

# Nebuchadnezzar's Dream

## Teacher's Notes

Like Nebuchadnezzar, we sometimes struggle with selfishness. The Lord made Nebuchadnezzar aware of his spiritual choices by sending a dream which he could not understand. The image in the dream pictured how selfishness can drag a person down completely if left unchecked. Only Daniel (conscience) could bring true perspective on the dream and its meaning.

Daniel 2 Lesson Plan		Materials Needed
<b>1. Welcome Activity</b> (2-3 minutes)	Dream Discussion pp. 1-2	
<b>2. Focus on the Word</b> (5-7 minutes)	Read Daniel 2 and discuss p. 2	shortened version of text included on p. 3
<b>3. Learn by Doing</b> Choose 1-2 activities (15-20 minutes)	Knock Down the Statue pp. 5-10	scissors, tape or glue <i>optional:</i> a ball, such as a tennis ball
	The Power of the Lord's Truth p. 11	milk; shallow dish; liquid food coloring in various colors; good quality dish soap; cotton buds, such as Q-tips; sink to clean up
	Picture to Color p. 12	crayons or markers
<b>4. Recitation &amp; Closing</b> (2-3 minutes)	Recitation and Closing p. 13	Parent Note p. 14

## Welcome Activity: Dream Discussion

Our story today involves a dream with an important message. Various people in the Word had dreams giving them messages, for example Jacob, Joseph and the wise men. While dreams do not give us messages today, they can help us think about our lives and the lives of others.

continued on next page

## New Church Concept Dreams

It is known that the Lord revealed heavenly secrets to the prophets by means of dreams. Things to come were disclosed to others besides the prophets, for example the dreams which Pharaoh, Nebuchadnezzar, and others had. Dreams of that kind come down and flow in from heaven. See *Arcana Coelestia* 1975

There are three types of dreams. The first type comes from the Lord through heaven. Prophetic dreams in the Word were like this. The second type comes by way of angelic spirits. This type of dream taught people in the Most Ancient Church. The third type of dream comes from spirits close to a person sleeping. These too carry spiritual meanings. See *Arcana Coelestia* 1976

## *Dream Discussion continued*

1. Have you had a dream that was so good you didn't want to wake up?
2. How about a dream that was scary?
3. Have you ever had a dream you couldn't remember, but wished you could?
4. In today's story, the king had a dream he couldn't understand. Pay attention to the way in which he wanted his wise men to help him find out what was in his dream.

---

### *Focus on the Word*

---

**Read:** Daniel 2. A shortened version is included on page 3. For young children you may wish to summarize some of the story and read aloud the sentences printed in **bold**.

1. **King Nebuchadnezzar had a dream while he was asleep. He was upset because he couldn't understand his dream. He knew it had an important message, and he wanted to discover what it was. Have you had a dream that puzzled you?**
2. **King Nebuchadnezzar asked his wise men to tell him what he had dreamed, and what it meant. Why couldn't they do it?**
3. **How did the king feel about that? How do you feel when you do not get what you want? Have you ever felt angry? What might you do to stop feeling angry and perhaps saying or doing things that could hurt others?**
4. **One of the king's officers informed Daniel that the king was angry, so Daniel asked to see the king so he could tell him his dream. What did Daniel do next?** He prayed to the Lord.
5. **What was in Nebuchadnezzar's dream?** He dreamed of a great statue with a gold head, arms and chest of silver, belly and thighs of bronze, legs of iron and feet of iron and clay.
6. **How did the statue break?** A rock cut without hands struck its feet, crushing it, and it blew away. The rock grew into a big mountain that filled the earth.
7. **Rocks stand for true ideas from the Word that tell us what is right and good. The statue was a picture of King Nebuchadnezzar's selfishness that needed to be broken, to be removed. We need to change too. The Word teaches that we must love the Lord first, and not ourselves.**
8. **How did the king thank Daniel for telling and explaining his dream?** He made Daniel a ruler and gave him gifts.
9. **We can thank the Lord for giving us His truth so that we can learn to love the Lord and others. The Lord knows that this is how He can make us truly happy.**

# Nebuchadnezzar's Dream

<sup>1</sup>King Nebuchadnezzar had a troubling dream and could not sleep. <sup>2</sup>So he summoned the magicians, enchanters, sorcerers and astrologers to tell him what he had dreamed. When they came <sup>3</sup>he said, **“I have had a dream that troubles me and I want to know what it means.”** <sup>4</sup>They answered, “May the king live forever! Tell us the dream, and we will interpret it.”

