

Earliten Sabbath School Lessons

First Year, First Quarter



*What Is Prophecy?
The Basics*

EARLITEEN

SABBATH SCHOOL LESSONS

FIRST YEAR, FIRST QUARTER

WHAT IS PROPHECY? THE BASICS

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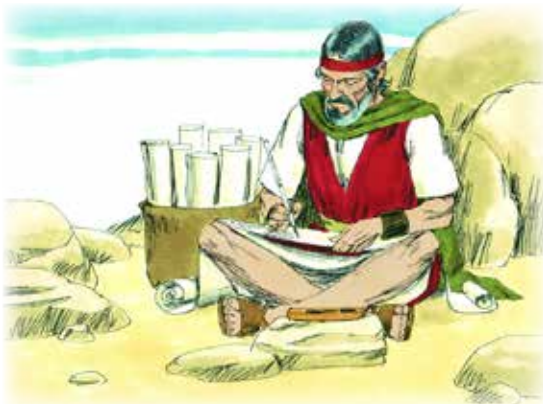
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INTRODUCTION

Years 1 and 2 of the Earliteen Sabbath School Lessons cover several basic Bible prophecies. This is very important, because, as the apostle Peter emphasized, “We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts: Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.” 2 Peter 1:19-21.

Fulfilled prophecy is proof that the Bible is God’s word. “God gave to men the sure word of prophecy; angels and even Christ Himself came to make known to Daniel and John the things that must shortly come to pass. Those important matters that concern our salvation were not left involved in mystery. They were not revealed in such a way as to perplex and mislead the honest seeker after truth. Said the Lord by the prophet Habakkuk, ‘Write the vision, and make it plain upon tables, that he may run that readeth it.’ Habakkuk 2:2, 3. The word of God is plain to all who study it with a prayerful heart. Every truly honest soul will come to the light of truth. ‘Light is sown for the righteous.’ Psalm 97:11. No church can advance in holiness unless its members are earnestly seeking for truth as for hid treasure.” –*The Spirit of Prophecy*, vol. 4, pp. 344, 345.

This quarter lays the foundation for the prophecies that will be studied later. God bless each student and instructor.



1

The Gift of Prophecy

DEFINITION: Prophecy is a declaration of something to come—prediction.

1. In relation to prophecy, what did Christ give to men when He ascended to heaven? Ephesians 4:8, last part.
2. Were prophets included in these gifts? Ephesians 4:11.
3. How long were these gifts to remain in the church? Ephesians 4:13.
4. Name the Old Testament prophets in the following verses:
2 Samuel 12:25
1 Kings 17:1
2 Kings 2:15
1 Samuel 10:9, 10
5. Who was he? _____
“... By a prophet the Lord brought Israel out of Egypt, and by a prophet was he preserved.” Hosea 12:13.
6. What two characteristics did John the Revelator see in the remnant church of the last days? Revelation 12:17.
 - a.
 - b.

7. What did John say the “testimony of Jesus” is? Revelation 19:10.
8. How do Seventh-day Adventists understand this Bible verse?

“As the end draws near and the work of giving the last warning to the world extends, it becomes more important for those who accept present truth to have a clear understanding of the nature and influence of the Testimonies, which God in His providence has linked with the work of the third angel’s message from its very rise.” –*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, p. 654.

“The Lord chose His own instrument for this purpose, selecting as His agent one who had not only surrendered all for Him, but whose life trembled in the balance, ‘the weakest of the weak.’ Within two months after the passing of the time, Miss Ellen G. Harmon (later Mrs. Ellen G. White), of Portland, Maine, then only about seventeen years of age, began to receive revelations from the Lord.” –J.N. Loughborough, *The Great Second Advent Movement*, p. 202.

What do you think?

1. When did prophecy first become necessary?
2. In what ways were prophets “spokespeople” for God?
3. Must a prophet be in harmony with God? Explain your answer.
4. Can one expect this gift to arise in the church again?
5. How can a true prophet be distinguished from a false one? See Isaiah 8:19, 20.

2

Leading Prophets of Old

MEMORY VERSE: "... Believe in the Lord your God, so shall ye be established; believe His prophets, so shall ye prosper." 2 Chronicles 20:20, last part.

In every period of the world, whenever the law of God was honored, God had a prophet or prophets through whom He led His people. The prophets of old gave messages from Him concerning the future. Among the many prophets, there a few who were specifically used by God to tell about coming events. All of the others were active in other ways. Elijah, for example, was a great prophet; yet he made no prediction that did not deal with the immediate present. The nearest he came to foretelling something was when he announced the drought and the destiny of Ahab and Jezebel. Likewise, John the Baptist, the greatest among the prophets, and Samuel did not foretell future events. The work to which they were called was different. They were statesmen, moral teachers, spiritual guides, divinely appointed watchmen, and instructors of the people.

