In any given case we are sure that the person who disagrees with us is wrong, and we are tempted to look for means of discrediting him and in the process to become careless of the truth and quite uncharitable. It is this kind of progressive deterioration of character as a result of the love of dominion which Nebuchadnezzar's image represents in its application to the individual life. We know that gold represents love to the Lord, silver spiritual truth or faith, brass natural goodness, and iron natural truth. Clay is another symbol of natural good, but in a bad sense it is this good turned to evil through being attributed to self. The head is the symbol of wisdom and the feet represent the outward conduct. So the image pictures the fact that even someone who starts with the intention of serving the Lord and a great deal of knowledge of spiritual things may—if he begins to think of his goodness and wisdom as his own and so sets himself above others—reach the point where his conduct toward others is wholly lacking in charity and directed by falsity rather than truth. Then if he is suddenly confronted by divine truth—as, for example, the truth that our conduct must be the expression of unselfish love for the Lord and the neighbor—the whole picture of himself which he has built up in his mind collapses and is blown away.

There are other applications of the meaning of Nebuchadnezzar's dream. In the letter Daniel gave Nebuchadnezzar its historical application. As we learn from chapters 3 and 4, Nebuchadnezzar himself, although he acknowledged Daniel's God with his lips, actually embodied the spirit represented by Babylon, and the kingdom he had built up passed to another nation not long after his death. The Lord is not only the creator and sustainer of the universe but is always in control of history. The rise and fall of nations is according to their service to the Lord or to self. This is something we should always keep in mind in forming our opinions in regard to

the policies and conduct of our own nation. For, as we read in Isaiah 60:12, "The nation and kingdom that will not serve thee shall perish." Even in this outmost interpretation of the image you notice that the final kingdom which is to stand forever is to be one which God shall set up.

Swedenborg interprets the image as applying to the church pictured by Babylon, which begins in genuine worship of the Lord but allows itself to come more and more into the love of rule until it has falsified all its truth by assuming the Lord's powers for itself. Swedenborg also in many places interprets the image as picturing the whole history of the Lord's church in the world. In this sense the head of gold is the Most Ancient Church, the breast and arms of silver the Ancient Church, the belly and thighs of brass the Hebrew Church through the time of the patriarchs, the legs of iron the Israelitish Church established among the sons of Jacob, and the feet of iron and clay this church in its last state when the Lord came into the world. The stone cut out without hands is divine truth in the person of the Lord Himself. In connection with this interpretation, we remember that mythology tells of the golden, silver, bronze, and iron ages.

There are many interesting stories in the book of Daniel as well as some wonderful prophecies concerning the Lord's Advent and even concerning His Second Coming. Daniel, the fourth of the Major Prophets, is the only prophet who became rich and powerful in the world, and he retained his prosperity and power throughout his long life, which extended into the reign of Cyrus, under whom the Jews were allowed to return to the Holy Land. But we see from the very first chapter of the book that Daniel's success was founded on his humility and obedience to the Lord. His story has striking similarities to that of Joseph, and it also gives us a good example of the truth of the ninety-first Psalm, which we have studied. Nothing could hurt Daniel because he trusted in the Lord.

There is another lesson which we should draw from our chapter. Because Daniel from the start disclaimed any credit for his wisdom and said that it was the Lord who was giving Nebuchadnezzar his

answer—just as Joseph had told Pharaoh so long before—Nebuchadnezzar acknowledged the God of Daniel as the greatest of all gods, even though he also honored and rewarded Daniel himself. We do not lead people to the Lord by trying to impress them with our own goodness and wisdom. If you look back over history and look about you in the world, you will find that the men and women who are regarded as truly great are not the self-confident ones but those who recognize their own weakness and look to the Lord for guidance and strength.

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### Adult

Although the meaning of Babylon and the application of the lesson to Babylon should be brought to the attention of the Adults, the meaning developed in the quotation from AE 411<sup>4</sup> should probably be given the greater part of the class time. Call attention to the fact that Babylon first appears in the Scriptures in the form of Babel and that it is not finally disposed of until chapter 18 of Revelation. It is our arch-enemy from the cradle to the grave.

The prophet Daniel, the fourth of the Major Prophets, was a member of the royal family of Judah and was carried to Babylon as a boy or very young man during the reign of Jehoiakim in Judah, when Babylon first invaded Judah and put it to tribute, thus before either of the two general deportations. We should read the first chapter of Daniel as a basis for understanding our lesson for today.

