

DANIEL BECOMES A GREAT MAN IN BABYLON

Daniel 2:1-49.

LESSON 138 -- Primary Course

MEMORY VERSE: "Hold fast that which is good" (I Thessalonians 5:21).

BIBLE TEXT

Daniel 2:1-49.

1 ¶ And in the second year of the reign of Nebuchadnezzar Nebuchadnezzar dreamed dreams, wherewith his spirit was troubled, and his sleep brake from him.

2 Then the king commanded to call the magicians, and the astrologers, and the sorcerers, and the Chaldeans, for to shew the king his dreams. So they came and stood before the king.

3 And the king said unto them, I have dreamed a dream, and my spirit was troubled to know the dream.

4 Then spake the Chaldeans to the king in Syriack, O king, live for ever: tell thy servants the dream, and we will shew the interpretation.

5 The king answered and said to the Chaldeans, The thing is gone from me: if ye will not make known unto me the dream, with the interpretation thereof, ye shall be cut in pieces, and your houses shall be made a dunghill.

6 But if ye shew the dream, and the interpretation thereof, ye shall receive of me gifts and rewards and great honour: therefore shew me the dream, and the interpretation thereof.

7 They answered again and said, Let the king tell his servants the dream, and we will shew the interpretation of it.

8 The king answered and said, I know of certainty that ye would gain the time, because ye see the thing is gone from me.

9 But if ye will not make known unto me the dream, there is but one decree for you: for ye have prepared lying and corrupt words to speak before me, till the time be changed: therefore tell me the dream, and I shall know that ye can shew me the interpretation thereof.

10 The Chaldeans answered before the king, and said, There is not a man upon the earth that can shew the king's matter:

therefore there is no king, lord, nor ruler, that asked such things at any magician, or astrologer, or Chaldean.

11 And it is a rare thing that the king requireth, and there is none other that can shew it before the king, except the gods, whose dwelling is not with flesh.

12 For this cause the king was angry and very furious, and commanded to destroy all the wise men of Babylon.

13 And the decree went forth that the wise men should be slain; and they sought Daniel and his fellows to be slain.

14 ¶ Then Daniel answered with counsel and wisdom to Arioch the captain of the king's guard, which was gone forth to slay the wise men of Babylon:

15 He answered and said to Arioch the king's captain, Why is the decree so hasty from the king? Then Arioch made the thing known to Daniel.

16 Then Daniel went in, and desired of the king that he would give him time, and that he would shew the king the interpretation.

17 Then Daniel went to his house, and made the thing known to Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, his companions:

18 That they would desire mercies of the God of heaven concerning this secret; that Daniel and his fellows should not perish with the rest of the wise men of Babylon.

19 Then was the secret revealed unto Daniel in a night vision. Then Daniel blessed the God of heaven.

20 Daniel answered and said, Blessed be the name of God for ever and ever: for wisdom and might are his:

21 And he changeth the times and the seasons: he removeth kings, and setteth up kings: he giveth wisdom unto the wise, and knowledge to them that know understanding:

22 He revealeth the deep and secret things: he knoweth what is in the darkness, and the light dwelleth with him.

23 I thank thee, and praise thee, O thou God of my fathers, who hast given me wisdom and might, and hast made known unto me now what we desired of thee: for thou hast now made known unto us the king's matter.

24 ¶ Therefore Daniel went in unto Arioch, whom the king had ordained to destroy the wise men of Babylon: he went and said thus unto him; Destroy not the wise men of Babylon: bring me in before the king, and I will shew unto the king the interpretation.

25 Then Arioch brought in Daniel before the king in haste, and said thus unto him, I have found a man of the captives of Judah, that will make known unto the king the interpretation.

26 The king answered and said to Daniel, whose name was Belteshazzar, Art thou able to make known unto me the dream which I have seen, and the interpretation thereof?