1. At the beginning of the world's history, how did God communicate with man? Genesis 1:28; 3:8.
2. What caused that communication to stop? Isaiah 59:2.

"Adam, in his innocence, had enjoyed open communion with his Maker; but sin brought separation between God and man, and the atonement of Christ alone could span the abyss and make possible the communication of blessing or salvation from heaven to earth. Man was still cut off from direct approach to his Creator, but God would communicate with him through Christ and angels."
—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 67.

3. How does God communicate with people today?
 - a. John 16:13
 - b. 2 Timothy 3:16
 - c. Revelation 19:10, last part

4. What made it possible for the prophets to be spokespeople for God?
 - a. Exodus 4:15
 - b. 2 Peter 1:20, 21
 - c. Jeremiah 7:1-3
 - d. Ezekiel 33:7

“Reverence should be shown for God’s representatives—for ministers, teachers, and parents, who are called to speak and act in His stead. In the respect shown them, God is honored.”
—*Prophets and Kings*, p. 237.

5. Who were they?
 - a. The evangelist of the Old Testament. Isaiah 1:1, 18.
 - b. The prophet chosen before his birth. Jeremiah 1:1, 4-10.
 - c. The greatest prophet who ever lived. Luke 7:24-28.

What do you think?

1. Why were the prophets so important?
2. List some of the things a prophet would do.
3. List five things that John the Baptist did in his service for the Lord.



How Prophecy Works

MEMORY VERSE: *“Surely the Lord God does nothing, without revealing His secret to His servants the prophets.” Amos 3:7, Revised Standard Version.*

Prophecy in the Bible assumed various forms and was not limited to the prediction of future events. The word “prophecy” means both forth-telling and foretelling. A prophet spoke forth the message of God, transferring reproof, correction, and instruction from God to man. The prophet also at times foretold events of either the immediate or distant future, telling about the developments of God’s purposes or what would come to pass in the working out of particular circumstances. Whether the prophet heard or saw the message from God, he spoke it forth as God’s word rather than his own or that of man.

1. For what purpose does God use prophecy? 2 Peter 1:19; Psalm 73:24.
2. What does the Lord desire to do for people by fulfilling prophecy? Jeremiah 29:10.
3. What did Daniel do so he could understand prophecy? Daniel 9:1-3.
4. How did John the Baptist present prophecy? Luke 3:3-6, 16.
5. Why did Christ give a prophecy about the siege of Jerusalem? Matthew 24:15-20.

“When the idolatrous standards of the Romans should be set up in the holy ground, which extended some furlongs outside the city walls, then the followers of Christ were to find safety in

flight. When the warning sign should be seen, those who would escape must make no delay. Throughout the land of Judea, as well as in Jerusalem itself, the signal for flight must be immediately obeyed.... They must not hesitate a moment, lest they be involved in the general destruction." –*The Great Controversy*, p. 26.

6. **TRUE OR FALSE?** God warns of coming consequences of transgression. His warnings are intended to lead people to repentance. Isaiah 1:4, 16, 17.

7. In the following texts, find two things about the work of the prophets.
 - a. Amos 7:1, first part
 - b. Amos 7:14, 15

8. How was the gift of prophecy active in the early Christian church? Acts 16:6-10.

Thought questions

1. Since God used prophets in the past, do you think it is possible for Him to have a prophet in the last days?

2. How does a person become a prophet?

3. What would you say is a prophet's main responsibility?

4. Do you think that prophecy is important today? Tell why or why not.

5. What are some future events that God has revealed in His word? Write them down.

How Prophecy Comes

1. “For the _____ came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.” 2 Peter 1:21.

“Before the entrance of sin, Adam enjoyed open communion with his Maker; but since man separated himself from God by transgression, the human race has been cut off from this high privilege. By the plan of redemption, however, a way has been opened whereby the inhabitants of the earth may still have connection with Heaven. God has communicated with men by His Spirit, and divine light has been imparted to the world by revelations to His chosen servants. ‘Holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.’ 2 Peter 1:21.

“During the first twenty-five hundred years of human history, there was no written revelation. Those who had been taught of God, communicated their knowledge to others, and it was handed down from father to son, through successive generations. The preparation of the written word began in the time of Moses. Inspired revelations were then embodied in an inspired book. This work continued during the long period of sixteen hundred years, from Moses, the historian of creation and the law, to John, the recorder of the most sublime truths of the gospel.” *—The Great Controversy*, p. v.

2. List the five steps through which prophecy reaches the people. Revelation 1:1.
 - a.
 - b.

c.

d.

e.

3. Who reveals prophecy? 2 Peter 1:21.

“The truths revealed are all ‘given by inspiration of God’ (2 Timothy 3:16); yet they are expressed in the words of men. The Infinite One by His Holy Spirit has shed light into the minds and hearts of His servants.” –*The Great Controversy*, p. v.