We remember that the ancient Jewish nation was only representative of a true church, and that it became more and more false to its original commission until it could no longer serve in that function. We remember, too, that Babylon represents “the love of dominion from the love of self,” the spiritual enemy which finally captivates the heart of the man who ceases to look to the Lord for guidance and to obey Him. So we may understand the meaning of Swedenborg’s summary interpretation of chapter 1 in *Prophets and Psalms*: “When the church among the Jewish nation had been destroyed, ‘Babylon’ appropriated to herself all things pertaining to it. She wished to know all things of the church, and to acquire

an understanding of them, and this was the beginning of 'Babylon'." Here Swedenborg is using Babylon to designate a particular type of church in the world, and this application of the meaning in *Prophets and Psalms* is continued through chapter 6. Then in chapter 7, which marks a transition, the application to the general history of the churches from the beginning is introduced, and the rest of the summary continues this larger application. In the light of this change it is interesting to read part of the Rev. William Hayden's account of the book of Daniel in *Our Heavenly Father's Book*:

The introduction to the book (Chap. i) is written in Hebrew, Daniel's native tongue. But when, as in the next chapter, he came to speak of and with the Chaldeans, who 'spake to the king in Syriac' (verse 4), he changed his language, and spake and wrote in their tongue, the Syriac or Chaldean, sometimes called also Aramaic. So from ii, 4 to end of Chap. vii., is in Chaldee, a language having the same characters and varying very little from the Hebrew. At the beginning of chapter viii., where Daniel resumes his own experiences as a prophet of the Lord, he returns to the Hebrew, and continues that to the end of the book.

The book thus is partly historical and partly prophetic. The prophecies may be divided into two parts; the first, those written in Chaldee, Chap. ii. to vii., giving an account of Belshazzar's feast, the den of lions, and the vision of the four beasts ascending out of the sea.

The second part, written in Hebrew, contains the vision of the ram and hegoat, Chap. viii.; Daniel's prayer and the unfolding of the prophecy of the seventy years by the Angel Gabriel, Chap. ix.; the fourth prophetic vision, which Daniel had in the third year of Cyrus, fills the last three chapters. The wonderful appearance of the Lord to him, in Chap. x., should receive careful study.

The close analogy between Daniel's prophecies and the Book of Revelation, has been recognized by nearly all commentators. Not only the first coming of the Lord, but His second coming also is foretold; and events connected with the Lord's spiritual kingdom on earth are foreshadowed, from the beginning of Christianity to the very last ages, yet to come.

In the writings both the particular and the general application of the spiritual meaning of the image are given in some detail. The one application shows us in a striking way the danger of allowing

the love of dominion to gain power in our hearts. This love is often unrecognized at first. We recall that Hezekiah received the ambassadors of the king of Babylon as friends and showed them all his treasures, and that Isaiah was sent to him with the message: “Behold, the days come, that all that is in thine house, and that which thy fathers have laid up in store unto this day, shall be carried into Babylon: nothing shall be left, saith the Lord.”

But there are many more passages in the writings which cite Nebuchadnezzar’s image as picturing the whole history of the church from the beginning. Such a passage is the following from AE 411<sup>4</sup>: “‘The head of the image’ which was gold, signifies the Most Ancient Church, which was a celestial church, or a church in which the good of love to the Lord reigned; this good is signified in the Word by ‘gold,’ and also by ‘the head’; ‘the breast’ and ‘the arms’ which were silver, signify the Ancient Church, which succeeded the Most Ancient, and this church was a spiritual church, or a church in which the good of charity towards the neighbor, and truth from that good, reigned; this truth and good are signified by ‘silver,’ and also by ‘the breast’ and ‘the arms’; ‘the belly and the thighs which were brass’ signify the church which succeeded the ancient spiritual church and which may be called spiritual-natural; in this church the good of faith and the truth from that good reigned; this good is signified in the Word by ‘brass,’ and also by ‘the belly’ and ‘the thighs’; but ‘the legs and the feet, which were part iron and part clay,’ signify the Israelitish and Jewish Church, which was an external church without any internal, and which therefore had no truth and good, but truth falsified which in itself is falsity, and good adulterated which in itself is evil; therefore it is said respecting it in this chapter: ‘Whereas thou sawest iron mixed with miry clay, they shall mingle themselves with the seed of man; but they shall not cohere one with the other, even as iron doth not mingle with clay (verse 43).’ ‘Iron’ signifies natural truth, and ‘miry clay’ natural good; ‘the feet and legs’ have a like meaning; but here ‘clay’ signifies good adulterated, and ‘iron’ such truth as there is in the external sense of the Word; for ‘the

seed of man' means the Word where there are goods and truths, the adulterations and falsifications of which are described by 'iron mixed with clay, which do not cohere one with the other.' . . . 'The stone' that smote the image means Divine truth from the Lord; that 'it became a great rock and filled the whole earth' signifies that the Lord by Divine truth is to rule over heaven and the church."

