

General Church Education



Nebuchadnezzar's Statue

Daniel 2:27-35

Lesson 34

Jacob's Ladder Religion Lessons

Level 3: The Lord Is Our Lawgiver

For ages 8-9 years

Nebuchadnezzar's Statue

Daniel 2:27-35

For Parents and Teachers

Daniel is a great example of someone who lived his religion. He made it a practice to look to the Lord for truth and guidance. He made sure King Nebuchadnezzar knew his power to interpret dreams came from the Lord and not from himself. Because Jehovah's power and Daniel's faith, Nebuchadnezzar acknowledged that Daniel's God was the greatest of all gods. Daniel's intelligence, humility and trust in the Lord allowed him to prosper even in the foreign and hostile land of Babylon. We can prosper spiritually when we emulate these qualities of Daniel.

Nebuchadnezzar's dream is a parable of the history of the church on earth. In the beginning people loved the Lord. Gradually people turned toward themselves. Eventually they lost all that was good and true and the Lord had to come into the world to save them. Finally, He came a second time as the spirit of truth to raise people's understanding into the light of heaven. This is a hopeful prophecy that the New Church will someday fill the whole earth when a wise and sincere love for the Lord and neighbor govern all human relationships.

Ideas for Children

- Prophecies sometimes come in visions or dreams.
- A prophecy of the New Church was given in Daniel.
- Jesus Christ is all-powerful.

From the Writings

The New Church is the crown of all the churches which have previously existed upon earth, because it will worship one visible God, in whom is the invisible God, as the soul is in the body. In this way and no other is God's connection with people possible. Connecting with an invisible God is like joining the sight of the eye with the expanse of the universe, the bounds of which are not to be seen. Or it is like looking out in the middle of an ocean, when the gaze falls on air and sea and is frustrated. But being connected with a visible God is like seeing a person in the air or the sea opening his arms and inviting you into his embrace. For any connection of God with a person must also be a reciprocal connection of a person with God; and this is only possible with a visible God.

Daniel prophesied that this church would take the place of those which had come into existence since the world began, and would last for ever and ever. It would thus be the crown of all the preceding churches. He made this prophecy first when he recounted and explained to Nebuchadnezzar his dream of the four kingdoms, which mean the four churches, represented by the statue he saw. *True Christian Religion* 787 and 788

Nebuchadnezzar's Statue

Daniel 2:27-35

Words to Understand

chaff—husks of grain that have been separated from the seed

soothsayer—one who claims to foretell events

The Prophet Daniel

Nebuchadnezzar, King of Babylon, had conquered the Holy Land. He gathered the strongest, most intelligent and important Jews and took them to Babylon as captives. Daniel was one of them. He was a prince of Judah. Although only a young boy, he had been taught the Hebrew religion, was intelligent and well-educated. Daniel learned the Chaldean (Babylonian) ways and language so he could serve the king. He was given a Chaldean name, Belteshazzar.

Daniel served the new king honestly, justly and faithfully. But Daniel also remained faithful to his God and kept His commandments in the new land. This was not an easy thing to do. It took courage! For example, even as a young man, Daniel refused to eat the Babylonian King's tasty food because it was forbidden by the laws of his religion. When he grew up, Daniel refused to worship

an idol even though the king commanded it. Perhaps you know how he was put into a den with lions because of his refusal. But Daniel was protected from the lions because he was doing what he knew was right.



Nebuchadnezzar's Dream

Our lesson today is about a dream that King Nebuchadnezzar had. It was a strange dream and it troubled him greatly. Nebuchadnezzar knew the dream held an important message. In those days people had dreams sent by the Lord to tell them about future events. But King Nebuchadnezzar could not remember the dream and he became frightened. He was so upset that he called all his magicians, sorcerers and soothsayers and demanded that they tell him both the dream and its meaning. Do you think any of these wizards were able to do this? Not one of them could

because the dream was sent from the Lord. So the king decided that all the wise men in the land should be killed.

When the king's guard sought out Daniel to kill him, he said he could tell the king about his dream. Then Daniel prayed to the Lord for help and was given a vision while he slept. He was shown Nebuchadnezzar's dream and also the meaning of it. Then Daniel was taken before the king.

Read Daniel 2:27-35.

Did you notice who Daniel said told him the dream and its meaning? He said it was the God in heaven who reveals secrets.

