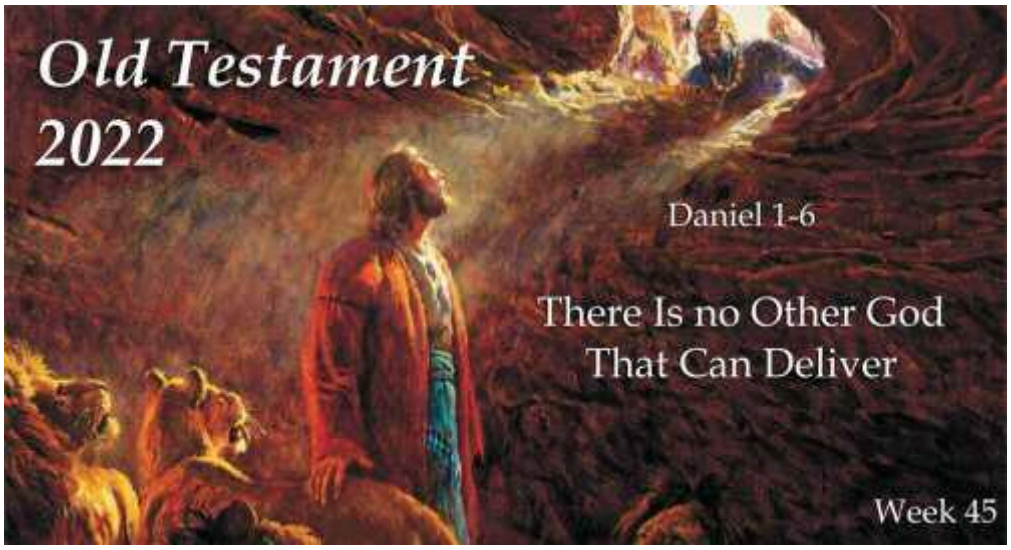

Week 45 is scheduled for study Oct. 31-Nov. 6, 2022. God is in control. We can trust him when our faith is tried, He will support us in our trials, and the Church is His earthly kingdom.

Day 1

Elder Richard G. Scott explained that recording inspiration "shows God that His communicat5ions are sacred to us. Recording will also enhance our ability to recall revelation." (Ensign or Liahona, May 2012, 46)

Daniel 1; 3; 6 - I can trust in the Lord when my faith is tried.

Daniel was a child raised in the middle of the heaviest concentration of those of his own faith you could imagine. Everyone around him was of covenant Israel, and the law of Moses was recognized and lived by all in his society. In such circumstances one's religion tends to become almost invisible. When everyone else around you lives and acts according to the same set of social norms and customs, you don't think about your religion, it is just the way life is.

This was Daniel's life, until he was hauled away to Babylon, the seat of all things worldly and the purveyor of anything but his religion. Except for his own close companions, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah (renamed by the Babylonians as Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego), he had few to associate with each day who were of his own religion. The Babylonian society worshipped every sort of god imaginable,

and they had statues and shrines to worship them on many street corners and in many businesses. Everyone's god was represented publicly, except the God of Israel. So Daniel was pretty much alone in his beliefs and worship of his God.

Every day these young men had to deal with others who lived their lives completely outside of the covenants they had been raised with in Jerusalem. People ate different foods, many of which were forbidden to the Jews. Morally, they practiced things that were abominations to the Jews, and worshipped false gods by the score. If there ever was a ripe field for temptation, Daniel and company were in the middle of it. It would have been completely unnoticed by those around them if they had abandoned their beliefs and lived like everyone else. In order for them to live their lives as closely to what they had been raised with, they would have to set themselves apart from everyone else around them, which was bound to draw attention. Time and time again Daniel and his buddies would have to choose whether to follow the crowd or buck the system and live as they had been raised.

Those of you reading this who were raised outside of a community where most are members of the Church recognize the challenges Daniel, et al had to face. If you were raised in a heavily populated LDS community then you will just have to imagine what life might be like if all the supports were taken away and you were left on your own to live your religion or go the way of the world. Following is an article I wrote of an experience I had my freshman year in college. I was raised in a military family, and attended the biggest drinking school in the United States. I lived in a coed dorm, and had my first real experience of fending for myself among those who were very worldly.

How to Spot a Perfect Temptation

The point of today's lesson, in my mind, is that there are times in life when we just have to decide that what the Lord wants of us is more important to us than what the world wants from us. Sometimes this goes in our favor socially. Sometimes it doesn't. We have to live with our choice. The Lord supports us when we place our faith in Him and are brave about living our religion. Often that support doesn't manifest itself until after the trial of our faith. But it always comes, for the Lord is always faithful to those who trust Him.

Day 2

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Daniel 2 - The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is the kingdom of God on earth.

I have just a couple of thoughts on this lesson. I have tried to produce a visual of how this stone rolling down from the mountain broke apart the great statue the king saw. From the nature of the language used in the scriptures, I get the impression (whether right or wrong) that the growth of the rolling stone was gradual, just as the breaking apart of the statue would need to be gradual.

The visual I see in my head can be compared to a special effect I have seen in several movies where someone is being vaporized. They are acting normal when suddenly particles of their body start to float away, gaining in momentum until they simply are blown away in the breeze and are no longer. We know that the stone doesn't just crack the kingdoms suddenly into pieces, like one would think of breaking stone. Daniel 2:35 describes it this way.

> 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.

