Take Time to Step Back



Nebuchadnezzar threatened to kill his wise men if they couldn't tell him about his dream. When they pleaded for time he accused them of *stalling.* When Daniel heard, he asked why it was so *urgent*, and went to the king and *asked for time* to interpret the dream. After he went home and *took time to pray*, the secret was revealed. Daniel gave thanks for receiving the answer and then delivered the Lord's message.

Like Nebuchadnezzar, we might sometimes want something *now*, and lash out in anger— "killing" others' joy, sense of fair play, or even our relationships. Students will engage in a timed task—"building" Nebuchadnezzar's statue—and race to beat their time (and/or others' times). Discuss how acting quickly in anger can hurt ourselves and others, and how taking time to pray keeps the Lord in mind.

1. Distribute copies of *Nebuchadnezzar's Statue Puzzle* (p. 2) and scissors. Cut out all the puzzle pieces. Some of them will make a statue that fits together correctly. Some of them will not work at all. You can either have all the students work together try to assemble one puzzle while you keep time or divide them into pairs and have them take turns timing each other.
2. Shuffle the pieces and place them face down on the table. Give students a go mark and have them assemble Nebuchadnezzar's statue, putting aside any pieces that do not fit. Encourage accuracy.
3. Tell students how long it took, and then challenge them to cut their assembly time *in half* i.e. if it took 30 seconds, try for 15 seconds next time. Re-shuffle the pieces, and time students as they re-assemble the statue. Did you make your goal? How did hurrying affect you?
4. Nebuchadnezzar pictures selfish desires. Why might he have been so impatient that he ordered his wise men to be killed? What qualities in us are like this?
5. Compare Daniel's use of time with Nebuchadnezzar's use of time. Is speed a virtue? What's more important—*how* something is done, or how *fast* it's done?
6. Older people can be very good at sports because they think strategically, based on a lot of experience, even though they are not as fast as younger people. How might taking time to strategize (sports, homework, hobbies) actually *save* time?
7. Daniel took time to pray for clear understanding. And then he didn't rush right to Nebuchadnezzar to tell him the answer. He took time to thank the Lord first. How might using the strategy of keeping the Lord in mind through prayer and thanksgiving change the outcome of a problem?
8. Have you tried stepping back from a situation? How did it help?

Materials Needed for Each Student

copies of the *Nebuchadnezzar's Statue Puzzle* p. 2, scissors, stopwatch or phone app or other way to keep time to share

Prepare in Advance

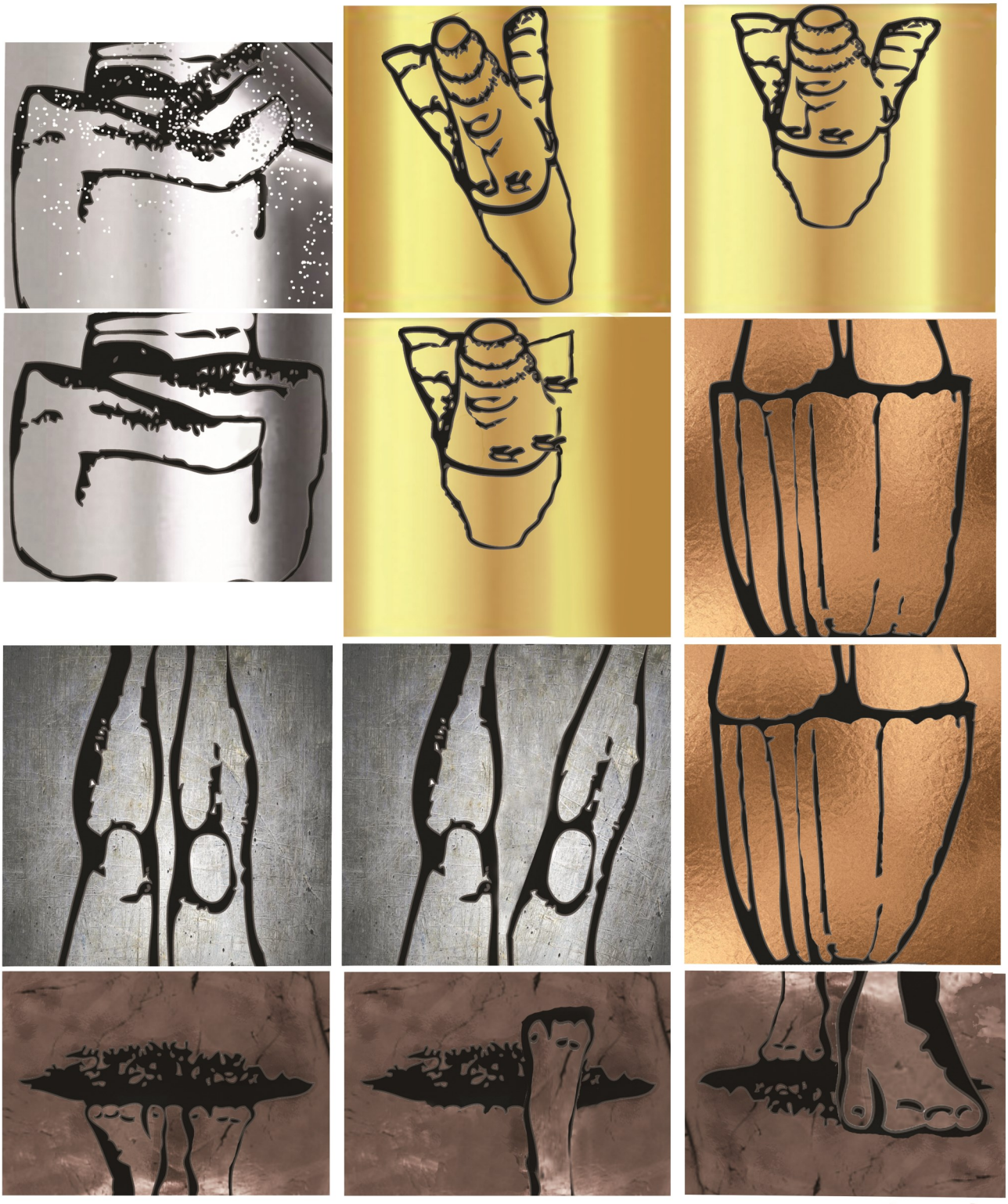
Print puzzle. Gather supplies.