<sup>5</sup>The king replied, “I have decided if you do not tell me my dream and interpret it, I will have you cut into pieces and your houses turned into rubble. <sup>6</sup>But if you tell me the dream and explain it, you will receive gifts and rewards and great honor.” <sup>10</sup>**The astrologers answered, “No one on earth can do what the king asks!”**

<sup>12</sup>**This made the king angry.** <sup>13</sup>So the decree was issued to put the wise men to death, and **men were sent to look for Daniel and his friends.** <sup>15</sup>Daniel asked the king’s officer, “Why did the king issue such a harsh decree?” The officer explained and <sup>16</sup>**Daniel went to the king and asked for time to interpret the dream.**

<sup>17</sup>Then Daniel explained the matter to Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah. <sup>18</sup>He urged them to plead for mercy from the God of heaven so that they might not be executed. <sup>19</sup>During the night the mystery was revealed to Daniel in a vision. Then Daniel praised the God of heaven.

<sup>24</sup>Then Daniel said, “Take me to the king, and I will interpret his dream.” <sup>25</sup>The officer took Daniel to the king and said, “I have found a man who can tell the king what his dream means.” <sup>26</sup>The king asked Daniel, “Are you able to tell me what I saw in my dream and interpret it?” <sup>27</sup>Daniel replied, “No wise man can explain the mystery the king has asked about, <sup>28</sup>but **there is a God who reveals mysteries. He has shown King Nebuchadnezzar what will happen. Your dream and visions are these:**

<sup>31</sup>**“You looked, and there before you stood a large statue, awesome in appearance. <sup>32</sup>The head of the statue was gold, its chest and arms silver, its belly and thighs bronze, <sup>33</sup>its legs iron, its feet partly of iron and partly of baked clay. <sup>34</sup>While you were watching, a rock was cut. It struck the statue on its feet of iron and clay and smashed them. <sup>35</sup>Then the iron, the clay, the bronze, the silver and the gold were broken, and the wind swept them away. The rock that struck the statue became a mountain and filled the whole earth.**

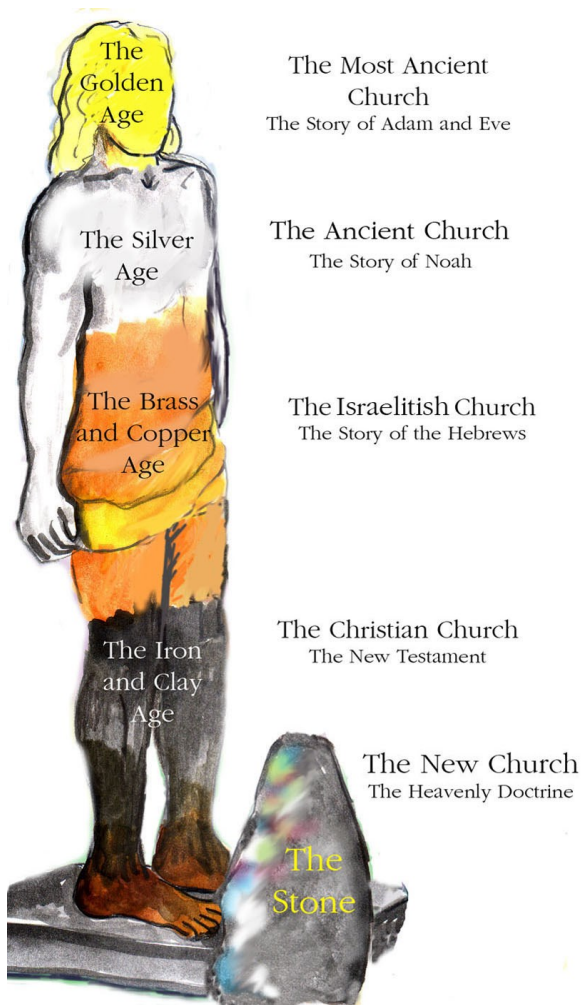
<sup>36</sup>**“Now we will interpret the dream. God has given you power and glory. <sup>38</sup>He has made you ruler. You are that head of gold. <sup>39</sup>After you, another kingdom will arise. Next, a third kingdom, one of bronze, will rule over the earth. <sup>40</sup>Finally, there will be a fourth kingdom, strong as iron—and as iron breaks things to pieces, so it will crush and break all the others. <sup>41</sup>The feet and toes were partly of baked clay and partly of iron, so this will be a divided kingdom. It will be partly strong and partly brittle. <sup>43</sup>And just as you saw the iron mixed with baked clay, so the people will not remain united.**

<sup>44</sup>“In the time of those kings, the God of heaven will set up a kingdom that will never be destroyed, nor will it be left to another people. It will crush all those kingdoms and bring them to an end, but it will itself endure forever. <sup>45</sup>This is the meaning of the vision of the rock cut, but not by human hands—a rock that broke the iron, the bronze, the clay, the silver and the gold to pieces.

