THE STORY...

The vast kingdom of Babylon was opulent and prosperous, yet Nebuchadnezzar the king stirred in his royal bed. How long would this golden era last, he wondered, and what would become of his powerful empire when he was gone? With these disturbing questions in mind, the mighty monarch drifted off to sleep. That night, a vivid image of a towering multi-mineral man flashed into his mind with a panorama of color unlike anything he had ever experienced. Throwing aside his embroidered covers, the king jumped out of bed and shouted to his bodyguards: “Call all the magicians and astrologers to come at once. I must know the meaning of this dream!”

The king’s wise men were roused and herded into the presence of the bewildered sovereign. “And the king said to them, I have had a dream, and my spirit is anxious to know the dream.” Daniel 2:3. One of the phony prophets smugly responded, “Tell your servants the dream, and we will give the wise men of Babylon.”

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When the king’s counselors failed to reveal and interpret the dream, what was Nebuchadnezzar’s command?

Daniel 2:12 The king ... gave the commanded to all the wise men of Babylon.

NOTE: The astrologers and magicians of Babylon claimed to have supernatural power, but when they could not reveal the dream to the king, they were shown to be imposters. If the king had recalled the dream, they would have simply manufactured a bogus interpretation. In his rage, Nebuchadnezzar commanded all the wise men to be slain—even those who were not present. Among those absent from the first meeting with the king was a God-fearing captive named Daniel, who had just been trained for the king’s service.

When Daniel learned about the death decree, what did he ask of the king and what did he tell his friends?

A. Daniel 2:16 Daniel went in and asked the king to give him to him, that he might tell the king the

B. Daniel 2:17, 18 Then Daniel went to his house, and made the decision to Hananiah, Michael, and Azariah, his companions, that they might seek mercy from the God of heaven concerning this .

NOTE: Daniel requested a little time from Nebuchadnezzar and promised that he would reveal the dream and its meaning. The king, who was still desperately to know the significance of his vision, granted Daniel’s request. Then he and his friends appealed to the only Source who could reveal the king’s dream. They prayed to the God of heaven.

When the Lord revealed the dream to Daniel, to whom did he give praise and credit?

Daniel 2:23, 28 I thank You and praise You, O of my , ... There is a in heaven who

NOTE: In this dream of the multi-mineral image, God outlined for all future millennia the rise and fall of the empires that would have a direct influence on His people.

THE STUDY

Fill in the blanks after reading each Bible text.

1. Why did God give the Babylonian king this dream?

Daniel 2:28 But there is a in heaven who reveals and He has made known to King Nebuchadnezzar what will be in the day.

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5. What two objects did Daniel say the king saw in his dream?

A. Daniel 2:31 You, O king, were watching; and behold, a

B. Daniel 2:34 You watched while a was cut out without hands.

Note: The first thing the king saw was a great image made of the following mineral elements:

1. The head was of gold.
2. The breast and arms were of silver.
3. The belly and thighs were of brass.
4. The legs were of iron.
5. The feet of iron and clay.

Next, the king saw a stone that had been cut without hands. At this point, King Nebuchadnezzar was no doubt sitting spellbound on the edge of his throne. Daniel had related the dream precisely as God had given it to him. Now the king eagerly waited, wondering what the dream meant. Daniel proceeded to explain the interpretation as the Lord had revealed it to him, and we would do well to take it just as He gave it. The only safe way to interpret the Bible and prophecy is to allow the Bible to explain itself.

6. What does the head of gold represent?

Daniel 2:38 You are this of gold.

Note: The king was regarded as the head of the state. This is why Nebuchadnezzar represented Babylon, the empire that began the prophecy. Neo-Babylon ruled the world from 612-539 B.C. as one of the mightiest empires of antiquity—one that could aptly be described as the head of gold. Notice that the prophecy begins with Daniel’s time.

7. Would the Babylonian kingdom last forever?

Daniel 2:39 But after you shall arise kingdom inferior to yours.

Note: Babylon’s supremacy would not last forever. Succeeding kingdoms, inferior to Babylon, would rule in their turn. Just as silver is inferior to gold, so the kingdom that followed Babylon enjoyed diminished glory. Led by Cyrus in 539 B.C., the Medo-Persian empire conquered Babylon and reduced it to ruins. The Medes and Persians were the ruling world power from 539-331 B.C. During their reign, all taxes had to be paid in silver.
8. What metal would represent the kingdom that followed Medo-Persia?