4. What means does God use to transmit His will to men? Psalm 89:19; Hosea 12:10.

5. Name the occupations of the following six people who received communications from God.

a. Genesis 20:2, 3

b. Genesis 37:5-11

c. Genesis 40:5-19

d. Genesis 41:1

e. Matthew 27:17, 19

f. Acts 10:1-8

6. List the physical phenomena that occur when God gives His prophet a vision.
 - a. Daniel 10:8
 - b. Daniel 10:15
 - c. Daniel 10:16, first part
 - d. Daniel 10:18
 - e. Jeremiah 1:9
 - f. 2 Samuel 23:2
 - g. Numbers 24:16

7. When a prophet speaks, what message does he give? 2 Chronicles 36:12; Ezekiel 3:17.

Things to discuss

1. What do you think your reaction would be if you were to see a prophet in vision?
2. How can you test the things the prophets say to be sure they are of God?
3. Do you think it would take courage to be a prophet?

True and False Prophets

1. “Beloved, believe _____, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many _____ are gone out into the world.” 1 John 4:1.

“Every conceivable message is coming to counterfeit the work of God, and always bearing the inscription of truth upon its banner...”

“It is no light matter to substitute for God’s revealed will, opinions and assertions, dreams, symbols, and figures from human, finite beings. Our actions, words, spirit, and influence are watched and criticized. Those whom God has chosen to be His ministers are to settle solidly into His word, and let the word of God be their authority.” –*Selected Messages*, book 2, pp. 92, 93.

2. What did Jesus say about false prophets? How believable would these things be? Matthew 24:24.
3. How can what is true be differentiated from what is false? Isaiah 8:20.

The words of a true prophet will harmonize with God’s law and the messages of all of His previous prophets. One who claims to be a prophet may fulfill every other test; but if his instruction is contrary to the Bible and the testimony, he proves himself to be false.

4. What two characteristics does God’s prophet demonstrate? 1 John 4:2, 3; Deuteronomy 13:1-4.
5. Can a prophet be of God if the messages he gives do not come to pass? Deuteronomy 18:21, 22.

6. A true prophet must be called by God. Look up the following texts, and describe in your own words how God revealed His will so that His chosen men could speak for Him. 1 Samuel 3:1-10; Daniel 2:19.
7. How else does God communicate with His prophets? 2 Chronicles 20:14-19; Acts 13:8-11.
8. What will a true prophet never do? Jeremiah 23:16.
9. What will a true prophet do? Acts 11:27-30.
10. Can a message from God be nullified by man? Jeremiah 36:32.

Things to discuss

1. Can there be false prophets today?
2. What spirit do you think leads false prophets?
3. How can you tell a false prophet from a true one?



6

Prophecy in the New Testament

MEMORY VERSE: *“Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein: for the time is at hand.” Revelation 1:3.*

1. According to the memory verse, why are many people reluctant to study prophecy in the book of Revelation? Why is Bible prophecy misunderstood?
2. Did Moses point to a New Testament prophet to come? Deuteronomy 18:15.
3. Who was this? Acts 7:37, 38, 52.
4. What priest had the gift of prophecy? Luke 1:67.
5. What woman gave a prophecy about the Saviour after His birth? Luke 2:36-38.
6. Who was called the greatest prophet of all? Matthew 11:9-11.

“Christ declared John the Baptist to be one of the greatest of the prophets, and He showed His hearers that they had had sufficient evidence that John was a messenger from God. The words of the preacher in the wilderness were with power. He bore his message unflinchingly, rebuking the sins of priests and rulers, and enjoining upon them the works of the kingdom of heaven. He pointed out

to them their sinful disregard of their Father's authority in refusing to do the work appointed them. He made no compromise with sin, and many were turned from their unrighteousness." –*Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 278.

7. What New Testament prophet foretold the famine that came in the days of Claudius Caesar? Acts 11:27, 28.
8. What did that same prophet do seventeen years later? Acts 21:10, 11.
9. What disciple of Jesus received a special vision? Acts 10:9-17.
10. What vision was given to John in A.D. 96? Revelation 1:10, 11.
11. What did the apostle Paul experience? 2 Corinthians 12:1; Acts 9:1-7.

What do you think?

1. How can you know that the prophetic gift reaches beyond the times of the New Testament?
2. Could there be more than one prophet at a time?
3. What was the purpose of Peter's dream in Acts 10:9-17?



7

Prophecy in the Remnant Church

MEMORY VERSE: “And the dragon was wrath with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.”
Revelation 12:17.

1. In Revelation 12:17, what did John write about what would happen to the remnant church?

2. What is the testimony of Jesus? Revelation 19:10.

3. Make a list of the gifts that God gave to the Christian church. 1 Corinthians 12:8-11.
 - a.
 - b.
 - c.
 - d.
 - e.
 - f.
 - g.
 - h.
 - i.