<sup>46</sup>**Then King Nebuchadnezzar fell before Daniel and paid him honor. The king said to Daniel, “Surely your God is the God of gods and the Lord of kings and a revealer of mysteries, for you were able to reveal this mystery.” <sup>48</sup>Then the king made Daniel ruler over the province of Babylon and placed him in charge of all its wise men.**

(Daniel 2:1-48 adapted from the NIV)

# 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.

## Knock Down the Statue

In this activity students will make a model of Nebuchadnezzar's statue (representing his selfishness) and use a ball of rock patterned paper (representing the rock of truth) to knock it down.

1. Nebuchadnezzar was a great, powerful, glorious king. He thought himself better than everyone else. He dreamed of a great statue.
2. The Lord told Daniel its gold head represented Nebuchadnezzar. Generally, gold corresponds to love to the Lord, but correspondences sometimes have an opposite meaning. Since Nebuchadnezzar was selfish, the gold pictures his self-love, which is the opposite of love to the Lord.
3. Like Nebuchadnezzar, we may think we are better than others at times. Only true ideas from the Word can help rid us of this false idea.
4. The rock cut without human hands corresponds to true ideas from the Word that crush false ideas; it is the truth that sets us free.
5. Give each child a copy of *Nebuchadnezzar's Dream Statue* (pp. 6-9), scissors, and tape or glue.
6. Cut out and assemble the five illustrated boxes needed to complete a statue. Fold and tape together neatly so they will stack securely.
7. Stack the boxes in the order of the statue in Nebuchadnezzar's dream.
8. Crumple *Nebuchadnezzar's Dream Rock* (p. 10) into a ball or wrap it around a small ball, such as a tennis ball. Tape to secure.
9. Throw or bowl the ball at the base of the statue to make it fall.
10. Remind the children that the rock is like the true ideas in the Word that can blow away selfishness and prepare us for heaven.



### Materials Needed for Each Student

copy of *Nebuchadnezzar's Dream Statue* pp. 6-9, copy of *Nebuchadnezzar's Dream Rock* p. 10, scissors, tape or glue  
*optional*: ball, e.g. tennis ball

