

Background

It is interesting that in the subsequent chapter Nebuchadnezzar objects to the interpretation by raising a statue completely made of gold. He does not accept that his kingdom and power may pass (Daniel 3:1).

4. Changes in History



Read

• Daniel 2:20, 21



Comment

Note how this prayer by Daniel summarises the main themes of the whole chapter. God gives wisdom to the wise men, that is, He reveals secrets; and God gives power to kings and dominions—and removes them again.

Reflect
Reflect

Daniel 2 is only one chapter, and it does not address all issues. What could be some of the reasons that God “removes kings”? Why does He not let the various empires and systems of government go on? Why does He change “the times and seasons” of power?

5. The Kingdom of God



Read

• Daniel 2:44, 45

Reflect
Reflect

How does the “kingdom of God” differ from all other kingdoms? On what principles would you want such an eternal kingdom to be based?

Background

The image of the statue implies that all the kingdoms will be crushed at the same time toward the end of days, though they have succeeded each other in the course of history. In an ancient Iranian text about world empires, these are compared to a tree and also presented as simultaneous, though they actually follow each other in historic time. The crushing of all the kingdoms in Daniel at once may refer to a final legal judgment (such is explicitly mentioned in Daniel 7:9-14).

6. The Stone Cut Off



Read

• Daniel 2:35 and 45



Comment

Rocks and mountains are common symbols of the kingdom of God (cf Psalm 68:15, 16; 121:1). A cornerstone also signifies Jesus Christ (as in Matthew 21:42; cf Psalm 118:22, 23; Isaiah 28:16).

Reflect
Reflect

What does it mean that the stone was “cut off” or “cut out of” the mountain of God?



Number 6. Behind the Scenes

ClearView

Bible study guide

Lesson 5 looked at the marvellous prophecy in Daniel 2. When giving His prophecies, God also provides an explanation of human history. This lesson continues the study of mainly the book of Daniel and highlights another aspect of the prophetic revelation. God takes us behind the scenes into the heavenly world. Only there are we able to understand why events on earth unfold as they do.

1. Prayer Connects to the Heavenly World



Read

• Daniel 2:18, 19 and 10:12, 13

Comment

Daniel is a man of prayer. The title given for God when the first prayer by Daniel is mentioned is “the God of heaven.” Prayers connect to God. In chapter 10 Daniel has a vision after three weeks of prayer and fasting. He is taken behind the scenes. Heavenly beings battle to win human hearts.

Background

At the time of the vision in Daniel 10 the Jews were hoping that the Persian king Cyrus, who had captured Babylon, would let them return to their homeland. God revealed to Daniel the spiritual struggle for the heart of Cyrus.

Reflect
Reflect

Do your prayers connect you to God? Is there a spiritual struggle going on for your heart and mind and allegiance? If so, what is the battle about?

2. Heaven Is Watching



Read

• Daniel 4:13-17

Background

In chapter 4 King Nebuchadnezzar has yet another dream. He sees himself as a tree that is cut down because of his religious pride and oppressive acts toward others.

Reflect
Reflect

How do you feel about the thought that a heavenly court is watching the acts of human beings? Afraid as if “a big brother is watching”—or comforted by the fact that Heaven sets limits on human evil and oppression?