

A dark, abstract, textured image, possibly a close-up of a surface or a piece of art, with a grainy, almost charcoal-like appearance. It features some lighter, irregular shapes and lines, suggesting a complex, perhaps organic or industrial, form. The overall tone is dark and moody.

GODS WINDOW INTO THE FUTURE

A PRIMARY SCHOOL'S VISION OF THE FUTURE

TRY JESUS COURSE BOOK 11

A survey of 500 Sydney teenagers, conducted by Loud Advertising, found the average adolescent thought the world was “going down the gurgler”.

VISION OF THE FUTURE

11 – GOD'S WINDOW INTO THE FUTURE

Students at Macquarie Primary School in Canberra, Australia, were asked to close their eyes and imagine the year 2020. They were to write down what they imagined. Their poems and ideas could be as weird and wonderful as they wanted them to be. What they wrote was published in a collection of student poetry and other works called *The Spinning Tree*. The title poem reads:

*We are based upon one tree,
All my friends and me.
The wind is blowing strong,
I'm not lasting long, the dying tree is red,
It's spinning in my head.
Time is going fast.
I know I'll never last.*

Another poem is called *ZED St*:

*On the side of Z street, grey mould
buildings on fire,
Children left on the bitumen cold,
The trees are naked as a flower
stripped of its beauty.
Everyone is dying, everything is dying.
On Z street, there's a crystal ball
in a fortune teller's hold.*

Teacher Craig Dent says that what he found disturbing about the exercise was that the children wrote and worked on their own but a lot of their imagery was the same:

"What they're writing about is very apocalyptic. They're not sure about where they are going.... I think a lot of them are really afraid of what's going to happen to the earth."


Remember, these are primary students!

Richard Eckersley, a social analyst, comments, "Not every vision is black; some are frivolous, light-hearted, bright. And some of the more serious still express hope. Nevertheless, fear of what the future holds for them is a common theme in the children's work."

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Eckersley says, "My concern is that *The Spinning Tree* poems and the survey results reveal a fundamental failing of modern Western culture: the absence of a shared ideal or vision of our society and its future, a vision that nurtures and nourishes the individual and helps to hold a society together."

(Youth Studies Australia)



Without Hope Human Beings Can't Survive

Rolling Stone magazine quotes Fiona Horne, former singer with Sydney band DefFX: "I don't believe there are any divine plans, I believe you make your own ... the way I choose to experience my life is a personal choice that isn't under ... any God's jurisdiction."

This discovery guide demonstrates very clearly that God does have a divine plan and that this world is still under His jurisdiction.

An Amazing Prophecy

Six hundred years before the birth of Christ, God gave the world a startling glimpse into the future through the prophet Daniel. He presented an outline of world

history, from Daniel's time to our own day -

and beyond. Whole libraries, filled with great books of history, have discussed these centuries, but only in the Bible is the story told, accurately and significantly.

This prophecy appears in the second chapter of Daniel. It actually originated in a dream God gave Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon, over 2600 years ago. The dream deeply troubled this monarch and he wanted to know what it meant.

After all

of Babylon's wise men failed to tell the king what he dreamed or what the dream meant, a young Hebrew slave named Daniel claimed that the God of heaven could reveal all mysteries. Daniel had been taken captive from Jerusalem to Babylon by Nebuchadnezzar in 605 BC.

1. What did Daniel say the king saw in his dream? Daniel 2:31-35 (page 626 in NIV Bible: International Bible Society, 00195)

You looked, O king, and there before you stood a _____ - an enormous, dazzling statue, awesome in appearance.

2. Do we have to guess at the interpretation of this dream? Daniel 2:36 (page 626)

This was the dream, and now we will _____ it to the king.

The Prophecy Interpreted

THE HEAD OF GOLD

3. What world power did Daniel tell the king the head of gold symbolised? Daniel 2:37, 38 (page 626)

You, O king, are the king of kings. The God of heaven has given you dominion and power and might and glory; ... _____ are that head of _____.

CHEST AND ARMS OF SILVER

4. What does the prophecy say would happen next? Daniel 2:39 (page 626); Daniel 5:25-31 (page 630)

After you, _____ kingdom will rise, inferior to yours. Your kingdom is divided and given to the _____ and _____.

In fulfilment of God's prediction, Nebuchadnezzar's kingdom fell when Cyrus, the Persian general, in coalition with the Medes, overthrew the Babylonian empire in 539 BC.

THE BELLY AND THIGHS OF BRONZE

5. What does the next part of the metal image represent? Daniel 2:39 (page 626)

Next, a third _____, one of bronze, will rule over the whole earth.

The bronze symbolises the kingdom of Greece, which overthrew the Persians at the Battle of Arbela in 331 BC (see Daniel 8:20, 21, page 633). Alexander the Great was the first ruler of the kingdom of Greece, which lasted to 168 BC.

THE LEGS OF IRON

6. What did Daniel say would follow Greece? Daniel 2:40 (page 626); Luke 2:1 (page 724)

Finally, there will be a _____ kingdom, strong as _____ - for iron breaks and smashes everything - and as iron breaks things to pieces, so it will crush and break all the others.

In those days Caesar Augustus issued a decree that a _____ should be taken of the entire _____ world.

After the death of Alexander, his empire weakened and split into rival factions until finally in 168 BC, at the battle of Pydna, the "Iron Empire" of Rome defeated Greece. Caesar Augustus ruled the Roman Empire when Jesus was born about 2000 years ago (Luke 2:1). Jesus and His apostles lived during the period represented by the legs of iron.