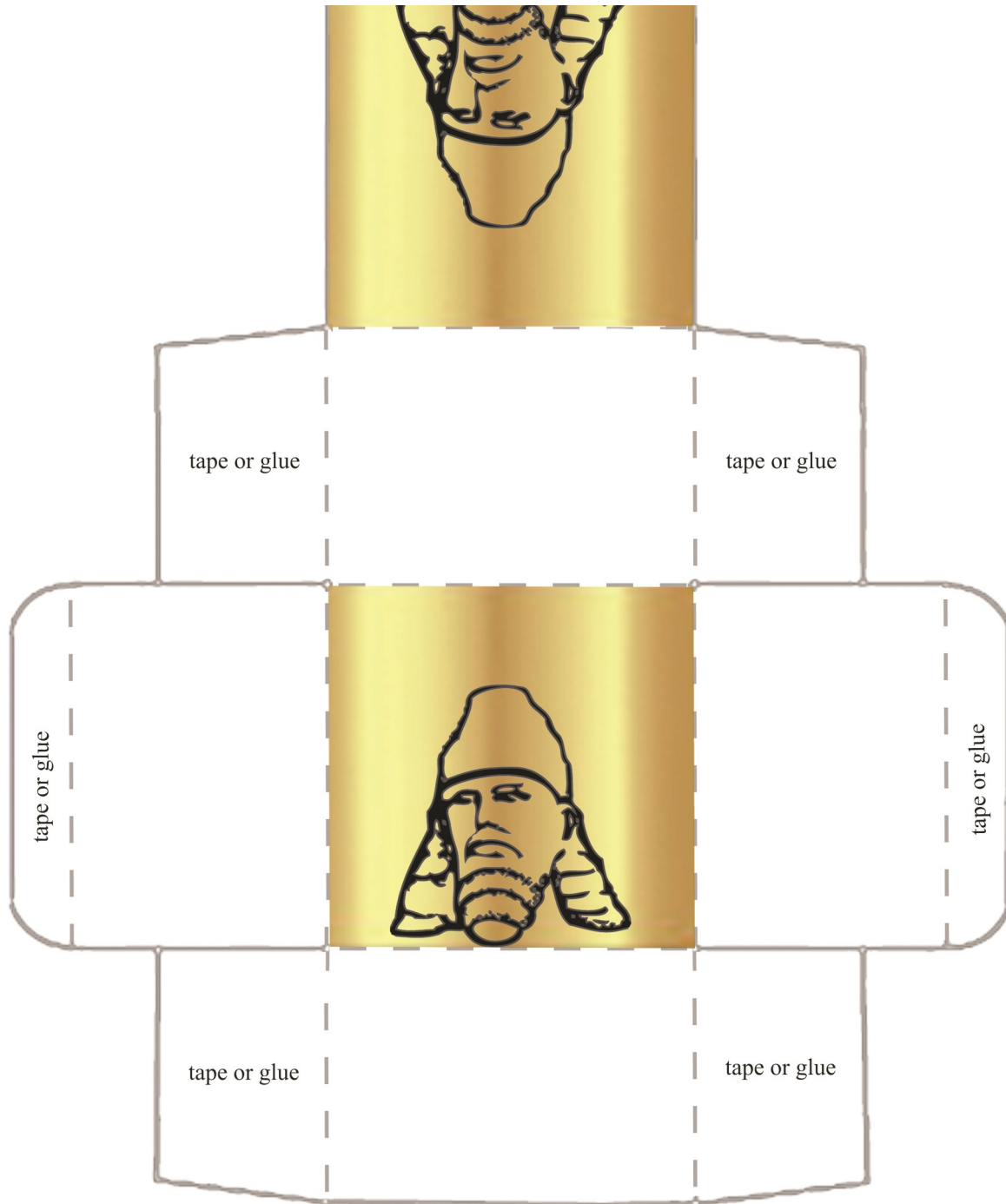
### Prepare in Advance

Print pages. Gather supplies.