4. Who gave the gift of prophecy to the church? Ephesians 4:10, 11.

“Early in my public labors I was bidden by the Lord, ‘Write, write the things that are revealed to you.’ At the time this message came to me, I could not hold my hand steady. My physical condition made it impossible for me to write. But again came the word, ‘Write the things that are revealed to you.’ I obeyed; and as the result it was not long before I could write page after page with comparative ease. Who told me what to write? Who steadied my right hand, and made it possible for me to use a pen? It was the Lord. When we come into right relation with Him, and give ourselves wholly to Him, we shall see the miracle-working power of God in word and deed.” –*Selected Messages*, book 3, p. 38.

5. Was Ellen G. White the only one in her day who claimed to have visions?

“Various things will appear claiming to be revelations from God, but which flow from the imagination of a conceited and deceived mind. We had to meet these things in our early experience. There were youth and children as well as those of mature age who claimed to be led and taught of God, having a special message to declare. They were springing up on every side, having the truth on some points, and error upon other points. For years the message from God came to me, ‘Believe them not, for they lead into false paths. God hath not sent them.’” –(Letter 4, 1893) *Selected Messages*, book 2, p. 90.

6. What was the spiritual condition of the first Adventists after the Great Discouragement in 1844?

“Our first conference in New York was held at Volney, in a brother’s barn. About thirty-five were present—all that could be collected in that part of the state. But of this number, hardly two were agreed. Some were holding serious errors, and each strenuously urged his own views, declaring that they were according to the Scriptures.” –*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 1, p. 86.

7. What brought harmony and unity to the believers? Ephesians 4:11-15.

8. What happens to the gift of prophecy when a prophet dies? Joshua 1:2-9.
9. What result does the activity of the Spirit of prophecy have in the church? 1 Corinthians 1:4-8.

What do you think?

1. Was Ellen G. White God's first choice for the office of prophet?
2. Sister White died in 1915. Can we expect another prophet to arise?
3. Do you think it would be good to have a living prophet in the church today?
4. What might he do?



Predictive Prophecy

MEMORY VERSE: “Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like Me, Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all My pleasure.” *Isaiah 46:9, 10.*

“God has in His word opened before us the great events of the future—all that it is essential for us to know—and He has given us a safe guide for our feet amid all its perils; but it is Satan’s purpose to destroy men’s confidence in God, to make them dissatisfied with their condition in life, and to lead them to seek a knowledge of what God has wisely veiled from them, and to despise what He has revealed in His Holy Word.” *—Patriarchs and Prophets*, pp. 686, 687.

“He has not left His church forsaken, but has traced in prophetic declarations what would occur, and that which His Spirit inspired the prophets to foretell has been brought about. All His purposes will be fulfilled. His law is linked with His throne, and no power of evil can destroy it. Truth is inspired and guarded by God; and it will triumph over all opposition.” *—The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 11.

1. What does the Lord do in regard to the future? *Isaiah 42:9.*
2. What is His purpose in letting people know what will happen in the future? *Isaiah 46:9, 10.*
3. To whom does He reveal His secrets? *Amos 3:7.*
4. What principle is essential to learn? *Deuteronomy 29:29.*

5. How can one be sure that Bible prophecy is accurate? 2 Peter 1:16.
6. Why is it reliable? 2 Peter 1:21.
7. What great blessing is there in the prophetic counsel of Scripture? 2 Peter 1:19.

Research

1. Make a list of the New Testament prophets whom you can think of who recorded future events.
2. Make a list of the Old Testament prophets who recorded future events that affect us today.
3. There are great blessings promised to those who study the book of Revelation. Revelation 1:3. Write down the ones that you appreciate the most.



Daniel the Prophet

MEMORY VERSE: *“And in all matters of wisdom and understanding, that the king inquired of them, he found them ten times better than all the magicians and astrologers that were in all his realm.” Daniel 1:20.*

We will now go back about 26 centuries to the golden age of the fabulous Babylonian Empire. Here we find Daniel, a handsome young prince of noble Jewish birth. Far from his native land, he is at the Babylonian court, for he was carried captive by King Nebuchadnezzar following his siege of Jerusalem in B.C. 606. The progressive king selected Daniel and other Hebrew captives of noble birth and great promise to be trained for state service.

Outstanding as it was to be singled out by a great monarch, this presented serious difficulties to Daniel and his friends. Many of the daily rituals, actions, and customs in the society were closely related to heathen idol worship. This brought the devout, God-fearing Hebrews into great danger and the most perplexing situations.

Because of the hatred and envy of his jealous fellow-courtiers, Daniel and his friends were repeatedly exposed to severe tests of fidelity to God. But over and over again these young men not only escaped the ingenious traps of their enemies but even gained spectacular victories over them.

In the second year of Nebuchadnezzar’s reign, Daniel described and interpreted the king’s forgotten dream, after which he was promoted to the position of ruler in Babylon and elevated to the leadership of all the wise men of the realm. In spite of all the honors and prestige heaped upon him, the young captive remained unspoiled, calmly trusting in the mighty protection of God, whom he continually served. The meaning of his name, “God is my judge,” was obviously fulfilled in his life.