The love of dominion is in all of us by inheritance. Babylon appears in the Word first as the Tower of Babel, the consummation of the Ancient Church. We need to recognize this evil in ourselves whenever and in whatever guise it crops up, and to fight it as the most subtle and deadly enemy of our spiritual life.

That it can be successfully resisted we learn from the story of Daniel. The character of Daniel stands out in sharp contrast to the state pictured by Babylon. Although he was one of those youths selected for his ability and education, he never took credit to himself for his wisdom. In the face of one danger after another he remained boldly faithful to the principles of his religion. In every emergency he looked to the Lord for guidance. He was true to his friends and also never bitter or resentful toward those who sought to injure him. And success and power had no bad effect on him. He retained both to the end of his life under several rulers and national sovereignties. Daniel, like Joseph, shows how divine power can express itself through the life of a person who is consistently humble before the Lord and obedient to His precepts. Daniel and Joseph are both examples of the man to whom, as we saw in our lesson on Psalm 91, the promises of protection by the Lord and the angels are addressed.

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#### From the Writings of Swedenborg

*Apocalypse Explained*, n. 1029<sup>5</sup>: "From the interpretation of this dream by Daniel, it is clear that it describes the state of the church that becomes Babylon, from its beginning to its end. . . . The successive states of this church even to the last are depicted by the head, breast, arms, belly, thighs, legs, and feet of the statue; likewise by the gold, silver, brass, iron and clay, of which

the statue consisted from top to bottom. All this makes clear that this church in its beginning was full of wisdom from the good of love to the Lord. For its 'head,' which is the highest part, signifies wisdom, and 'gold' signifies the good of love to the Lord. That the toes of its feet were 'part of iron and part of clay' signifies that the last state of that church would be without any good of love and without any wisdom. . . . 'The seed of man' signifies the Divine truth, thus the truth of the Word; and by this no coherence is effected, because at the end of the church it is falsified by application to the worship of men."

*Arcana Coelestia*, n. 9406<sup>7</sup>: "That 'a stone out of the rock broke in pieces the iron, the brass, the silver, and the gold' signifies that the church perishes in respect to the reception of truth from the Word, when falsity and evil are confirmed by the sense of the letter of the Word, as is the case when the church is in its last state, when it is no longer in any heavenly love, but only in worldly and bodily love. Such was the Word in respect to its reception among the Jewish nation when the Lord came into the world; and such is the Word with many at this day, insomuch that it is not even known that there is anything internal in the Word; and if it were said that there is, and its nature were to be told, it would not be received; when yet in the most ancient times, which were signified by 'gold,' nothing else was seen in the sense of the letter of the Word than what is heavenly, almost abstractedly from the letter."

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### Suggested Questions on the Lesson

- J. Where did Daniel prophesy? *Babylon*
- P. Why could the Lord always protect and enlighten Daniel? *his faith*
- J. Who was the king of Babylon at this time? *Nebuchadnezzar*
- P. What did he ask of his wise men? *recall and interpret his dream*
- P. How did Daniel learn the answer? *through prayer*
- J. What was Nebuchadnezzar's dream? *great image*
- P. What was the head of the image made of? *gold*
- J. What other metals formed other parts? *silver, bronze, iron*
- J. Of what were its feet? *iron and clay*
- P. How was it destroyed? *great stone*
- P. What became of the stone which destroyed it? *became a mountain*
- J. What did Nebuchadnezzar say about Daniel's God? *"a God of gods"*
- J. How did he reward Daniel? *ruler of province*
- I. What do the four metals in the image correspond to? *gold, love to God; silver, faith; bronze, natural goodness; iron, natural truth*
- I. What do the feet correspond to? *outer life*
- S. What does the whole vision picture? *the spiritual decline of one who allows love of dominion to develop in his life*