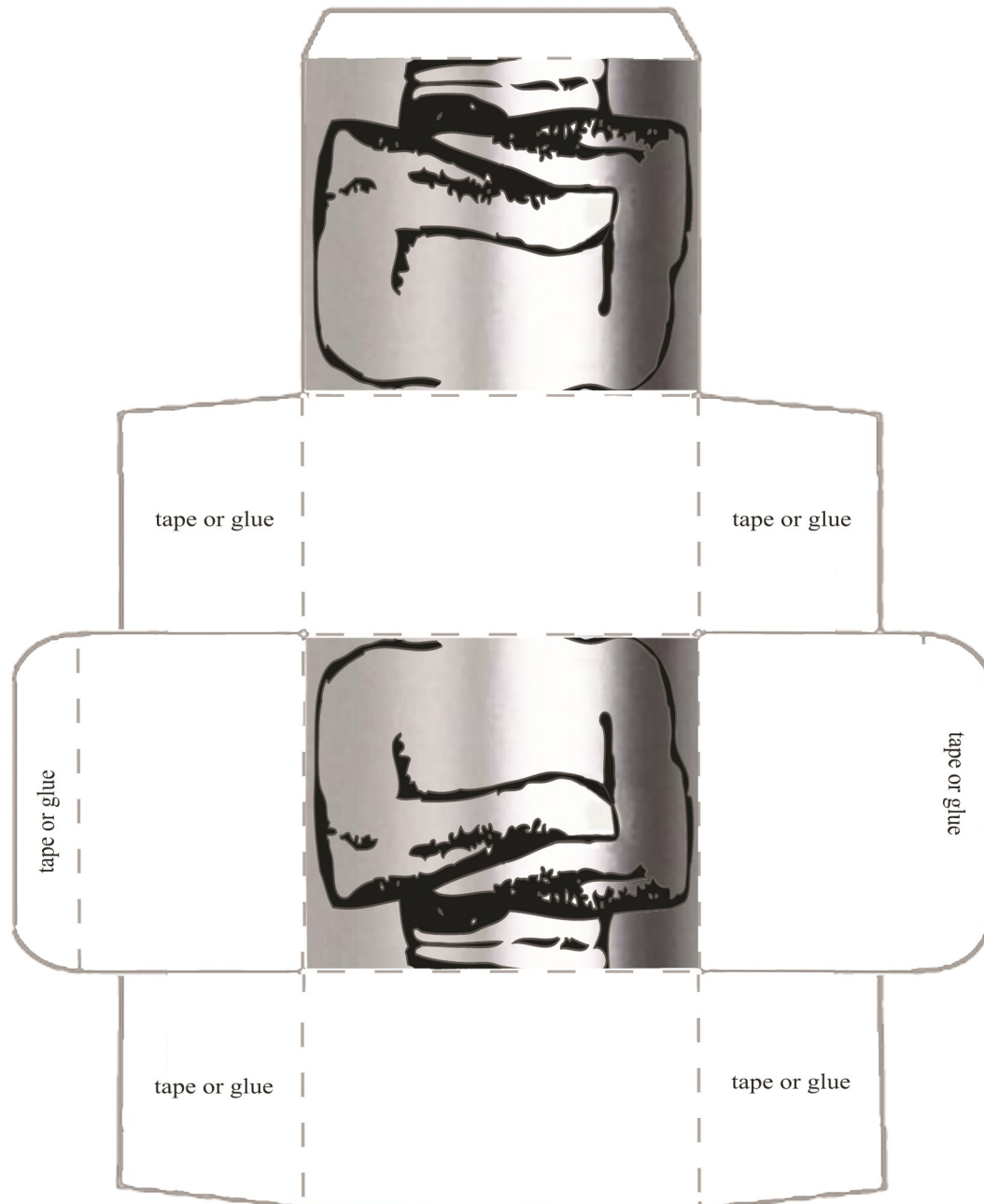
### New Church Concept The Stone

A stone struck the statue and smashed it to pieces. It became like chaff which the wind carried away. But the stone that struck the statue became a great rock and filled the whole earth. The subject here is the Lord and His kingdom, "a stone" being used to mean faith, and "a rock" the Lord in respect of faith. "A stone" also means in the Word the truth that composes faith because "a rock" also means a fortress that withstands falsities. The actual fortress is the truth of faith, for this is what the battle against both falsities and evils is waged from. See *Arcana Coelestia* 8581