That his fortune and fame in the secular world of his time were not due to the favoritism of one ruler in particular can be seen from the fact that Daniel with equal stature and success served no less than four great monarchs in two world empires. Nebuchadnezzar,

Belshazzar, Darius the Mede, and Cyrus the Persian all highly appreciated Daniel's wisdom, skill, and integrity. While occupying the position of a famous and influential statesman, Daniel at the same time humbly filled the position of the faithful prophet of the living God.

1. Daniel and his friends are first found in the Scriptures at the court of _____ . Daniel 1:1, 6, 7.
2. Why were they there? Daniel 1:2-4.
3. List five things that King Nebuchadnezzar expected of those whom he wanted to have as part of his kingly court. Daniel 1:4.
 - a.
 - b.
 - c.
 - d.
 - e.

"The king did not compel the Hebrew youth to renounce their faith in favor of idolatry, but he hoped to bring this about gradually. By giving them names significant of idolatry, by bringing them daily into close association with idolatrous customs, and under the influence of the seductive rites of heathen worship, he hoped to induce them to renounce the religion of their nation and to unite with the worship of the Babylonians." *-Prophets and Kings*, p. 481.

4. The king gave these chosen young people the food that he was used to eating. What was it? Daniel 1:5, 8.
5. Daniel wanted to remain faithful to God, so he requested that the prince of the eunuchs give him and his friends pulse to eat. What is pulse? Daniel 1:12.

“Test your servants for then days; let us be given vegetables to eat and water to drink.” Daniel 1:12, *Revised Standard Version*.

6. What was the effect of the simple diet? Daniel 1:15, 16.
7. A great crisis occurred soon afterward in the kingdom. What happened? Daniel 2:1-12.
8. Why were Daniel and his friends affected by this crisis? Daniel 2:13.

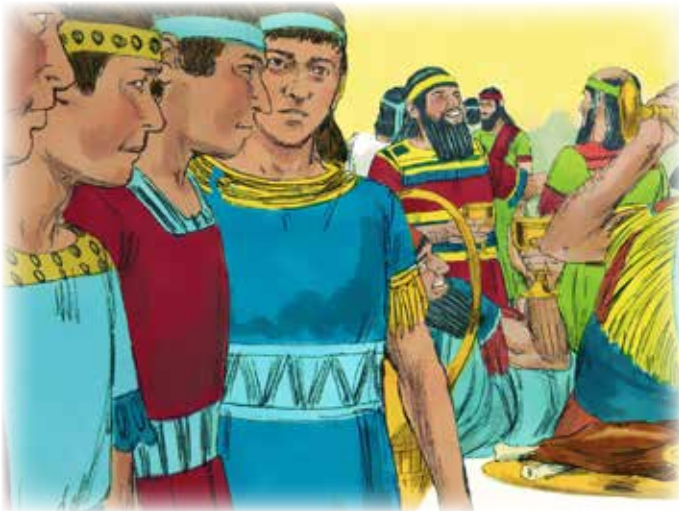
Things to discuss

1. In looking at Daniel's life, we learn that God took an active part in helping him and his faithful friends. If you want to be faithful as were they, what do you believe God will do for you?
2. What kind of a person was Daniel in his temperament and emotional character?
3. When did Daniel show the greatest courage?
 - a. When things were calm and pleasant.
 - b. In the midst of a crisis.
4. What possibilities exist for a faithful Christian in the world's society?
5. How would you get along with Daniel if he were here today?

“As God called Daniel to witness for Him in Babylon, so He calls us to be His witnesses in the world today. In the smallest as well as the largest affairs of life, He desires us to reveal to men the principles of His kingdom. Many are waiting for some great work to be brought to them, while daily they lose opportunities for revealing faithfulness to God. Daily they fail of discharging with wholeheartedness the little duties of life. While they wait for some large work in which they may exercise supposedly great talents, and thus satisfy their ambitious longings, their days pass away....

“In the life of the true Christian there are no nonessentials; in the sight of Omnipotence every duty is important....

“A noble character is not the result of accident; it is not due to special favors or endowments of Providence. It is the result of self-discipline, of subjection of the lower to the higher nature, of the surrender of self to the service of God and man.” —*Prophets and Kings*, pp. 487, 488.



Daniel 2, Part 1

MEMORY VERSE: *“Daniel answered and said, Blessed be the name of God for ever and ever: for wisdom and might are His: 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: He revealeth the deep and secret things: He knoweth what is in the darkness, and the light dwelleth with Him.” Daniel 2:20-22.*

“Soon after Daniel and his companions entered the service of the king of Babylon, events occurred that revealed to an idolatrous nation the power and faithfulness of the God of Israel.” *—Prophets and Kings*, p. 491.