New Church Concept Loves

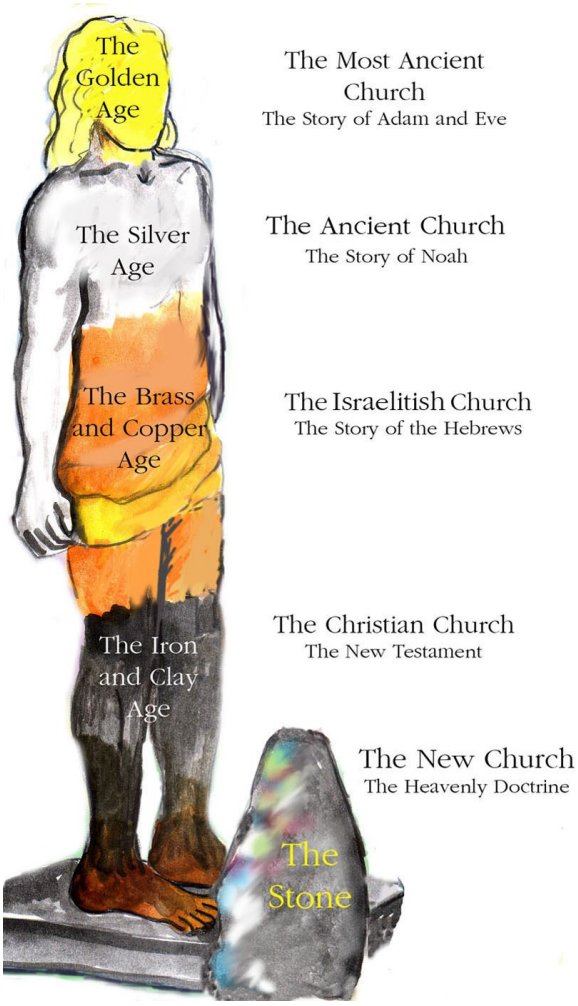
When the loves of the Lord, the world and ourselves are properly prioritized in us, they are also coordinated in such a way that the highest love, our love for heaven, is present in the second love, our love for the world, and through that in the third or lowest love, our love for ourselves. In fact, the love that is inside steers the love that is outside wherever it wants. Therefore if a love for heaven is present in our love for the world and through that in our love for ourselves, with each type of love we accomplish useful things that are inspired by the God of heaven. See *True Christian Religion* 395

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Nebuchadnezzar's Statue Puzzle



For Teachers: The Meaning of the Statue



Many people have interpreted the meaning of the statue in Nebuchadnezzar's Dream as having to do with the history of civilizations. Although we have not focused on this aspect in the materials for students, the New Church has been given a variation of this understanding. Instead of earthly civilizations, we are taught that the different parts of the statue represent different churches, or religions, that the Lord has established on the earth.

The way the Lord established these religions or churches was through revelations. The Lord helps people find the way to heaven by revealing Himself to them. Over time, as the human race developed, the Lord provided new revelations, so that all people might know Him.

Historically, the Lord has established five churches on earth where He is known, each with a distinctive revelation. These churches are the Most Ancient Church, the Ancient Church, the Israelitish Church, the Christian Church, and the New Church. The statue and the rock in Nebuchadnezzar's dream represents these churches.

The revelation for **The Most Ancient Church** was not written. Instead the Lord gave the Most Ancients dreams and visions as well as the ability to communicate with angels. He also filled their minds with heavenly ideas, for they perceived spiritual meanings in everything they saw in nature. The golden head of the statue represented the Most Ancient Church.

The **Ancient Church** was given a revelation called the Ancient Word, written as stories with spiritual meanings. Most of this Word was lost, but a portion is found at the beginning of the book of Genesis. The silver chest of the statue represented the Ancient Church.

The Lord gave the **Israelitish Church** the Old Testament by means of Moses and other prophets. The Old Testament tells about the history of the Israelites while also teaching us about the Lord and His laws of order. The belly and thighs of the statue represented the Israelitish Church.

The New Testament was the new revelation given as the **Christian Church** was established. This part of the Word tells us what the Lord did on earth, describing His miracles and what He taught people. It also prophesies how the Lord would establish the New Church. The legs and feet of the statue represented the Christian Church.

The revelation given to the **New Church** is called the "Heavenly Doctrine of the New Jerusalem" or "The Writings". It tells the inner meaning of stories in the Old and New Testaments and provides us with new teachings about the Lord, heaven, and marriage which people are now ready to receive. The stone that broke the statue and grew to fill the earth represents the New Church.

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