Daniel wanted to be sure the king knew that this wisdom was not his own but came from the Lord. The Lord had revealed to him the dream of the awesome image or statue and the uncut stone that destroyed it and became a great mountain.



The Interpretation

Daniel told the king the dream and then explained its meaning. He said that the statue of gold, silver, bronze, iron and clay meant different kingdoms that would follow Nebuchadnezzar's kingdom. The stone that struck the statue and filled the whole earth meant the Lord Himself would come and set up His kingdom on earth. It would destroy all the other kingdoms and it would last forever.

In the Writings we learn that these kingdoms are all the churches that were in the world before the New Church. The head of the image made of gold meant the Most Ancient Church of the Golden Age represented by Adam and Eve in the beginning of creation. The chest and arms of silver meant the Ancient Church of the Silver Age represented by Noah and his family. The belly and thighs of brass or copper represented the Israelitish Church which began with Moses. The legs of iron and feet of iron mixed with clay meant the Christian Church which began when the Lord was born on earth.

The Second Coming

Nebuchadnezzar's dream was a prophecy of the New Church that would come on earth



and eventually spread everywhere. Just as with other prophecies of the Lord’s Coming, this one tells about a time when the Lord would have to be present so that He could conquer the forces of evil and bring spiritual freedom back to people on earth. But this time the Lord would not be born as a baby as in His first coming. The stone cut without hands that destroyed the image and became a great mountain pictures the Lord coming as new truths for the New Church. These new truths are called the Heavenly Doctrine and they were given through Emanuel Swedenborg to bring great spiritual happiness to a suffering world. When the New Church has spread throughout the world this uncut stone will have become like the great mountain in the king’s dream.

The Lord Is All-powerful

Can you think why the Lord is pictured as a rock or stone in the Word? It is because He is all-powerful. Psalm 18 says, “The Lord is my rock and my fortress and my deliverer; my God, my strength, in Whom I will trust.” Without strength from the Lord we could do nothing. We could not fight against evil. But

we can turn to the Lord when we need strength to do what is right and He will protect us. We can turn to the Lord and learn from Him. His truth can guide our lives to heaven. The strong truth of the New Church can destroy all our weak and imperfect desires and show us how following the Lord God Jesus Christ can bring new and beautiful life to all people.

Discussion Ideas

- Daniel courageously lived in integrity and led a religious life. Has your faith in the Lord and the New Church been challenged? How could Daniel’s example help you?
- Nebuchadnezzar’s dream prophesied that the New Church would eventually fill the earth. All who follow the Lord and live well help the Lord’s church to grow. Investigate where people in the world belong to the New Church at newchurch.org.

Activity Overview | Nebuchadnezzar's Statue

Recitation

Learn the recitation by heart.

And he showed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding from the throne of God and of the Lamb. In the middle of its street, and on either side of the river, was the tree of life, which bore twelve fruits, each tree yielding its fruit every month. The leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. Revelation 22:1, 2

Songs

Lord, for Countless Gifts We Thank Thee

Listen or download at <https://www.newchurchvineyard.org/resource/song-lord-for-countless-gifts-we-thank-thee/>

New Hope of Every Nation

Listen or download at <https://www.newchurchvineyard.org/resource/song-new-hope-of-every-nation/>

Peace Be to This Congregation

Listen or download at <https://www.newchurchvineyard.org/resource/song-peace-be-to-this-congregation/>

The Lord God Jesus Christ Reigns!

Listen or download at <https://www.newchurchvineyard.org/resource/song-the-lord-god-jesus-christ-reigns/>

Projects

Choose one or two activities.

- Activity 1 | Nebuchadnezzar's Dream Crossword Puzzle
- Activity 2 | Write an Acrostic on DANIEL
- Picture to Color—Nebuchadnezzar's Dream Statue (Daniel 2)

Additional Activity Ideas

- Create a statue of the image in Nebuchadnezzar's dream out of clay or play dough.
- Gather beautiful stones to remind you of the Lord's strength.
- Can you remember a time when others were doing something that you knew was wrong, something that was against the commandments? How did you feel? Talk about the choices you made and why.