God gave a dream to Nebuchadnezzar, who believed that Babylon would stand forever. By His prophet He gave Nebuchadnezzar the interpretation of the dream, so he might know that Babylon would not stand forever and that truth was more than the ambitions of imperialism. Furthermore, every king who came after him was also to understand from the dream that earthly kingdoms are all temporal at best and will pass away. Only the eternal kingdom, which will never pass away, is the kingdom of Christ, represented by the stone that struck the image on the feet and became a great mountain that filled the whole earth.

1. What happened to King Nebuchadnezzar one night? Daniel 2:1-9.
2. Why was he unable to tell the wise men the dream? Daniel 2:5.
3. When Daniel found out the reason for the king’s anger, what did he do, and where did he go for enlightenment? Daniel 2:16-18.

“Upon hearing this, Daniel, taking his life in his hands, ventured into the king’s presence and begged that time be granted, that he might petition his God to reveal to him the dream and its interpretation.” *—Prophets and Kings*, p. 493.

4. How do you know that Daniel had a living connection with God? Daniel 2:19-23. What did he do after God revealed the dream to him?
5. What was God's purpose in giving the king this dream? Daniel 2:28.

6. Describe the image the king saw in his dream. Daniel 2:31-33.

- a. Head of fine _____
- b. Breast and arms of _____
- c. Belly and thighs of _____
- d. Legs of _____
- e. Feet—part _____ and part _____



7. What happened to this image? (Circle the letter of the correct answer)
- a. It stood forever
 - b. It turned to gold
 - c. It broke in pieces and was destroyed

8. What was represented by the head of gold? Daniel 2:37, 38.

9. How impressed was the king with the interpretation? Daniel 2:46-48.

10. What was the king thinking about before he fell asleep? Daniel 2:29.

11. What truths did Daniel try to impress upon Nebuchadnezzar? Daniel 2:21, 28.

What do you think?

1. What kind of man was King Nebuchadnezzar?
2. What is your opinion of Babylon's wise men?
3. From what source did they get their wisdom?
4. Can we tap into the source of Daniel's wisdom and knowledge?



Daniel 2, Part 2

MEMORY VERSE: “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.” Daniel 2:44.

“Hundreds of years before certain nations came upon the stage of action, the Omniscient One looked down the ages and predicted the rise and fall of the universal kingdoms. God declared to Nebuchadnezzar that the kingdom of Babylon should fall, and a second kingdom would arise, which also would have its period of trial. Failing to exalt the true God, its glory would fade, and a third kingdom would occupy its place. This also would pass away; and a fourth, strong as iron, would subdue the nations of the world....

“In the history of nations the student of God’s word may behold the literal fulfillment of divine prophecy. Babylon, shattered and broken at last, passed away because in prosperity its rulers had regarded themselves as independent of God, and had ascribed the glory of their kingdom to human achievement.” —*Prophets and Kings*, pp. 501, 502.

1. What kingdom followed Babylon? Daniel 2:39; 5:28, 30, 31.

Darius the Mede was king of this empire; and his general, who led Babylon’s overthrow, was named Cyrus. Within two years Cyrus became king of Persia (Medo-Persia). See Daniel 6:28.

2. What interesting facts can you find concerning this king? Isaiah 44:26-28; 45:1-5.
3. The name of the third kingdom was _____. Daniel 8:20, 21.

4. What kingdom followed next? Daniel 8:23, 24.

5. What were its main characteristics? Daniel 2:40.

6. What was to happen to the fourth kingdom? Daniel 2:41-43.

Between the years A.D. 356 and 483, Rome was divided into ten parts. Some of the kingdoms were strong, and others were weak. The ten toes represent the ten kingdoms occupying present-day Europe, including Italy, France, England, Austria, Belgium, Holland, Spain, Portugal, Germany, and Switzerland.

7. What does Daniel 2:43 mean when it states: “They shall mingle themselves with the seed of men”?

Mighty efforts have been put forth to weld the nations of Europe, the divisions of Rome, into one homogenous whole by intermarriage, referred to in the prophecy as mingling “themselves with the seed of men”; but they have failed. Charlemagne and Napoleon sought by force of arms to build a united kingdom, but they failed. The prophecy declared that these nations would not be united, even as iron cannot mix with clay. The words, “They shall not cleave one to another,” is stronger than diplomacy or force of arms.

8. What prophecy was given that is still in the future? Daniel 2:44.

In the days of the last divisions of Rome, the God of heaven will set up His kingdom, which will never be destroyed and never be given to anyone except His own people, who will inhabit it forever. “And the dream is certain, and the interpretation thereof sure.” Daniel 2:45.

What do you think?

1. How is God's character shown in the vision given to Nebuchadnezzar and revealed to Daniel? What do you think His divine character is like?
2. In relation to this vision, where do you place yourself in reference to the different parts of the image?
3. Knowing that all these kingdoms will be destroyed, on whose side do you want to be when the end of this world comes?