Gibbon, the 18th century historian, no doubt had Daniel's prophecy in mind when he wrote:

"The arms of the republic, sometimes vanquished in battle, always victorious in war, advanced with rapid steps to the Euphrates, the Danube, the Rhine, and the ocean; and the images of gold, or silver, or brass, that might serve to represent the nations and their kings, were successively broken by the iron monarchy of Rome." (The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire, Vol. 3, page 634)

THE FEET AND TOES OF IRON AND CLAY

7. What would happen next? Would a fifth world power follow Rome? Daniel 2:41, 42 (page 626)

Just as you saw that the feet and toes were partly of baked clay and partly of iron, so this will be a

_____.

During the fourth and fifth centuries of the Christian era barbaric invaders from the north attacked the decaying Roman Empire. Finally 10 of the tribes gained most of the territory of Western Rome. Seven of the 10 nations of divided Western Rome remain on the map of Europe today and relate directly back to Daniel's prophecy.

How could Daniel, a Hebrew living in the time of Babylon, know that there would be four world empires within 1000 years? How did he know that the fourth one would be divided? This amazing prophecy is sure evidence that God has a divine plan for this world and that there is hope for the future.

8. What is the perpetual marvel of European history? Daniel 2:43 (page 626)

And just as you saw the iron mixed with baked clay, so the _____ will be a mixture and _____, any more than iron mixes with clay.

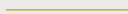


Adolf Hitler
was just one

among
g

many who tried.

*DISSAPPEAREDÉFROMÉHISTORY



9. What is the meaning of the stone that strikes the statue and grinds it to powder? Daniel 2:44, 45 (page 626)

"In the time of those kings, the God of heaven will set up a _____ that will _____ be destroyed, nor will it be left to another people."

The kingdom of God has two phases—the kingdom of grace and the kingdom of glory. The first came with Jesus' first advent (Matthew 21:33-46; Mark 1:15, pages 698 and 707).



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10. What event brings in God's kingdom of glory? Matthew 25:31-34 (page 702)

When _____ in his glory, and all the angels with him, he will sit on his throne in heavenly glory. All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will _____ the people one from another . . . on his right and . . . on his left.

Then the King will say to those on his right, "Come, you who are blessed by my Father; take your inheritance, the _____ prepared for you since the creation of the world."

Kingdoms rise and kingdoms fall, nations come and nations go, but the kingdom of God will last forever. Here is a vision for our society and its future, a vision that can nurture and nourish each person and give us hope for the future. Jesus is the stone. We can either accept him and be saved or reject him and be lost (Luke 20: 17-1, page744).

11. What promise did Jesus leave His followers? John 14:1-3 (page 763)

Do not let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God; _____ . In my Father's house are many rooms . . . I am going there to prepare a place for you. And if I go . . . _____ and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am.

A Dream About the Future

AFTER ANSWERING QUESTIONS 3-9 FILL IN WHAT THE PARTS OF THE IMAGE SYMBOLIZE

Head of _____ Daniel 2:37-38; 1:1, 4:30

B _____ 605 BC - 539 BC

Chest of _____ Daniel 2:39a; 5:25-28

M _____ & **P** _____ 539 BC - 331 BC

Thighs of _____ Daniel 2:39b; 8:20-21

G _____ 331 BC - 168 BC

Legs of _____ Daniel 2:40; Luke 2:1

R _____ 168 BC - AD 476

Feet of _____ & _____ Daniel 2:41-43

D _____ **K** _____ 476 AD >



cut out, not

Daniel 2:44-45

You Can Be a Part of This Kingdom

Clifton James "CJ" and Damien Hobgood* (twins) are both professional surfers, from Satelite Beach, Florida. CJ won the Association of Surfing Professional world title in 2001 when aged 22. In 2007 he won the US Open of Surfing. He also won the O'Neill World Cup of Surfing at Sunset Beach, in Hawaii in 2008.

Damien defeated world champion Andy Irons (died 2010) at Quicksilver Pro Fiji in 2004. After suffering a shoulder injury in 2005 Damien rebounded by winning The Globe World Championship Tour, Fiji in 2006.

The year before CJ's world title win he had another incredible experience that's open to all of us.

"I accepted Jesus Christ last year... I find that when I know His will is being done in my life, satisfaction is guaranteed."

His favourite Bible verse is: "For what shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world, and lose his own soul." (Mark 8:36).

When asked why he thanked God in his world title acceptance speech CJ said, "He pretty much is my life, and I try to be on his path. He has given me everything that I have.... I'm stoked to be able to thank Jesus Christ for everything. I'm able to enjoy all I have so much more because of that."

Damien too, has accepted Jesus Christ. He says, "It's so easy to get caught up in the "real world" things and you try to get happiness from making money, getting the ultimate wave But the only time I really found the most happiness in my life is when I was really in tune with Him and putting all my trust in Him." Just as Jesus helps CJ and Damien with their lives, so He can help you with yours.



History proves the accuracy of Daniel's interpretation of the king's dream. So too we can have assurance in the Bible that tells us about Jesus. How would you like to respond to the amazing prophecy in this guide?

- It's given me confidence in the trustworthiness of the Bible.
- I would like to trust in Jesus and be ready for Him to come again.

On a scale of 1 to 10 my confidence in the future is _____

*Wikipedia, vidsurf.net, surfersbible.info

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Published by: The Seventh Day Adventist Church, South Pacific Division Design
and Layout: DEC Creatives, Bonnells Bay, New South Wales, Australia Cover

Image: shutterstock.com