

Summary Handout

“A Kingdom Which Shall Never Be Destroyed”

Lesson

46

Summary

Daniel 2; Nebuchadnezzar's dream is revealed to Daniel—The king saw a great image; a stone cut from the mountain without hands destroyed the image; and the stone grew and filled the whole earth—The stone is the latter-day kingdom of God.

Supplemental Holy Land and Jewish insights:

Historical Takeovers of the Little Land of Israel: Our archaeology shows close to thirty major different levels of conquering and habitation. The conqueror's quest was to secure the “Crossroads of the East.” It reached from the north, sometimes governed by Assyrians, Babylonians and others and extended south to Egypt and the gateway to Africa. Babylon (today's Iraq), was one of the major conquerors.

Four Thousand Year of Babylonian Changes: “Babylon, the capital city of ancient Babylonia, is called by Isaiah “the glory of kingdoms.” Over the years the city was destroyed, rebuilt, then destroyed and rebuilt once again. When the Neo-Babylonian Empire was built at the expense of the Assyrian Empire, Babylon was made the capital of the new Empire, and underwent a vast program of public building and fortification. In excavations of Babylon, two palaces of King Nebuchadnezzar have been uncovered. One of them is assumed to be the location of the Hanging Gardens of Babylon, considered in ancient times to have been amongst the Seven Wonders of the World.” “In 612 B.C.E. Nebuchadnezzar became the ruler of Babylonia and shortly afterwards, in 586 B.C.E., conquered Judea, destroying the Temple and exiling the Jews to Babylonia. These exiles formed a large Jewish community who yearned for their homeland; as we read in Psalm 137: ‘By the rivers of Babylon we sat and cried, remembering Zion . . . How shall we sing the Lord's song in a foreign land? If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning.’” (*Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.*)

Nebuchadnezzar Suffered: “Daniel and the prophets Jeremiah and Ezekiel were eyewitnesses to all these events and the biblical books bearing their names testify to the political and spiritual crises which confronted Judea during this period. According to the Book of Daniel, Nebuchadnezzar suffered greatly for destroying the Temple. He was beset by dreams which he could not understand. One of them, a vision of a magnificent tree cut down in its prime was interpreted by Daniel for the king as a personal warning of many years of madness that were about to come upon him, during which time he would eat grass and live like an animal.” (*Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.*)

Daniel Interprets: Prayer, alone as well as by those who accompanied him, was able to lead Daniel through the confusing dreams of Nebuchadnezzar. The children of Israel have always thought and spoken in illustrative imagery. The Old Testament only has about 8,900 different words, (English has about 850,000 yet the illustrative capacity of the prophets is expressed through the images that are given. Hence, Daniel was able to interpret the king's dreams using “the learning of the Jews” as well as being “Highly favored of the Lord.” (*See 1 Nephi 1:1-2*)

“Dreams Through the Ages: “The Biblical view was that dreams are divine communication --- events transpiring on a supernatural plane. Thus, dreams were regarded as omens, which could be interpreted only by visionaries or prophets, who were in touch with this “divine dimension.” In the Bible, “dreamer,” “prophet,” and “magician” are related terms. Joseph was one such interpreter; he explained Pharaoh's dreams of the fat and thin cows as symbolizing seven years of plenty followed by seven years of hunger (Genesis 41). God's promise to Abraham about the inheritance of the land of Israel came in a dream (Genesis 15) and Samuel's first prophecies were stimulated by God's calling to him in a dream (Samuel 1:3).” (*Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.*)

Stone, as Physical Object and as Metaphor: Here are some examples in dreams, visions and general instruction: Altars and Temple: “. . . Jacob . . . took the stone . . . and set it up for a pillar” (*Genesis 28:18*) “And this stone, which I have set for a pillar, shall be God's house . . .” (*Genesis 28:22*) “. . . Thence is the shepherd, the stone of