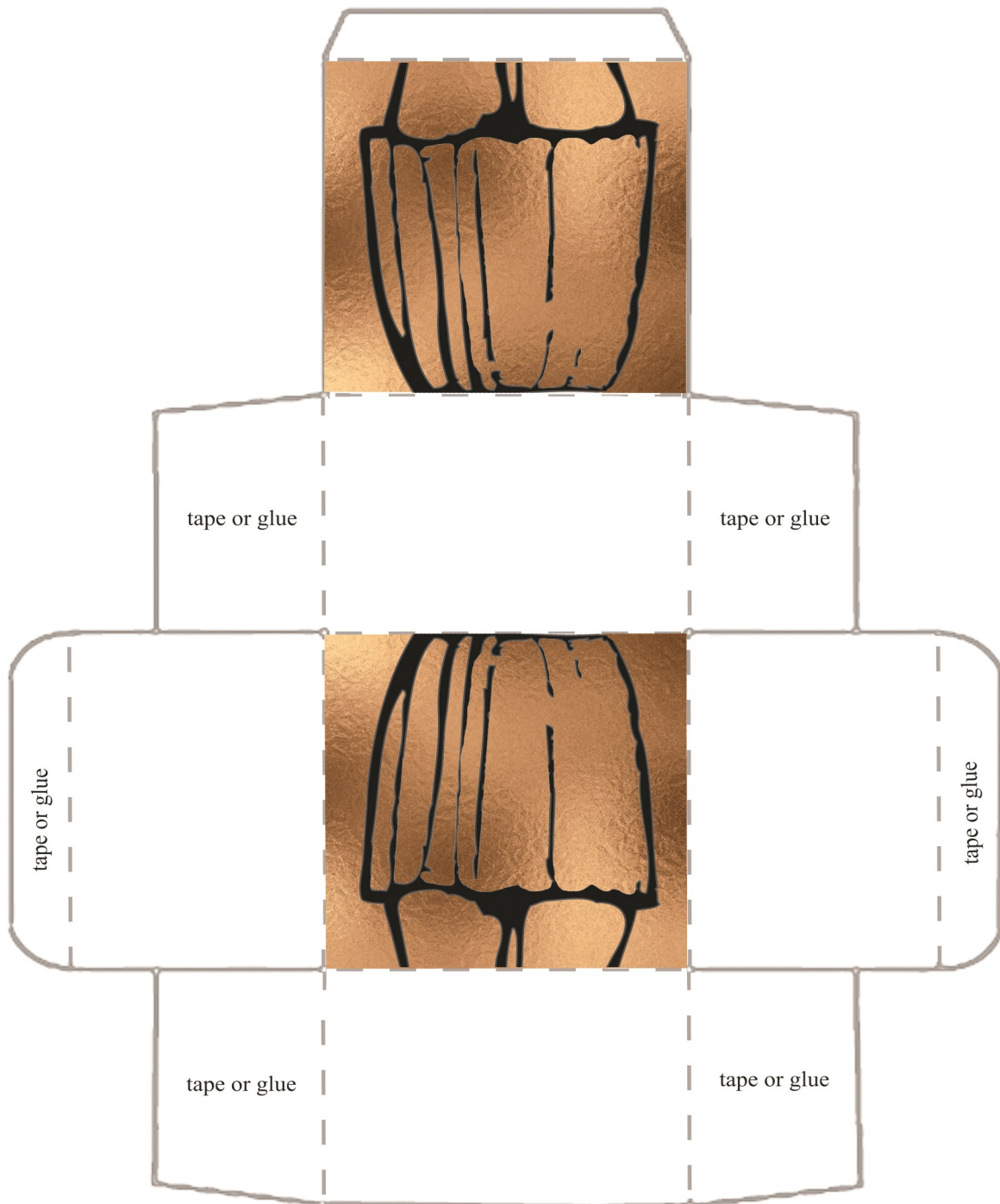
# *Nebuchadnezzar's Dream Statue*



# *Nebuchadnezzar's Dream Statue*

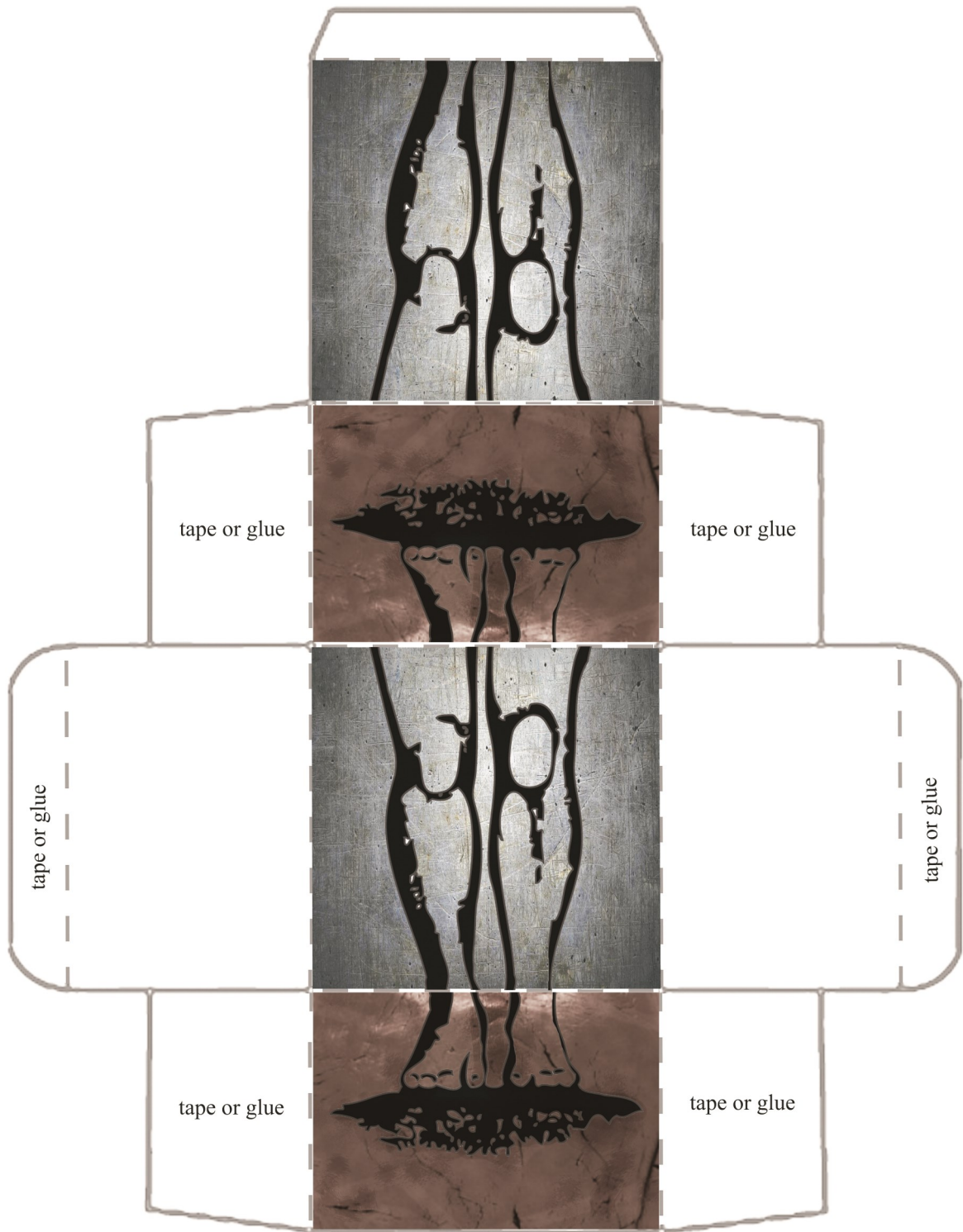


# *Nebuchadnezzar's Dream Statue*





# *Nebuchadnezzar's Dream Statue*



# *Nebuchadnezzar's Dream Rock*



## *The Power of the Lord's Truth*

The rock that destroyed the statue in Nebuchadnezzar's dream corresponds to true ideas from the Word that can blow away selfish thoughts and loves in an instant. Angels who receive the Lord's Divine truth and love are given power over evil spirits. In fact, they have only to look at an evil spirit for the spirit to fall into a swoon. They can disperse thousands of evil spirits in a moment (see *Heaven and Hell* 232). They also protect people by removing the influence of the hells. Explore the power of the Lord's Divine truth by doing a simple experiment with milk, food coloring and soap.