Activity 1 | Nebuchadnezzar's Dream Crossword Puzzle



Word Bank

Babylon
 Daniel
 dream
 God
 idol
 Lord
 New
 soothsayer
 statue
 stone

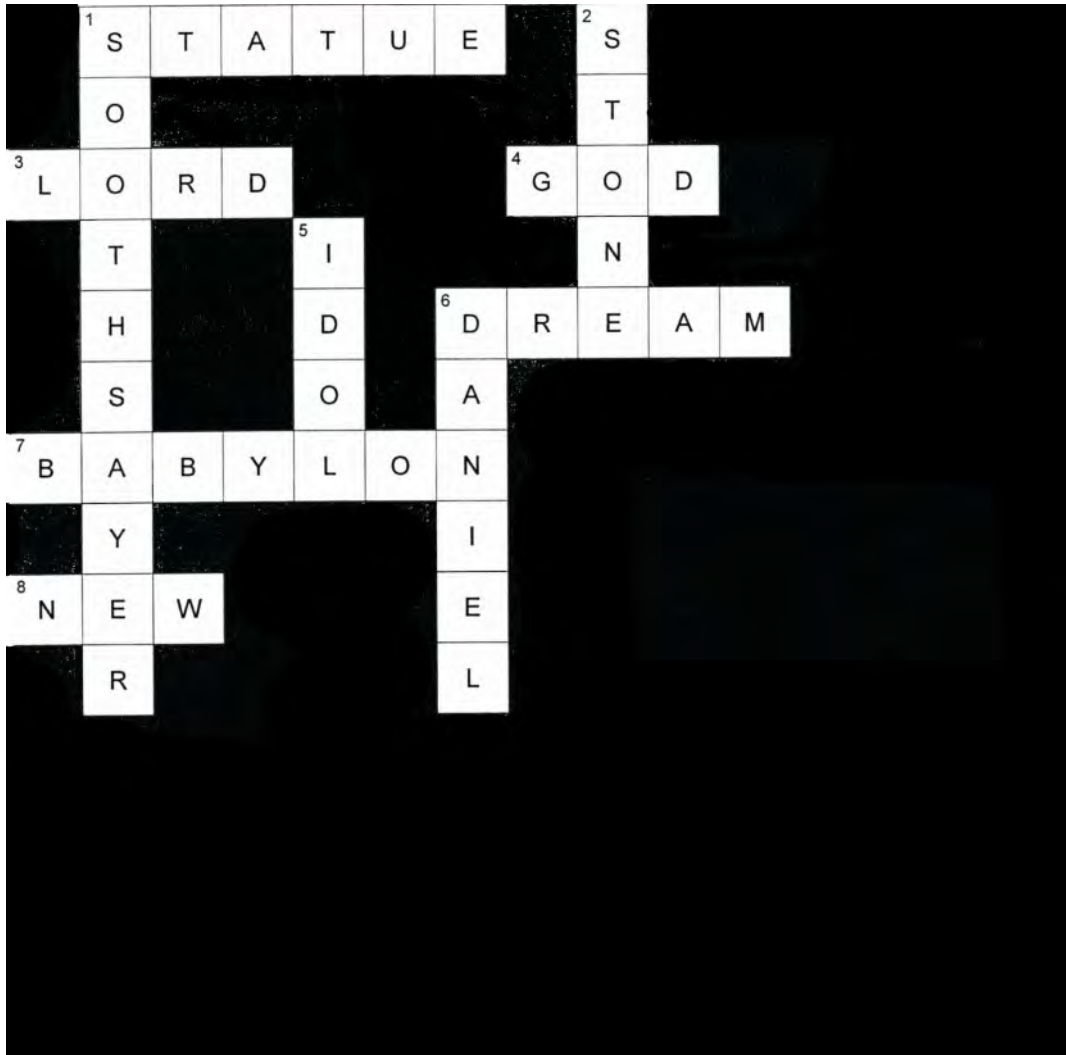
Across

1. What did the king see in his troubling dream?
3. Who did the prophets speak for?
4. Daniel served the new king but remained faithful to his _____.
6. Nebuchadnezzar had a strange _____.
7. Nebuchadnezzar was the king of what country?
8. The dream was an early prophecy of the _____ Church.

Down

1. One who claims to foretell events is called a _____.
2. What destroyed the statue?
5. Daniel refused to worship an _____ even though the king commanded it.
6. Who was able to tell the meaning of the dream?

Activity 1 | Nebuchadnezzar's Dream Crossword Puzzle Answers



Activity 2 | Write an Acrostic on DANIEL

Use the letters of the name “Daniel” to start each line of your poem. For example for the letter D you could write: *Different lands have different customs.*

If you can't think of a way to start a line with the letter, use it somewhere else in the sentence and highlight it like this: *Some **D**reams contain messages.*

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