27 Daniel answered in the presence of the king, and said, The secret which the king hath demanded cannot the wise men, the astrologers, the magicians, the soothsayers, shew unto the king;

28 But there is a God in heaven that revealeth secrets, and maketh known to the king Nebuchadnezzar what shall be in the latter days. Thy dream, and the visions of thy head upon thy bed, are these;

29 As for thee, O king, thy thoughts came into thy mind upon thy bed, what should come to pass hereafter: and he that revealeth secrets maketh known to thee what shall come to pass.

30 But as for me, this secret is not revealed to me for any wisdom that I have more than any living, but for their sakes that shall make known the interpretation to the king, and that thou mightest know the thoughts of thy heart.

31 ¶ Thou, O king, sawest, and behold a great image. This great image, whose brightness was excellent, stood before thee; and the form thereof was terrible.

32 This image's head was of fine gold, his breast and his arms of silver, his belly and his thighs of brass,

33 His legs of iron, his feet part of iron and part of clay.

34 Thou sawest till that a stone was cut out without hands, which smote the image upon his feet that were of iron and clay, and brake them to pieces.

35 Then was the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver, and the gold, broken to pieces together, and became like the chaff of the summer threshingfloors; and the wind carried them away, that no place was found for them: and the stone that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth.

36 This is the dream; and we will tell the interpretation thereof before the king.

37 Thou, O king, art a king of kings: for the God of heaven hath given thee a kingdom, power, and strength, and glory.

38 And wheresoever the children of men dwell, the beasts of the field and the fowls of the heaven hath he given into thine hand, and hath made thee ruler over them all. Thou art this head of gold.

39 And after thee shall arise another kingdom inferior to thee, and another third kingdom of brass, which shall bear rule over all the earth.

40 And the fourth kingdom shall be strong as iron: forasmuch as iron breaketh in pieces and subdueth all things: and as iron that breaketh all these, shall it break in pieces and bruise.

41 And whereas thou sawest the feet and toes, part of potters' clay, and part of iron, the kingdom shall be divided; but there shall be in it of the strength of the iron, forasmuch as thou sawest the iron mixed with miry clay.

42 And as the toes of the feet were part of iron, and part of clay, so the kingdom shall be partly strong, and partly broken.

43 And whereas thou sawest iron mixed with miry clay, they shall mingle themselves with the seed of men: but they shall not cleave one to another, even as iron is not mixed with clay.

44 And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever.

45 Forasmuch as thou sawest that the stone was cut out of the mountain without hands, and that it brake in pieces the iron, the brass,

the clay, the silver, and the gold; the great God hath made known to the king what shall come to pass hereafter: and the dream is certain, and the interpretation thereof sure.

46 ¶ Then the king Nebuchadnezzar fell upon his face, and worshipped Daniel, and commanded that they should offer an oblation and sweet odours unto him.

47 The king answered unto Daniel, and said, Of a truth it is, that your God is a God of gods, and a Lord of kings, and a revealer

of secrets, seeing thou couldest reveal this secret.

48 Then the king made Daniel a great man, and gave him many great gifts, and made him ruler over the whole province of Babylon, and chief of the governors over all the wise men of Babylon.

49 Then Daniel requested of the king, and he set Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, over the affairs of the province of Babylon: but Daniel sat in the gate of the king.

A Strange Request

When young Daniel and his three friends had been living in Babylon for some time, King Nebuchadnezzar had a very strange dream. When he awoke he was greatly troubled. He could not go to sleep again. Perhaps he kept thinking: What was that dream I had? It must have some special meaning. In the morning I will ask my wise men about it.

Perhaps a servant was sent out to tell the wise men and magicians that the king wanted to see them. When they were together, the king told them he had had a dream that troubled him and he wanted to know what it meant. The wise men asked the king to tell them the dream and then they would tell him the meaning of it. King Nebuchadnezzar could not tell them the dream, because he had forgotten it. He was used to having people do what he told them to do, even though it was unreasonable, and he became cross and impatient, and said if they would not tell him the dream and the meaning, too, they would be cut in pieces.