### Materials Needed

milk (4% or 2% milkfat works best); shallow dish such as a pie pan; liquid food coloring in a variety of colors; good quality liquid dish soap; cotton buds, such as Q-tips; sink to clean up

### Prepare in Advance

Gather supplies.

1. Who was more powerful—Daniel or king Nebuchadnezzar? Nebuchadnezzar could order people to do whatever he wanted. He could even order people to be put to death, as he was going to do to his wise men. What power did Daniel have that Nebuchadnezzar did not?
2. Who really had that power? Daniel, or the Lord? Can any person have power apart from the Lord?
3. We can have power from the Lord when we read His Word so that we can do what is right. This power helps chase bad thoughts and actions out of our lives.
4. In the spiritual world, angels who love the Lord have power from Him. They can chase evil spirits away. They also protect us from evil spirits each day! They can just look at an evil spirit, and the spirit will have no power. One angel can do this to thousands of evil spirits at the same time!
5. We're going to do an experiment that demonstrates the type of power the Lord and His angels have over evil spirits.
6. Put milk in a shallow dish or plate. Invite children to add drops of food coloring to the milk.
7. Coat a cotton bud, such as a Q-tip, with dish soap. Touch the tip of the cotton bud to the milk and watch what happens!
8. The soap is like the power of the Lord. It makes the colors move away rapidly—just as the angels make evil spirits move away.

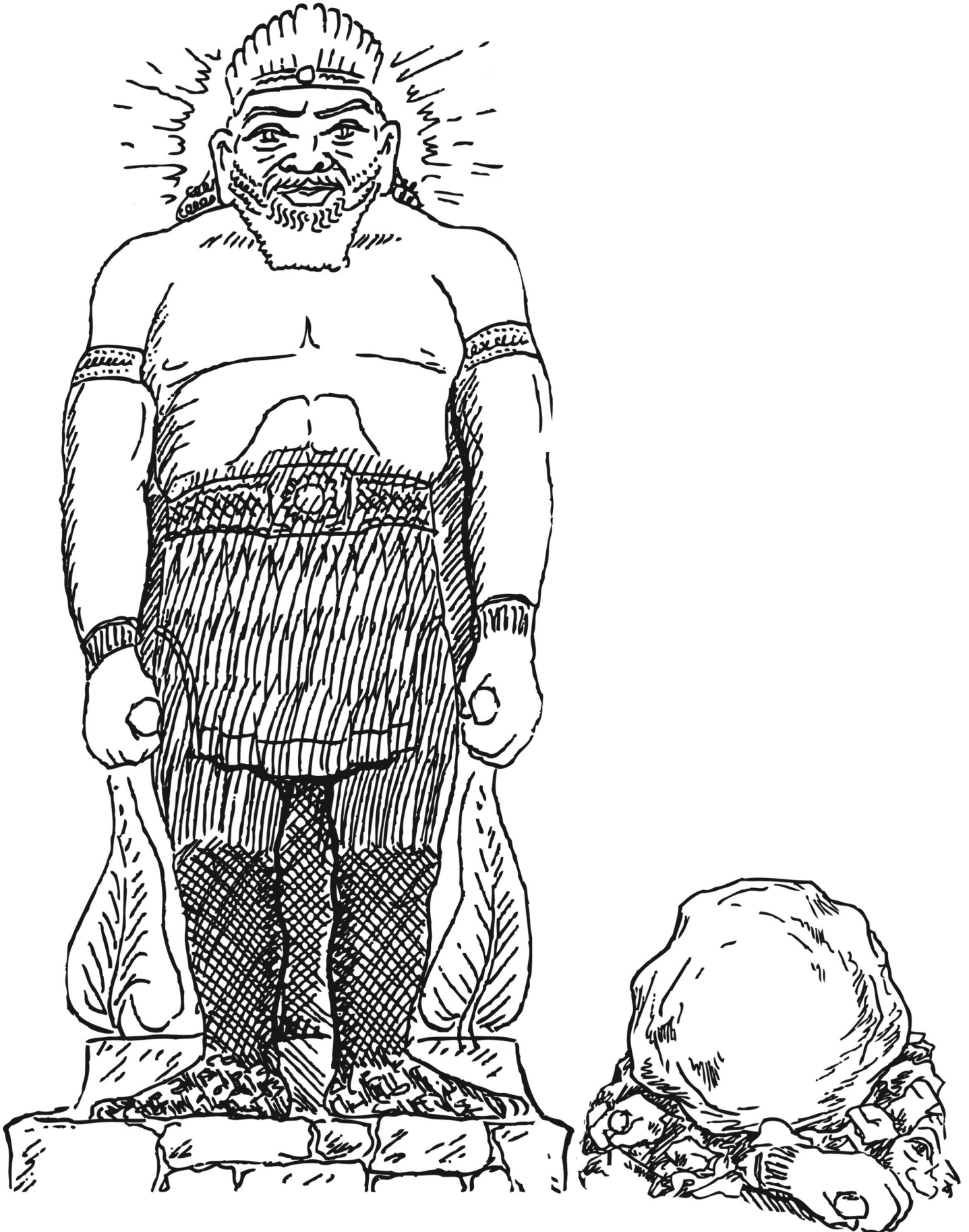
*The experiment explained:* The soap spreads on top of the milk and grabs the food coloring. Soap is a degreaser, so the molecules in it attack the fat in the milk, causing motion and making the colors swirl.