When the verse says that all the parts of the statue were "broken to pieces together, and became like the chaff of the summer threshingfloors" that doesn't tell me that the statue was blown away in an instant. It sounds to me like the breaking of the statue was more gradual, like the growth of the stone that filled the earth. I interpret it this way because we have seen that the restoration of the Lord's kingdom on earth in 1830 has been a gradual, but steady growth, and it will continue to grow until the Savior comes and this same kingdom which has been established throughout the earth will become the governing instrument the Lord uses to rule the earth.

A note for those unfamiliar with threshing floors or chaff - Many kernels of grain have an outer "shell" that is little more than a papery film that covers the seed within. When you take the grain to the threshing floor, the grain is placed on the ground and beaten to break apart the papery covering. The pieces of papery covering are then separated from the grain by placing it all in a shallow basket and tossed into the air so the breeze can blow the chaff (the paper coverings) away, leaving only the grain in the basket. With the chaff gone the grain is now ready to be stored or ground for flour.

As the Church grows, and its influence permeates greater and greater sectors of society, the more the machinations of the wicked are frustrated and fall apart. Eventually all the governments of the nations of the earth will collapse in upon themselves, leaving the Lord's Church as the main beacon of hope and guiding influence throughout the world. I believe the scriptures bear this view out.

The second thought on this lesson is on the reality of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints as the kingdom of God on earth. God's government has never been one of armies and power over the people. His government has always been one of love, cooperation, and improvement of the people. His government has always been taught to His people through the influence of the Holy Spirit, whether in Adam's day or our own. The principles that guide the behavior of God's people in His kingdom are found in the gospel Christ has given us. The gospel holds all the commandments, covenants, and ordinances that are able to bring peace to the world. The more faithful we are to those commandments, covenants, and ordinances, the closer to a Zion society we become.

The governments of the world are continually fracturing because of internal strife and rebellion. But God's kingdom in the last days is becoming stronger and stronger through cooperative living and greater loving of our fellow travelers in mortality. It is through the growth of God's kingdom that Satan's rule will eventually be crushed.

Day 3

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Daniel 3:19-28 - The Savior will support me in my trials.

In Daniel 3:17-18 the three men tell the king that under no conditions will they submit to worship his golden image. If God wants to deliver them from the king's hands then He will do so, but even if He chooses not to deliver them, they will still not bow down and worship the king's golden image. They said this to the king knowing that the punishment was to be thrown into a furnace to burn to death.

These men did not know if they would be spared from a horrible and painful death. What they did know was that no matter what happened to them they would live or die faithful to their God and His covenants. Their resolve to be obedient didn't end there. The king was so furious with their defiance that he had the furnace heated to seven times its normal temperature. I am guessing that is scripture talk to say that he had the furnace heated to as hot as it could possibly be made to go. Then, to add insult to injury, the king had the men bundled up in all their clothing so there would be more to burn, and because they were temporarily protected from the fire because of all the layers of clothing, they would suffer a little longer in the flames.

Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego had to maintain their resolve through all these preparations. And when the furnace was ready and they were bundled up in all their clothing, they were bound so they couldn't move, and carried into the flames and dumped on the floor of the furnace to die. The heat was so intense that it killed the men assigned to carry them into the furnace.

In spite of all these preparations, our three heroes maintained their faith in God, and their determination to suffer, if need be, for their beliefs, even if it meant giving up their lives to do it. And it was such a gruesome and painful way to die. At the moment the men met the flames on the floor of the furnace, the king was astonished to see that there were not three men in the flames, but four. The Lord had a lesson to teach the king, and a blessing to give to His faithful servants. God sent a messenger to comfort and free the men in the flames. They were so protected that even their clothing was spared from the smell of smoke. It was as though they had not ever been near that fiery furnace, and were able to walk out of the fire on their own.

An important lesson here is that the Lord doesn't usually prevent us from being cast into our own personal fiery furnace. He usually waits until we have passed the point of no return before sending us comfort. But send it he always does.

God does not always protect us when we have trials in life. Look at the people thrown into a fiery furnace during Alma and Amulek's teaching. The Lord allowed them to die so that His judgments on the city would be just when he destroyed them. He also promised the prophet that all those who died would be richly blessed for their faithfulness. The point here is that faith doesn't always provide freedom from suffering. What it does provide is peace of conscience, and blessings from God that we counted His approval more valuable and important than that of the world. When we read the words of Joshua that say "Choose you this day whom ye will serve, ... but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord" (Joshua 24:2, 15), this is what it means. The choice that is required here is a life or death type of commitment. And the greater the faith demonstrated, the greater the miracles we will see in our lives.

FHE/Personal Study

Improving Our Teaching - Teach the doctrine

When we teach, whether in our home or in a classroom situation, we have been warned against the spirit of speculation and against pursuing our own ideas about the gospel. Speculation and teaching our own ideas about the gospel of Christ invite dissention and division. That is not the Lord's way. His way to teach is to present His doctrine then let the Spirit testify to its truthfulness.

Our responsibility when we teach is to bring the Spirit so He can convert all in the room who are prepared to listen. Only by teaching the doctrines of Christ can that happen. From my own personal experience I know that when presenting an idea in class you are almost guaranteed to have someone miss where you want to go and instead introduce side notes, false doctrine, or speculation. This immediately drives away the Spirit and sidetracks the class from where you wanted it to go. Sticking to doctrine, especially when you need to discuss the doctrine so everyone has a better understanding of it, can be tricky. You need to be as well versed in the principles of the doctrine you are teaching as you can be so you know when the discussion is straying away from revealed truth.

Click the link below to

print a PDF copy of the article.

OT45-2022 – There Is no Other God That Can Deliver

Week 45