Daniel 2:40 The fourth kingdom shall be as strong as _______________. ... And the stone that struck the image became a great _______________ and filled the whole earth.

NOTE: The iron monarchy of Rome conquered the Greeks in 168 B.C. and enjoyed world supremacy until Rome was captured by the Ostrogoths in A.D. 476. Rome is the kingdom that dominated the world when Jesus Christ was born. Notice how Daniel foresaw a thousand years of world history with unerring accuracy. The rise and fall of these four world empires—Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, and Rome—are clearly foretold in the Bible and proved by the history books.

9. What metal represents the fourth kingdom?

The kingdom shall be _______________. ... As the toes of the feet were partly of iron and partly of clay, so the kingdom shall be partly strong and partly fragile.

NOTE: When the Roman Empire began to crumble in A.D. 476, it was not overtaken by another world power. Instead, barbarian tribes conquered the Roman Empire and divided it—just as Daniel prophesied. Ten of these tribes evolved into modern Europe: They were the Ostrogoths, Visigoths, Franks, Vandals, Alamanians, Sueves, Anglo-Saxons, Huns, Lombards, and Burgundians. Seven of them will exist today in Europe. For example, the Anglo-Saxons became the English, the Franks became the French, the Alamanians became the Germans, and the Lombards became the Italians.

10. What would happen after the fall of the Roman Empire?

The kingdom shall be _______________. ... As the toes of the feet were partly of iron and partly of clay, so the kingdom shall be partly strong and partly fragile.

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11. Would these 10 kingdoms ever succeed in uniting?

They will mingle with the seed of men; but they will _______________ them in pieces. ... And the stone that struck the image became a great _______________ and filled the whole earth.

ANSWER: _______________

NOTE: Through marriage, alliances, and treaties, men have vainly attempted to reunite the European continent. All throughout history, leaders such as Charlemagne, Napoleon, Kaiser Wilhelm, Mussolini, and Hitler have fought to build a new European empire; but these words of Scripture have stopped every attempt to establish a universal religion, but Daniel's prophecy clearly states that the world will remain politically divided for the rest of Earth's history.

12. Who will set up the final kingdom?

Daniel 2:44 And in the days of these kings the _______________ will set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed.

NOTE: The next great universal kingdom will be the kingdom of heaven, which is described in Matthew 25:31-34.

13. What does the stone do to the other world kingdoms?

Daniel 2:34, 35 A stone was cut out without hands, which _______________ the image on its feet of iron and clay, and _______________ them in pieces. ... And the stone that struck the image became a great _______________ and filled the whole earth.

NOTE: The stone that was cut without human hands represents God's kingdom. It will not be a conglomeration of earthly kingdoms, but a total replacement (Revelation 21:1). The Scriptures declare that when Jesus Christ returns to earth, He will completely consume all the kingdoms of earth and establish an everlasting kingdom (Daniel 2:44). What exciting news! Jesus Christ is coming again! All history is moving toward this climactic conclusion, when the Son of God shall return in majesty to bring in the kingdom of everlasting righteousness. Notice how Daniel foretold a thousand years of world history with unerring accuracy. The rise and fall of these four world empires—Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, and Rome—are clearly foretold in the Bible and proved by the history books.

14. After hearing Daniel's clear interpretation of the dream, what did Nebuchadnezzar say about the Lord?

Daniel 2:47 The king answered Daniel, and said, “Truly your God is the _______________ of _______________, the Lord of kings, and a revealer of secrets, since you could reveal this secret.”

NOTE: Having seen that God has complete control of world events, even Nebuchadnezzar readily acknowledged that the God Daniel served was above all the heathen gods of Babylon. How quickly the picture had changed! Daniel and his friends, because of their faithfulness to God, were elevated from their initial captivity in Babylon to positions of prominent leadership for the kingdom (Daniel 2:44, 49). God always honors those who honor Him (1 Samuel 2:30).

YOUR RESPONSE

Recognizing that God is in full control of earthly events, are you willing to let Him have full control of your life?

ANSWER: _______________