### New Church Concept Angelic Power

Angels have no power from themselves. All their power is from the Lord. See *Heaven and Hell* 230

So great is the power of angels in the spiritual world that it would exceed belief. I have seen hundreds of thousands of evil spirits dispersed by angels and cast down into hell. They see through them all, and disperse them in a moment. See *Heaven and Hell* 229

By means of the power which angels receive they protect a person by removing the hells from him; for a single angel is stronger than a thousand who come from hell. See *Arcana Coelestia* 10182



## *Recitation and Closing*

Each lesson in the Daniel series includes a recitation. The recitations are taken from prayers in the book of Daniel. Most of the sentences were spoken by Daniel after he received the power to explain Nebuchadnezzar's dream (Daniel 2). They are arranged in an order that reflects the story for each week. The sentence for lesson three was spoken by Nebuchadnezzar after he recognized the Lord as the true God (Daniel 4). We will be learning one sentence with each lesson, and building on each until all six sentences can be recited together.

Introduce the 2nd sentence of the *Prayers in Daniel*, the recitation for this lesson: "He reveals deep and secret things." Daniel did reveal secret things as a messenger of the Lord.

Try saying the sentence aloud and inviting the children to repeat it after you. Finish by repeating sentences 1, and 2.

### *Prayers in Daniel*

1. Blessed be the name of God forever and ever.
2. He reveals deep and secret things.
3. How great are His signs!
4. He gives wisdom to the wise.
5. He removes kings and raises up kings.
6. I thank You and praise You, O God.

*Daniel 2:20-23; 4:3 adapted*

### **Closing**

King Nebuchadnezzar rewarded Daniel for telling him his dream and explaining its meaning. The Lord explains questions we may have about ourselves and about Him. And if we listen and do what He says, He will gift us with joy and contentment which can only come from walking in His ways.

Give students a *Parent Note* (p. 14) to take home.

Cut the Parent Notes apart and give one to each student.

### *Nebuchadnezzar's Dream*

Dear Parents,

Today we learned about a time when Daniel helped King Nebuchadnezzar by explaining a dream he could not understand. Ask your child about Nebuchadnezzar's dream, and what happened to the statue he saw.

We are learning one sentence from *Prayers in Daniel* each week. Please help your child remember the first two sentences this week. You could say them at meal time, bed time, or when you are brushing your teeth!

Thank you.

### *Nebuchadnezzar's Dream*

Dear Parents,

Today we learned about a time when Daniel helped King Nebuchadnezzar by explaining a dream he could not understand. Ask your child about Nebuchadnezzar's dream, and what happened to the statue he saw.

We are learning one sentence from *Prayers in Daniel* each week. Please help your child remember the first two sentences this week. You could say them at meal time, bed time, or when you are brushing your teeth!

Thank you.

### *Prayers in Daniel*

1. Blessed be the name of God forever and ever.
2. He reveals deep and secret things.
3. How great are His signs!
4. He gives wisdom to the wise.
5. He removes kings and raises up kings.
6. I thank You and praise You, O God.

*Daniel 2:20-23; 4:3 adapted*

### *Prayers in Daniel*

1. Blessed be the name of God forever and ever.
2. He reveals deep and secret things.
3. How great are His signs!
4. He gives wisdom to the wise.
5. He removes kings and raises up kings.
6. I thank You and praise You, O God.

*Daniel 2:20-23; 4:3 adapted*