No doubt the wise men were very much surprised and afraid. How could anyone do such a thing as tell what someone else had dreamed and forgotten? Only God could do that, and they did not love and serve God. They could not tell the king his dream even though they were to be cut in pieces.

The King's Command

The king was very angry and commanded his captain to destroy all the wise men of Babylon. We can imagine that we see the king's captain and his helpers going first to this house and then to that one, taking the poor frightened wise men with them to be destroyed. Daniel and his friends did not know what had happened. Perhaps they were on an errand out of town when the other wise men were called to come to the king. When the captain came to take them, Daniel asked why they were to be destroyed. So the captain told him that the king had had a dream, and that he had forgotten it; and because the wise men could not tell him what the dream was, he was angry and was going to have them destroyed.

Daniel Prays

Daniel knew that God could tell him what Nebuchadnezzar's dream was, for God knew everything – even secret things. Daniel wanted time to pray, so he told the king that if he would wait a little while, Daniel would tell him what the dream was and what it meant. Daniel went home and told his friends all about it. They may have been afraid, but God had helped them before and surely He would help them now. Perhaps they remembered what King David had said to God, "What time I am afraid, I will trust in thee."

After they had prayed, they very likely went to bed and slept, and in the night God showed Daniel the dream and the meaning. First of all, Daniel wanted to thank God for answering their prayers. We are sure that Daniel always thanked God for the many times He had taken care of Daniel and had helped him when he asked God for help. How happy Daniel must have been that he could go to the king and tell him his dream! Perhaps Daniel did not take time to eat breakfast the next morning, but hurried away to tell the king's captain not to destroy the wise men, because Daniel could tell the king the dream. The captain took Daniel in to see the king at once.

The Dream

The king asked Daniel if he could make known the dream and the meaning. It would have been easy for Daniel to let the king think that he was wise enough to tell the dream, but Daniel was not that kind of boy. Daniel said that neither he nor the wise men could do that, but the great God in Heaven had told him what the king's dream was. Daniel wanted the king to love and worship God. Then Daniel told the king that in his dream he had seen a great image that was very bright. The head was of gold; the breast and arms were of silver; the waist was of brass; the legs were of iron; and the feet were part iron and part clay.

In the dream the king saw a stone roll toward this great image and break its feet. The whole image fell to the ground into pieces, and the wind blew them away. The stone that broke the image became a great mountain and filled the whole earth. That great stone was no doubt Jesus, the Word of God, that would be everywhere in the earth.

Daniel said that God had made King Nebuchadnezzar very strong and a ruler over many people, and he was like the golden head of the image. He said there would be other kings who were not so strong. But God would send Jesus to be King, and He would be so strong that no one could ever do such great things as He could do, and His power and goodness and greatness would last forever.

Rewards

Then King Nebuchadnezzar knew that the God whom Daniel worshiped was the true God. The king made Daniel a great man; gave him many rich gifts, and made him leader of all the wise men in Babylon. He also honoured and set up Daniel's three friends, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego.

QUESTIONS

1. What did King Nebuchadnezzar want to know? Daniel 2:3.
2. What was going to happen because the wise men could not tell the king his dream? Daniel 2:5.
3. What did Daniel and his friends do when they heard they were to be destroyed? Daniel 2:18.
4. How did God help them so that all the wise men could live? Daniel 2:19.
5. Give the names of the four young men who were honoured because they prayed to God for help. Daniel 2:48, 49.