12

Daniel Sees the Future

MEMORY VERSE: *“But the saints of the most High shall take the kingdom, and possess the kingdom for ever, even for ever and ever.” Daniel 7:18.*

The two outstanding prophecies of the Old Testament are Daniel 2 and Daniel 7. They are also quite simple to understand. Why? Because the interpretation is given hand in hand with the symbols of the visions themselves. Thus they also form the foundation for the study of all prophecy, for a single symbol used in various prophecies stands for the same type of thing throughout.

The outstanding theme of these two prophecies is: God in heaven guides the course of this earth’s nations and rulers. Over 500 years before Christ came to this world, God revealed to Daniel the future of the world’s major powers. How was He able to do this? In the first place, God knows what will happen in the future. In the second place, He is the One who removes kings and sets up kings.

“All Scripture language is to be taken literally, unless there exists some good reason for regarding it as figurative. All that is figurative is to be interpreted by that which is literal. That the language here used is symbolic, is evident from verse 17, which reads: ‘These great beasts, which are four, are four kings, which shall arise out of the earth.’” –Uriah Smith, *Daniel and the Revelation*, p. 105.

1. What did Daniel see in a vision at night? Daniel 7:2, 3.

Four _____

Four _____

2. What did the four beasts represent? Daniel 7:17.

3. How do we know that the prophecy refers not to individual kings but kingdoms? Daniel 7:18, 23.
4. What did the lion represent? Daniel 7:4.



The first beast was like a lion with eagle's wings. This is a very appropriate symbol for Babylon. The winged lion is found on many Babylonian art objects. The combination of the eagle with the lion was a common motif. The lion is commonly regarded as the king of beasts; and the eagle, as the royal bird. Hence, they show the outstanding position of the Babylonian kingdom. Remember the golden head of the image? The wings show the rapid conquest of this empire over others; however, the wings were plucked, showing that the early power of Babylon waned under the successors of King Nebuchadnezzar. Babylon became weak and enfeebled through wealth and luxury and was finally conquered by Medo-Persia. The Bible says a man's heart was given to it. The bold, proud kingdom now appeared meek, timorous, and faint.

5. Describe the second beast. Daniel 7:5.



The second beast, which was like a bear, was leaning on one of its powerful paws, showing that the Persians were more powerful than the Medes. It held three ribs in its mouth. This power was described as very cruel and destructive. "Arise, devour much flesh." Daniel 7:5. The prophet Isaiah, over 100 years before, described the Medes as cruel. Isaiah 13:7, 8. When Daniel saw the bear arise, he recognized it as the nation of which Isaiah had written.

6. What was the third beast like? Daniel 7:6.



The third power arose—a leopard with four wings like a fowl and four heads. It would also have dominion over the world. This world kingdom to rise after Medo-Persia is compared with the brass belly in the image of Daniel 2. It represented Greece, whose extremely rapid conquest under Alexander the Great was aptly denoted by four wings. The four heads accurately portrayed the kingdom's division into four parts after Alexander's short reign and death. His four generals—Cassander, Ptolemy, Lysimachus, and Seleucus—ruled these four divisions of the kingdom. Thus, the great Macedonian empire was the third beast that Daniel identified in his vision.

7. What great, horrible terrible beast did Daniel see next? Daniel 7:7, 8, 19, 20.



From the way Daniel described the fourth beast, there is obviously nothing like it in the natural world. He simply called it dreadful and terrible, with strong iron teeth. We can recognize the parallel between this verse and the iron legs of the image of Daniel 2. The iron empire of Rome was represented here in its most hideous form—destructive, devouring, and stamping its enemies to the ground. The beast had ten horns, which correspond to the ten toes of the image of Daniel 2. These ten horns, like the ten toes, represent the ten European countries that occupy the territory formerly ruled by the Roman Empire.

8. What other power was shown coming up from the horns of the fourth beast? Daniel 7:8, 20.



This little horn represented the beginning of the great spiritual empire of the Roman Catholic (Universal) Church, which arose from the ruins of political Rome. In the establishment of its power in Rome, the Roman bishop subdued three barbarian nations—the Heruli, the Vandals, and the Ostrogoths—thus fulfilling the plucking up of the three horns.

9. What was significant about the eyes in this little horn? What do they symbolize?

The eyes with which this little horn was endowed symbolized its cunning intelligence, insight, and foresight. The main instruments of this supreme intelligence have always been the Catholic Church's confessionals, from one end of the globe to the other, where high and low repeat their innermost thoughts and plans to Catholic priests.

10. What else characterized this little horn? Daniel 7:25.

The characteristics described here are applicable only to the Roman Catholic Church. By its own admission, it attempted to change God's law, omitting the second commandment in the catechism, and splitting the tenth commandment into two, as well as claiming the power to substitute the day of the sun for the seventh-day Sabbath of the fourth commandment.