Israel . . .” (*Genesis 49:24*) “. . . neither shall ye set up any image of stone in your land, to bow down unto it: for I am the LORD your God.” (*Leviticus 26:1*) “His heart is as firm as a stone; yea, as hard as a piece of the nether millstone.” (*Job 41:24*) “The stone which the builders refused is become the head stone of the corner.” (*Psalms 118:22*) “I will give thee tables of stone, and a law” (*Exodus 24:12*) “. . . thou shalt be called Cephias, which is by interpretation, A stone.” (*John 1:42*) “And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone;” (*Ephesians 2:20*)

Stones on Graves: Stones or rocks are still placed on Jewish graves as reminders of the stone built temple and an innate desire to rebuild the temple in Jerusalem. Apparently, it was and will be made with stone - and the Rock of Salvation will come to that temple! Gold and silver represent the wealthy nation of Babylon and the term “gold and silver” is a commodity as well as a metaphor for wealth. When used properly it is pleasing and used considerably in the temple construction. When misused, it represents a snare and detriment to a Godly life.

Silver and Gold: “Ye shall not make with me gods of silver, neither shall ye make unto you gods of gold.” (*Exodus 20:23*) “And Pharaoh took off his ring from his hand, and put it upon Joseph's hand, and arrayed him in vestures of fine linen, and put a gold chain about his neck;” (*Genesis 41:42*) “Behold, the money, which we found in our sacks' mouths, we brought again unto thee out of the land of Canaan: how then should we steal out of thy lord's house silver or gold?” (*Genesis 44:8*) “And Balaam answered and said unto the servants of Balak, If Balak would give me his house full of silver and gold, I cannot go beyond the word of the LORD my God, to do less or more.” (*Numbers 22:18*) “The graven images of their gods shall ye burn with fire: thou shalt not desire the silver or gold that is on them, nor take it unto thee, lest thou be snared therein: for it is an abomination to the LORD thy God.” (*Deuteronomy 7:25*)

Silver, Gold, Positive and Negative: “They shall cast their silver in the streets, and their gold shall be removed: their silver and their gold shall not be able to deliver them in the day of the wrath of the LORD: they shall not satisfy their souls, neither fill their bowels: because it is the stumbling block of their iniquity.” (*Ezekiel 7:19*) “Awake, O kings of the earth! Come ye, O, come ye, with your gold and your silver, to the help of my people, to the house of the daughters of Zion.” (*Doctrine & Covenants 124:11*)

Contrasting Use of Brass, Iron: Another metaphor used to denote hardness and obstinacy is brass and iron, yet in proper use they have a value of strength. “Because I knew that thou [art] obstinate, and thy neck [is] an iron sinew, and thy brow brass;” (*Isaiah 48:4*) “Arise and thresh, O daughter of Zion: for I will make thine horn iron, and I will make thy hoofs brass: and thou shalt beat in pieces many people: and I will consecrate their gain unto the LORD, and their substance unto the Lord of the whole earth.” (*Micah 4:13*)

Clay like Formation and Shaping of God's People: “Formed out of clay.” (*Job 33:6*) “But now, O LORD, thou art our father; we are the clay, and thou our potter; and we all are the work of thy hand.” (*Isaiah 64:8*) “And the vessel that he made of clay was marred in the hand of the potter: so he made it again another vessel, as seemed good to the potter to make it.” (*Jeremiah 18:4*) “O house of Israel, cannot I do with you as this potter? saith the LORD. Behold, as the clay is in the potter's hand, so are ye in mine hand, O house of Israel.” (*Jeremiah 18:6*) Analyzing the various metaphors we can see that beyond the riches and apparent beauty of man's creations, what is more solid, prevailing and will continue to exist into eternity is the “Rock” or “Stone,” the King of Kings, the Lord of Lords!

Daniel Rona, born in Israel and living in Jerusalem has authored Old & New Testament, Book of Mormon and Doctrine and Covenants and Church History Supplement Study Materials to be used in conjunction with the weekly LDS Gospel Doctrine Lesson study. NOTE: Three versions of the supplemental study materials are available FREE at www.HolyLandsRevealed.com. (Just click “LDS SUPPLEMENTS”)

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