LESSON RESOURCES

TOPIC

DANIEL BECOMES A GREAT MAN IN BABYLON

Lesson 138

Daniel 2:1-49

MUSIC

There Is Nothing Too Hard For Thee

WATCH & PRAY 197

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There Is Nothing Too Hard For Thee

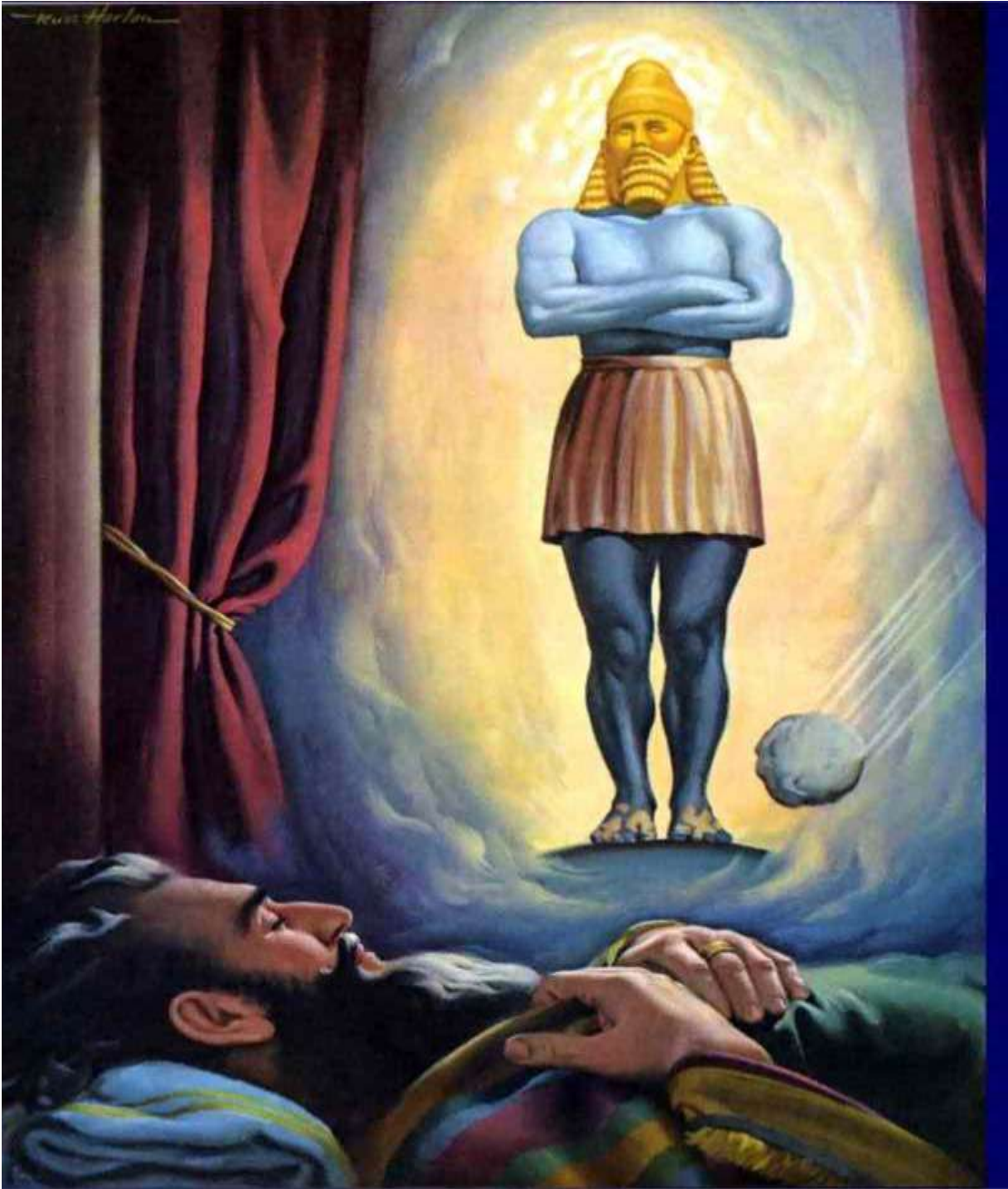
There's nothing too hard for Thee,

There's nothing too hard for Thee,

Nothing, no, nothing,

There's nothing too hard for Thee

PICTURE 1



PICTURE 2



PICTURE 3



PICTURE 4