11. How did this vision of Daniel end? Daniel 7:9-14, 22, 26, 27.

The judgment is of the greatest importance, because, according to the vision, it is to take place at the end of time. The next event for this earth is the second coming of Jesus Christ. Then there will be no more time to change one's life, thoughts, or actions. We must do this now, while there is still time. The judgment will result in the establishment of the kingdom that is everlasting. Christ will rule as the righteous conqueror of this world, and dominion will be given to the people of the saints of the Most High.

What do you think?

1. What difference is there between Nebuchadnezzar's dream and that of Daniel?
2. Which of the four kingdoms is described most extensively in Daniel's vision?
3. Was God's law actually changed by the actions of the papacy?



The Kingdom of God

MEMORY VERSE: *“From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.” Matthew 4:17.*

“Whereunto shall we liken the kingdom of God? or with what comparison shall we compare it?’ In earthly governments there was nothing that could serve for a similitude. No civil society could afford Him a symbol....

“The germ in the seed grows by the unfolding of the life-principle which God has implanted. Its development depends upon no human power. So it is with the kingdom of Christ. It is a new creation. Its principles of development are the opposite of those that rule the kingdoms of this world. Earthly governments prevail by physical force; they maintain their dominion by war; but the founder of the new kingdom is the Prince of Peace.” *—Christ’s Object Lessons*, pp. 76, 77.

1. What was the message of John the Baptist? **Matthew 3:2, 3.**
2. What gospel (meaning “good news”) did Jesus preach? **Mark 1:14, 15.**
3. What did He teach His disciples to pray? **Matthew 6:10.**

“The disciples of Christ were looking for the immediate coming of the kingdom of His glory, but in giving them this prayer Jesus taught that the kingdom was not then to be established. They were to pray for its coming as an event yet future. But this petition was also an assurance to them. While they were not to behold the coming of the kingdom in their day, the fact that Jesus bade them pray for it is evidence that in God’s own time it will surely come.

“The kingdom of God’s grace is now being established, as day by day hearts that have been full of sin and rebellion yield to the

sovereignty of His love. But the full establishment of the kingdom of His glory will not take place until the second coming of Christ to this world....

“But before that coming, Jesus said, ‘This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations.’ Matthew 24:14. His kingdom will not come until the good tidings of His grace have been carried to all the earth. Hence, as we give ourselves to God, and win other souls to Him, we hasten the coming of His kingdom.” –*Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing*, pp. 107-109.

4. What did Jesus instruct His followers to do? Matthew 6:33.

“Jesus does not release us from the necessity of effort, but He teaches that we are to make Him first and last and best in everything. We are to engage in no business, follow no pursuit, seek no pleasure, that would hinder the outworking of His righteousness in our character and life. Whatever we do is to be done heartily, as unto the Lord.” –*God’s Amazing Grace*, p. 21.

5. Read Matthew 13, and list 6 things to which the kingdom of God is compared.

- a.
- b.
- c.
- d.
- e.
- f.



6. Where did Jesus say His kingdom is found? Luke 17:20, 21.

7. Four elements make up the kingdom. The first is the King, Christ. He is also to be married to the bride, who is composed of the remaining three elements. What are they?
 - a. Revelation 21:9, 10
 - b. Ephesians 5:23
 - c. Isaiah 62:4

God's giving the above three things to Jesus constitutes the marriage.

8. There are three phases to the marriage, or the advent of Christ:
 - a. He comes to judge the world (going to the marriage)
 - b. He comes as a thief (the marriage)
 - c. He comes to take His people to heaven (coming from the marriage)

Match the three phases below with the above events surrounding Christ's coming:

- ___ Close of probation (Revelation 22:11, 12)
- ___ Investigative judgment (Daniel 7:9, 10, 13, 14)
- ___ Christ's coming (Matthew 13:38-41)

"The coming of Christ as our high priest to the most holy place, for the cleansing of the sanctuary, brought to view in Daniel 8:14; the coming of the Son of man to the Ancient of days, as presented in Daniel 7:13; and the coming of the Lord to His temple, foretold by Malachi, are descriptions of the same event; and this is also represented by the coming of the bridegroom to the marriage, described by Christ in the parable of the ten virgins, of Matthew 25...."

"The coming of the bridegroom, here brought to view, takes place before the marriage. The marriage represents the reception by Christ of His kingdom....

"In the parable of Matthew 22 the same figure of the marriage is introduced, and the investigative judgment is clearly represented as taking place before the marriage. Previous to the wedding the king comes in to see the guests, to see if all are attired in the wedding garment, the spotless robe of character washed and made white in the blood of the Lamb. Matthew 22:11; Revelation 7:14." –*The Great Controversy*, pp. 426, 428.

What do you think?

1. What differences are there between the kingdom of God and the kingdoms of the world?
2. What will determine whether or not a person becomes a citizen of God's kingdom?
3. Is the eternal kingdom important today? Explain your answer.

